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LOCALISED GLOBALITIES AND SOCIAL WORK

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

Recent global and structural transformations, a West-centric development agenda and the triumph of neoliberal politics have led to destructive consequences for many local communities and individual life chances. The global dominance of the West-centric development agenda, with its roots in the colonial past, has created uneven developments and an unjust world in which Western countries continue to gain advantages and increase their prosperity. Although a minority elite in many non-Western countries share the same interests as Western countries and their global organs, the majority of people in these countries are suffering from increasing socioeconomic inequalities. As a result of the dogmatic belief in a singular and West-centric modernity and its practices, many problems are considered to be the result of non-Western countries' inabilities to complete the project of modernity in accordance with Western blueprints. This has also influenced social work as a global and modern profession. Social problems are often individualised and the reasons behind many inequalities are increasingly related to non-Western people's individual shortcomings and traditional cultural backgrounds. In Western and non-Western countries equally are the neoliberal structural and institutional transformations ignored and social problems of individuals and families defined as a matter of wrong and deviant actions and choices.

The main objective of the dissertation, which is constituted of four articles and an overall introduction and summary, is to examine the consequences of recent neoliberal globalisation based on the belief in a single and West-centric modernity and development agenda and their consequences for social work facing increasing global inequalities. The following research questions have guided the work: 'How can social work play an effective role in combating social problems and

otherisation, marginalisation and increasing inequalities in a globalised world?', 'How does the global development agenda function within the local arenas of social work?', 'Are development projects improving people's life chances in local communities in non-Western countries?', 'How informed and responsive are social workers towards the global context of local problems?'

The work is based on a qualitative design using qualitative content analysis for analysing data collected through interviews, participant observations and official documents. The results show that irrespective of where and in which context social problems are appearing, since local problems often have global roots, a global perspective to local problems should be included in every practices of social work in order to develop new methods of practices in an increasingly globalised field of work. Destruction of local communities, forced migration from non-Western countries, and marginalisation of people with immigrant background in Western countries should not be considered only as local problems, but also as problems with their roots in global structural inequalities which reproduces global social problems with local consequences.

It is argued that social work should consider the dilemmas and problems connected to the taken for granted West-centric theories, understandings and practices of social work in order to develop new methods of practices for combating social problems, marginalisation and increasing inequalities in a globalised world. Such a position includes practicing multilevel social work, social work in global alliances beyond the division of East and West, and mobilisation against neoliberalism and the retreat of the welfare state. This requires critical standpoints against the relationship between the global context of the neoliberal ideology and practices in a Western-dominated and postcolonial world and the daily practices of social work.

Keywords: globalisation, global social problems, glocalisation, multiple modernities, neoliberalism, social work, West-centric development

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This dissertation is mainly based on the following four articles, herein referred to by their Roman numerals:

Article I   Jönsson, J H. (2010). Beyond empowerment: Changing local communities. *International Social Work, 53*(3), 393–406.

Article II   Jönsson, J H. & Kamali, M. (2012). Fishing for development: A question for social work. *International Social Work, 55*(4), 504–521.

Article III   Jönsson, J H. (2013). Social work beyond cultural otherisation. *Nordic Social Work Research, 3*(2), 159–167.

Article IV   Jönsson, J H. (2014a). Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work (accepted for publication in *British Journal of Social Work, 44*(4), June 2014).

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PART ONE

LOCALISED GLOBALITIES AND SOCIAL WORK

To change the world, one has to change the ways of world-making, that is, the vision of the world and the practical opportunities by which groups are produced and reproduced.

Pierre Bourdieu, (1989, p. 17)

Any effort to understand modernities in general, and the 'modern West' in particular, without analyzing the role of colonialism, the slave trade and modern wars in the modern development of Europe becomes a selective and self-celebrating presentation without much historical evidence.

Masoud Kamali, (2012, p. 8)

Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness - and our ability to tell our own stories. Stories that are different from the ones we're being brainwashed to believe. The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy, World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2003

INTRODUCTION

The global nature of our societies makes it almost impossible to study any aspects and areas of social work, as well as other fields of social science, without considering global mechanisms and transformations which influence socioeconomic, cultural and political structures and arrangements of 'ours' and 'the others'' societies and everyday experiences. As a former social worker, I had spent much time reflecting on the problems rooted in global inequalities, such as poverty and instability in many non-Western countries[1], which forces many people to leave their communities and countries of origin and come to 'us' in search of a better and more secure life. The established narratives about modernity and global and social development in the world did not provide me conceivable explanations for the existing inequalities and the problems which harm many people in the world. Despite many declarations and agreements about the Western countries' ambitions and policies for the development of non-Western countries and people, many development projects and interventions in non-Western countries proved to play a marginal role for the improvement of the living conditions of people in unprivileged non-Western countries (Amin, 1990; Ericsson Baaz, 2005; Escobar, 1995; Goudge, 2003; Gupta, 1998).

This work examines the global context of social work and argues that organising a progressive social work in an increasingly globalised field requires knowledge of mechanisms behind the reproduction of global inequalities. Understanding the ways colonialism and the brutal history of modernities all over the globe have influenced and created the structural and institutional arrangements of our late modern[2] world have been crucial through all different parts of this work.

The critical and new theoretical perspectives for understanding the inequalities of the world and the way they are reproduced have been important for the studies presented in this work. The established narratives, such as the non-Western countries inability to realise the project of a linear developmental modernity, following the Western models, have lost their creditability in the face of increasing global gaps and the return of colonialism and military interventions and wars forced on many unprivileged countries (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Kamali, 2012;

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[1] By 'non-Western countries' I mean countries which have been colonised or subjected to socioeconomic, political and cultural oppression by Western countries. The term 'Western countries' in this work encompasses Western European countries and what George Fredrickson, (2000) calls 'extended Europe', i.e. North America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

[2] The concept of 'late modernity' refers to modernity in its late stage and global dominance as discussed by Ulrich Beck, et al., (1994) and Anthony Giddens, (1990).

Wallerstein, 2006). The problems which harm many non-Western countries, individuals and families from less privileged countries or areas, such as poverty and the lack of material resources and political instability, are not just local problems with local or national roots, but also part of a global order, in which Western countries reproduce their privileges in a way which generates many problems for 'the others'.

Many social work theories and practices are deeply influenced by the colonial past and its related discourses which fuel the construction of a division of people of the world into the categories 'us' and 'them' (Briskman, 2003; Haug, 2005; Kamali, 2002; Ranta-Tyrkkö, 2011; Razack, 2009; Sewpaul, 2007). Accordingly, the social problems of 'them' are presented as their social problems based on their own cultures, economic shortcomings and undemocratic political structures without any connection to the colonial past and the postcolonial order of the world. Many interventions of Western countries and global organs, such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) for the development of non-Western countries are guided by a biased understanding of the modern history in which Western countries' privileges are considered to be the result of their internal socioeconomic, cultural and political developments (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991; Engel-Di Mauro, 2006; Featherstone, 1990; Payne, 2005). The role of wars, colonial occupations, slavery and mass-killings are mainly ignored.

This work considers many social problems, irrespective of where and in which context they are appearing, as a problem with global roots, meaning that a global perspective to local problems should be included in every practices of social work in order to develop new methods of practices in an increasingly globalised field of work. Studies of the destruction of local communities in, and forced migration from, non-Western countries, as well as studies of marginalisation in Western countries, should be considered as both historical and current inequalities and power structures in the world which reproduce global social problems with local consequences.

In this respect, this work challenges the established misrecognitions of the global roots of social problems and the inefficiencies of the nationalised social work. It argues that theories and practices of social work should consider and recognise the global roots of inequalities, which create local and global social problems, and the need for the development of new theoretical perspectives and methods of practices in the local, national and global field of social work. Studies of global social problems and their local and human consequences make up the focus of the studies collected in this work. It includes the voices of unprivileged people who are harmed by various negative consequences of global socioeconomic, cultural and political transformations which make their lives unbearable. Some have left their local communities, and moved to urban areas in

their countries of origin or to Europe in hope of better life chances. Others are trapped in their impoverished local communities in non-Western countries and fighting for their living. Even many of those who succeed to enter the 'Fortress of Europe' are often marginalised and subjected to racial and structural discrimination. However, the focus of this work is not on globalisation per se, but rather on the processes of disempowering dynamics of West-centric globalisation processes and projects, which have had many negative consequences for non-Western countries and communities.

Economic globalisation, which mainly takes place in the form of transnational and global companies led by increasing their profits, (Beck, 1999) and the dominance of neoliberalism together with the retreat of welfare states have reinforced and increased global inequalities and social problems for many 'localised' people around the world. The globalisation has also resulted in many socio-political implications, such as increasing ethnic conflicts, re-colonisation, increasing poverty and displacement of millions of people on a global scale (McMichael, 2008). During the last decades, social workers all over the world have witnessed the increasing destructive consequences of globalisation and it is widely recognised that social work researchers, educators and practitioners, who are the main actors in the global field of social work, have an important role to play in combating inequalities and negative consequences of such global transformations and their local consequences (Dominelli, 2010, 2012; Ferguson et al., 2005; Healy & Link, 2012 Lavalette & Loakimidis, 2011; Lyons, et al., 2006).

Globalisation and the unequal relations of power and privileges increasingly challenge national policies. Policies at national level prove to be mainly ineffective and disabling, unable to do much about the global economic and social processes affecting the life chances of people, normally categorised as belonging to 'a nation'. The previously dominant principles of national independence are increasingly becoming weaker in favour of political actions across borders (Sassen, 1996). Countries are now interconnected more closely than ever before. Today, violations against universal values, such as human rights, are not perceived as a national concern, but something that concerns everyone in a global perspective. Although social work in general consists of multiple local practices, the local conditions are intertwined with global processes of change beyond the national level. In this context, it is argued that social workers need to actively participate and be involved in social work action for promoting global justice and against local consequences of global problems (Dominelli, 2010, 2012; Ferguson et al., 2005; Sewpaul, 2013). It is also argued that social work has to be able to place itself in a broader global and historical socio-politic context beyond the division of social problems into 'ours' and 'the others' and relate global structural transformations to their local consequences (McMichael, 2008; Wallerstein, 2001).

The consequences of recent large-scale transformations for social work are often described as preparing the social workers of the twenty-first century for massive changes, 'risks' or challenges in the contemporary global conditions for work. Some scholars have argued that such changes imply a new agenda for social work action including a wide range of activities for the societal changes and for the improvement of peoples' living conditions in a rapidly changing world. From a critical social work perspective this means to analyse the global structural transformations such as the neoliberal globalisation and the reorganisation of welfare regimes and the consequences for the living conditions of unprivileged groups and for social work practice (Dominelli, 2010; Ferguson & Lavalette, 2013; Guru, 2010; Reisch, 2013a). In this respect, social workers critical consciousness and active engagement receive a central position. Dominelli, (2010, p. 172) argues:

> Social workers 'need to be informed about the social, political and economic realities that impact on their practice; widening their understandings of these regardless of the setting and territory in which they are located; and broadening the scope of the curriculum so that it addresses issues that arise in the interstices between the local and the global and supports the development of locality-specific social work.

Others claim that social workers need to be empowered with new flexible competences and a broad range of multilevel working skills (Adams, et al. 2009; Hare, 2004; Midgley & Conley, 2010). The background of the changing conditions for social work, and for which further practice is expected to prepare the profession, are often expressed in terms of globalisation and the challenges of new/old globalised social problems with structural and institutional roots (Dominelli & Hackett, 2012; Reisch, 2013).

In this respect, the recent debates have stressed the global conditions of social work practice to call for new theoretical and practical approaches adjusted to the global arenas of social work. There have frequently been calls for a re-envision of social work in a global context through more theoretical attention to globalisation, more focus on global policies and power relationships and the impact of these issues on the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Such challenges have been reflected on in the recently declared strategic document called 'The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: Commitment to Action, (2012)' published by IFSW, IASSW and ICSW[3] (called 'The Global Agenda' hereafter). This global agenda serves to illustrate practical, conceptual and ethical challenges linked to the core global statements of social

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[3] The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW).

work including challenges for social workers to develop new methods, strategies and practices for the future global organisation of social work (Jones & Truell, 2012). ´The Global Agenda', is closely related to the universal mission of social work based on its codes of ethics and the global definition of social work provided by IFSW (2013):

> The social work profession facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.

These are guiding principles fundamental to any social care organisation or social worker, as well as a legitimate research goal of social work, given that social work is universally committed to working towards justice.

These calls can be understood as responses to the gaps in social work research and the need for a more critical approach to the West-centric understanding of modernisation and global development, in order to include global conditions of local social problems and realise itself as a human rights profession (Ife, 2012; Kreitzer & Wilson, 2010; Williams & Sewpaul, 2004). A key component of the criticism of the dominant social work perspective is the lack of attention to historical and current structural inequalities, which create global injustices with concrete local implications.

However, in promoting socioeconomic, cultural and political justice, social work covers a range of genuinely and deeply divergent approaches rooted in many vested interests and the different theoretical and practical traditions of social work. Given the fragmented and differentiated orientations and many mandates of a multi-level social work today, it is not clear how the principles of human rights and social justice should be included in all aspects of social work. This suggests a need for the integration of new progressive responses to social problems with critical analyses of the context in which social work is operating. Social work does not exist in a social or institutional vacuum, but within global structural transformations and institutions with both power to define social problems and present their solutions. In other words, social work should critically analyse the global and local mechanisms of the production and reproduction of social problems around the world. Such an understanding of the role of social work has guided me in choosing the different research areas examined in this dissertation.

The main objective and research questions of the dissertation

The main objective of the dissertation, which is constituted of four articles and an overall introduction and summary, is to examine the consequences of recent neoliberal globalisation based on the belief in *a* single and West-centric modernity and development agenda and their consequences for social work facing increasing global inequalities. Although many social problems are experienced locally, they have global roots and are reinforced by the triumph of neoliberalism these past decades and the retreat of the welfare states. The work will hopefully contribute to the development of new theoretical perspectives and methods of practices relevant for the globalised field of social work.

Within the frame of social work and its late modern challenges, this work is focused on the global context of social work, including its education and practice. In this respect, the global structural transformations behind current global social problems such as poverty, destruction of local communities and forced migration and their consequences for local communities and individual life chances as well as for social work are examined.

One important aspect of the studies included in this work is the critical examination of the established global 'development agenda', which is guiding many development projects around the world and which also influences the practices of social work. This implies the imagination of the West-centric essence of globalisation processes with its homogenising, linear and neoliberal development agenda including the concept and practices of empowerment and partnership implicated in international agreements and projects of development. Furthermore, the role of social work in working with the individual consequences of such global transformations in form of established theories of social work and methods of practices are brought to a central position by focusing on the local reactions to global problems in non-Western countries as well as in Western countries.

The following research questions have guided the work and are addressed in the studies reported in the four articles included in this work:

- *How can social work play an effective role in combating social problems and otherisation, marginalisation and increasing inequalities in a globalised world?*

- *How does the global development agenda function within the local arenas of social work?*

- *Are development projects improving people's life chances in local communities in non-Western countries?*

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- *How informed and responsive are social workers towards the global context of local problems?*

The interest in the first study, reported in article 1 (Jönsson, 2010), concerns social development issues, methods of practices and theoretical assumptions and principles of empowerment and emancipation. Development projects to empower local communities, women and children in Southern India are examined. The study concerns the themes and complexities of global and historical relations in social work and social development and their local consequences in non-Western countries.

The second study, reported in article 2 (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), also concerns the global development agenda but the interdependencies of the local and the global aspects of social work. The study examines developmental agreements between the EU and some African countries. The destructive life conditions of people in fishing communities in terms of social problems and forced migration are discussed.

The focus of the third study, reported in article 3 (Jönsson, 2013), is on the shortcomings of the nationalised social work in relation to globalisation, increasing inequalities and marginalisation in Swedish society. The processes of marginalisation of people with immigrant backgrounds and the way culturalisation of their social problems is part of their exclusion from society are examined and discussed in this study.

The fourth study, reported in article 4 (Jönsson, 2014a), examines the problems of the nationalised social work in a time of increasing globalised social problems and the presence of undocumented immigrants in Sweden. The study also discusses the consequences of the retreat and weakening of the Swedish welfare state, as a result of neoliberal reforms, and its consequences for working with increasing social problems of undocumented immigrants.

Outline of the dissertation

The work is divided into two parts. Part one includes the following:

- Introduction chapter
- A background with a general overview of the research interests
- A theoretical background framing the research interests
- A discussion of the empirical contexts
- A discussion of research methods, ethics and collection and analysis of the empirical materials

- Summaries of the studies reported in the four articles
- A concluding discussion

Part Two includes four studies as reported in the following four articles:

Article 1   Jönsson, J H. (2010). Beyond empowerment: Changing local communities. *International Social Work, 53* (3), 393–406.

Article 2   Jönsson, J H. & Kamali, M. (2012). Fishing for development: A question for social work. *International Social Work, 55* (4), 504–521.

Article 3   Jönsson, J H. (2013). Social work beyond cultural otherisation. *Nordic Social Work Research, 3*(2), 159–167.

Article 4   Jönsson, J H. (2014a). Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work (accepted for publication in *British Journal of Social Work, 44*(4), June 2014).

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Social work – A brief global and historical overview

This section discusses the establishment and growth of social work as a professional discipline. This is particularly important in relation to the emerging challenges for social work in terms of global structural mechanisms generating global social problems and the development of 'The Global Agenda' for social work and social development. It is crucially important in a time when the retreat and the reorganisation of the welfare state and institutionalisation of the neoliberal ideology and politics have reduced the possibilities of welfare organisations and municipal professional social workers for providing services to increasing numbers of individuals and families in need.

There are different ways of discussing the growth and development of social work as an organised activity and in terms of different traditions and orientations. As a socio-political field, social work's features, scope, functions and missions have always been influenced by local and global ideas and political agendas for economic and social development and by different debates on social problems, social work theory and social work methods of practice. Such a rich and multi-faceted field of work brings together a wide range of differences of positions among researchers, educators and practitioners engaged in social work activities. Although there may be some common assumptions on the set of ethical principles and core values of social work and practical interventions aiming at improving the living conditions of people, there are different and in many cases controversial and contentious orientations and theoretical perspectives and methods of practising social work in both local and global arenas. Such different traditions and orientations influence how social problems and their roots are conceived and should be solved.

However, one important theoretical basis that have affected the choice of different approaches in social work is the dichotomy of the reality of social conditions of individuals or groups within existing system and structures of power in society, on the one hand, and by considering social problems merely as individual problems aiming at improving individual capacities to change their living conditions, on the other. The latter orientation, namely the individual casework tradition, has probably been the most widely used method of social work practices. This tradition of work, which emerged out of the North American charity organisations (Wenocur, & Reisch, 1989; Woodroofe, 1962), has been generally applied in specialised fields of social work, such as in family and child welfare, medical social work and rehabilitation. Such a tradition was reinforced by the further development of the social administration resulting from the expansion of governmental social services and income maintenance programs including

different social work activities. It is widely held that the tradition of individual casework is associated with the profession's controlling function by identifying and categorising people as 'clients' and work for their treatment, rehabilitation and education at the individual level (Lowe & Reid, 1999; Midgley, 2001; Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Other traditions, which could be related to more structural approaches, includes different activities of group work and community work in combating social problems and improving the social integration and empowerment of 'vulnerable' and marginalised groups in society (McDonald et al., 2005; Vinik & Levin, 1991; Solomon, 1976). Many of such functions and methods of practising social work can be associated with its origin in the social action and neighbourhood organisation of the Settlement Movement in Europe and North America in the early decades of the 20th century (Powell, 2001; Reisch & Andrews, 2002). Although there have been other related practices, the approaches of individual casework, group work and community work have mainly formed the core structures and ideologies of social work not only in Western countries, but also in the non-Western countries, which will be discussed later.

However, as an approach to social work, long term structural dimensions in order to make the social transformations of inclusion and integration of disadvantaged and marginalised groups possible, has been marginalised both within social work education and social work practices for several decades (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2006; Dominelli, 2002; Kamali, 1997, 2006b; Pease and Fook, 1999). Although, social work at the macro level have offered an alternative to the individual casework model by acknowledging the constraints imposed by socioeconomic, cultural and political structures, and at the same time recognising the human potential to change both oneself and the society in more collective terms of social activities and movements, 'such efforts have not been sufficiently successful in undermining the dominant position of individual casework' (Midgley, 2010, p. 5).

While, these approaches could be discussed separately as case work, group work or societal reform work and as different paradigms of social work, which aim to combat social problems at the individual, group and community level, these traditions cannot simply be divided into completely different fields of practices. If one examines the development of these traditions, they have often been interconnected and influenced each other. One example is the field of community development in which international social work have had an individual-oriented profile (Lazar, 2004; Saraswati, 2005). Other examples are the projects and interventions which emphasise the direct transfer of relevant and appropriate knowledge, skills and resources to marginalised groups, undertaken within the existing socioeconomic, cultural and political structures of power. For example,

there are many community projects in marginalised areas aimed at reducing criminality among youths and improving their integration in society.

However, many policies and projects launching in marginalised areas suffer from discriminatory discourses and policies which in some cases counteract their aim and increases the marginalisation and exclusion of youths and people with immigrant background (Coussée et al., 2009; de los Reyes & Kamali, 2006; Kamali, 1997, 2006b; Molina, 1997; Wacquant, 2008). Along the same line, many development projects in non-Western countries, although leading to some social and economic improvements, bear the burden of the Enlightenment epistemologies and the West-centric understanding of modernity and development and have proven to be ineffective in addressing the real needs of local communities in these countries (Bose, 1992; Haug, 2005; Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012; Khinduka, 1971; Kuruvilla, 2005; Nagpaul, 1972; Sewpaul, 2005). In the same way, individual casework have adopted many principles and approaches of various macro-related activities such as empowerment-oriented and investment-related activities, community-based and participatory-based interventions for the improvement of people's living conditions (Jönsson, 2010; Midgley & Conley, 2010). During the recent decades, the compass of social, economic and political activities has increasingly been limited to individual interventions within existing social systems and structures of inequalities based on the need to reduce the costs of economic liberalisation, such as growing social problems.

Because of the globalisation of modern institutions, many Western models of social work have been globalised and have been adopted by many non-Western countries (Nagpaul, 1972; Jönsson, 2010; Midgley, 1981; Sewpaul, 2006). In this respect, social work in non-Western countries has also been largely individualised in its character. Social work was first introduced in many colonial settlements by the colonial authorities, to work in the new organisations to control and provide services that had been to respond to increasing social problems in colonies (Dominelli, 2010; Midgley, 1981). Professional social workers were imported from Western countries to serve in the new departments of social welfare that were developed in many of the colonial territories and even many educated groups, including social workers from non-Western countries were sent abroad to Western countries to obtain professional social work skills (Midgley, 1981).

Accordingly, global social work cannot be regarded as a neutral theoretical discourse and profession. Its historical role and involvement in the rise of imperialism and the historical abuses associated with colonial practices cannot be ignored. International social work was established through the missionary work of colonisers during industrialisation in Europe and colonial occupations and exploitation of colonised countries where social sciences have been developed in interaction with the economic and political power centres in Europe and has

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generated scientific knowledge necessary for colonisers (Haug, 2005; Midgley, 1990; Ranta-Tyrkkö, 2011; Sewpaul, 2006). Therefore social work education has sometimes been termed as 'professional imperialism' (Midgley, 1981), which is still in effect through the current social work interventions within the framework of social development projects around the world (Arvanitakis, 2007; Ericsson Baaz, 2005; Goudge, 2003). The tradition of international social work has been the 'export' of such criticised models of development, developed in the so-called 'centre' for countries known as the 'margins' or the 'periphery'. Colonialism has been influenced by and has in turn affected the theories of social sciences, which in turn legitimised the European mission to 'develop the world' (Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2008; Loomba, 2005). Accordingly, social sciences should recognise its discriminatory role in the creation of global injustices and unequal distribution of resources.

However, given the global characteristics of modernity and its colonial past and postcolonial present (Kamali, 2006), many local elites in non-Western countries, even after the formal ending of colonialism, were highly influenced by West-centric ideas of economic development and modernity. In this respect, the West-centric understanding of modernity has not only been introduced by Western forces of economic and social change, but also by local elites who consider the West as the ultimate goal of modernity and development (Kamali, 2006). Consequently the growth of social development programs, social welfare programs and other social work activities in non-Western countries have their roots in the institutionalisation of West-oriented modernities and ideas of development and social progress.

This has played a major role for social work in many non-Western countries, such as India, which has adopted Western models, in particular the English model of modernity, as blueprint for its modernisation and development. Also in African and South American countries, many local needs have been addressed from the same understanding of social progress (Escobar, 1995; Ericsson Baaz, 2005; Goudge, 2003). Different reforms, such as literacy education, and constructing community health centres, have been introduced by colonial authorities in collaboration with social workers in order to bring about so called community development (Midgley, 1993). However, such efforts of development have been equally realised by sacrificing local environments, traditional solidarities, and local support systems, which have led to the increasing role and interventions of professional and voluntary social workers in people's daily lives (Berger & Kelly, 1993; Dominelli, 2012; Gray et al., 2008).

It is also important to state that despite social work's colonial and oppressive history, which should be recognised, it has also been involved in the struggle for social justice and the improvement of people's life chances, both as discipline and

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profession. Pioneers in social work have been involved in the struggles against national and global socioeconomic and political injustices. Among these pioneers were Jane Addams, Mary Richmond, Grace Abbott, Bertha Reynolds, Ellen Khuzwayo, Shirley Gunn and Setareh Farman Farmanian. They were all highly involved in the fight for women's rights, the peace movement and children's rights, among other movements. Other social workers have been engaged in the struggle against dictatorship in countries like Chile and South Africa (Jimenez & Alwyn, 1992; Mazibuko et al., 1992; Patel, 1992). South American social workers who have been inspired by Paulo Freire and his ideals of emancipatory social work practice were involved in the fight for social justice (Resnick, 1976).

In other words, there has been a great tradition in social work to criticise the institutional arrangements contributing to the reproduction of existing power relations and uneven development patterns. There is often a belief in these forms of social work in grassroots associations, participatory approaches and more activist forms of social development which emerged in the 1970s. Related to the women's movement, liberation movements in former colonies, different kinds of self-help organisations, social activism, social mobilising, and protest movements have been developed in many parts of the world (Escobar, 1992; McMichael, 2008).

At large, the different traditions and orientations of social work now discussed, have laid the ground for the conceptualisation of social work up until and during the 1970s and 1980s. Later, in the 1990s, the influence of the neoliberal ideology concerning the role of state and the retreat of the welfare organisations led to the dominance of the ideology and practices of neoliberal social development in the field of social work. This resulted in the introduction of the structural adjustment programmes, and the reduction of the role of the state resulted in the increasing role of civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs hereafter), in order to compensate for socioeconomic inequalities and social problems. The recent globalisation of neoliberalism has clearly influenced the activities of social work and social development in the last decades (Brodie, 2007; Ferguson & Lavelette, 2007; Howell & Pearce, 2000; Larsson et al., 2012; Reisch, 2013; Sewpaul, 2006).

This approach has been broadly accepted by many governments around the world by encouraging private and voluntary sectors' involvement in health care, education, housing and employment services. Entitlement to benefits and services has become more conditional, with a 'modern' welfare state working with market imperatives, rather than tackling embedded inequalities. We are currently witnessing different political coalitions using the global financial and economic crises to impose cuts to public social services (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2013; Larsson et al. 2012; Loakimidis & Teloni, 2013; Rogowski, 2010). Individuals and families facing social problems and difficulties must to an increasingly extent rely on the

local community, themselves, family or friends or charity rather than the state through social work (Lorenz, 2005; Rogowski, 2010; Sarr, 2005; Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). What is significant for the neoliberal understanding of social works' involvement in combating social problems is that it does not prioritise social change, nor consider it necessary. Neoliberal globalisation has resulted in many negative consequences for many people and their living conditions around the world.

Discussions and initiatives of social work and social development in relation to global social problems, such as socioeconomic crises, wars and conflicts, poverty, unsustainable development and its human consequences, have been spread globally by the organisations of the UN and other global organs, such as the EU, providing scientific and technical advice and funding to assist governments. Given the historical and global mission of social work as a human rights profession, the global associations of social work have always been part of such work (Healy, 2008). Emphasis on the need for greater international cooperation around these themes and questions has been discussed in international social work literature, meetings and conferences through the years including 'The Global Agenda' of 2012 (Dominelli, 2010; Jones & Truell, 2012; Midgley, 2008). In the early 1990s the UN was committed to social work and social development known as 'The World Summit on Social Development'. Later these goals were reformulated and adopted as 'The Millennium Development Goals' by the UN in the year of 2000. The Millennium Development Goals agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions ranged from 'halving extreme poverty rates to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education' (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/).

Recently (June, 2013) the UN published a new comprehensive development report namely 'A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development' which articulates the new vision and responsibility to combat poverty in its all forms through 'sustainability for all'. This report is based on the earlier declaration of 'The Millennium Development Goals' for the development of 'non-developed' countries. In such reports, development is mainly understood as economic growth, modernised policies and global commitments, but the report also pays more attention to how economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development are interconnected and how development interventions should include the most marginalised people. The UN in its development report (UN, 2013) declares that 'we need to find alternative and more sustainable ways to business as usual' and declare its ambitions for change in five principals of global transformations, namely 'Leave no one behind', 'Put sustainable development at the core', 'Transform economies for jobs and inclusive

growth', 'Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all', and 'Forge a new global partnership'.

Although social work has always been part of social movements for the improvement of people's living conditions in many countries, it has also been marginalised in the socio-political debates on socioeconomic and political decision-makings important for the structural and institutional arrangements of society. This is partly because of the dominance of the traditional and West-centric theoretical approaches and paradigms, such as modernity and development, which have guided the research and practices of social work. In such circumstances, nationalised social work education and practices mainly ignore the historical and global contexts of the development of social work. Nationalised social work is not generally related to the global history of colonialism, slavery, wars and exploitation (Ranta-Tyrkkö, 2011; Razack, 2009; Sewpaul, 2006), which have been inseparable parts of the modern development of the world and current injustices in the world (Kamali, 2008, 2012).

Furthermore, social work is mainly considered as a 'practical field', which uses theories generated in other fields, such as sociology and psychology. The established assumption of the dualism between theory and practice, which is dominating in the field of social work, has been a major obstacle for the development of creative methods adjusted to, and suitable for, the global field of social work. That is why, despite a few exceptions, social work research plays a marginal role in the debates concerning global transformations and how they affect people's lives. Social workers are in many cases absent in such debates and policy-makings and at the best they are represented as representatives of a 'practical field' with a limited possibility to be heard. The global triumph of neoliberalism instead provides many spaces for neoliberal actors, politicians and entrepreneurs, who are considered being fully competent to highlight and address the social dimensions of what is today addressed as sustainable development[4].

However, such controversies in social work depend on its controversial and double-edged history, discussed in this section. Social work has been a part of progressive movements for the improvement of the living conditions of unprivileged groups (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2006; Healy, 2008; Ife, 2013; Mohan, 2005), on the one hand, and participated in colonial occupations and missionary crusades for the reinforcement of European colonialism, on the other. It has a

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[4] The term 'sustainable development' refers to the environmental, economic and social wellbeing of human societies in present and future. The most common used definition is from the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*, known as the Brundtland report (UN, 1987), which describes sustainable development as: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

history of being tapped in problematic and binary theoretical divisions of the world and people into categories, such as developed/underdeveloped, modern/traditional and 'us' and 'them' (Kuruvilla, 2005; McDonald, 2006; Payne, 2005; Sewpaul, 2006, 2007). Social work's commitment to the legacy of the Enlightenment and its ideas of progress and development is not widely examined within the field. The discriminatory and racist culture of modernity (Eze, 1997; Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2008), which has influenced the theories and practices of social work, are rarely addressed in the mainstream literature of social work.

However, the shortcomings of many social work theories and practices, influenced by the West-centric belief in 'a global modernity' and 'a global blueprint' for all countries around the world (Kamali, 2006, 2008), have been challenged because they have repeatedly been shown to be not only inappropriate but also inadequate for addressing the social, economic and environmental problems affecting people's lives. Many scholars in the field of international social work have claimed that new and globalised arenas of social work need new and creative theoretical perspectives (see e.g. Dominelli, 2010, 2012; Haug, 2005; Healy & Link, 2012; Lyons, et al., 2006; Sewpaul, 2006).

However, from a perspective where globalisation is not only the destructive force of social development but also the potential solution to a range of social problems in different context, the underlying assumptions of the globalisation project and the relationship between globalisation, development and colonialism and more specific the globalisation of West-centric modernisation programs have to be examined.

Studies of the globalised field of social work

The shortcomings of the traditional research in social work and the recent socioeconomic and cultural global transformations have led to new studies on the influences of such transformations for the globalising practices of social work (see e.g. Dominelli, 2010, 2012; Ferguson et al., 2005; Harrison & Melville, 2010; Healy & Link, 2012; Hugman et al., 2010; Ife, 2013; Lavalette & Loikimidis, 2011; Lyons et al., 2006). However, and notwithstanding the valuable contributions of such studies, this dissertation is using the theoretical perspective of multiple modernities, postcolonialism and critical development studies in order to examine the roots of global injustices.

The complexities and challenges of the recent decade's socioeconomic and cultural transformations and the triumphant march of the neoliberalism have influenced many social work researchers to conduct studies responding to the globalised context of social problems. Many of such studies concern different areas of social work, such as developmental approaches to social work (see e.g.

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Butterfield & Tasse, 2013; Midgley, 1995; Midgley & Conley, 2010), discourse and reflexive approaches to social work (see e.g. Haug, 2005; Morley, 2004; Sewpaul, 2007; Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004; Webb, 2003), education and social work (see e.g. Gray & Fook, 2007; Reisch, 2013b; Williams & Sewpaul, 2007), human rights approaches to social work (see e.g. Healy, 2008; Ife, 2012; Reichert, 2007), postcolonial and feminist approaches to social work (see e.g. Deepak, 2012; Dominelli 2002b; Razack, 2009; Sewpaul, 2006), critical and radical approaches to social work (see e.g. Dominelli, 2010; Ferguson et al., 2005; Lavalette & Loikimidis, 2011; Reisch, 2013), multicultural approaches to social work (see e.g. Healy, 2007; Wing Sue, 2006), ecological approaches to social work (Besthorn, 2000; Coates, 2003; Dominelli, 2012; Jones, 2010; Mary, 2008), indigenous approaches to social work (Briskman, 2007; Coates, 2004; Gray et al., 2008; Gray et al., 2013; Green & Baldry, 2008) and neoliberalism and social work (Ferguson et al., 2005; Lavalette & Loikimidis, 2011; Lorenz, 2005). Such studies do not share the same theoretical perspectives and in some cases are even controversial and use different theoretical perspectives in order to study the global and local field of social work in recent years. This means that in many ways, the interactions of global-local, micro-macro and agency-structure are crucial for designing multi-level and differentiated social work research.

During the last years, however, there has been a gradual shift from micro and nationalised arenas of social work to macro and global perspectives in the studies and education of social work, by which contemporary socioeconomic, cultural, political issues have become an integral part of social work and social work knowledge production. These works have paid attention to important themes and questions of structural inequalities as well as the narratives of social workers and people facing social problems. Earlier views of the nation-based social work research have been challenged by new perspectives, reflecting awareness throughout the academy of massive global processes of change in the in the early twenty-first century and by locating the 'glocal' arenas of social work. For those placing their research in relation to such global structural transformations, for which past historical narratives and global contexts of social work were not fully adequate, a critical framework have appeared through various accounts of themes and questions, as well as new processes captured in concepts, such as 'glocal' (Hugman et al., 2010; Lyons et al., 2006) 'empowerment' (Adams, 2008; Pease, 2002), 'postcolonial' (Gray et al., 2013; Razack, 2009; Sewpaul, 2006), 'indigenous' (Briskman, 2007; Gray et al., 2008), and 'sustainability' (Coates, 2003; Dominelli, 2012).

Accordingly, for social work research interested in the role of the recent global transformations for reproduction of inequalities and social problems, new theoretical frameworks are needed in order to facilitate new studies and

accumulation of new knowledge for the organisation of a more effective and accurate social work, which moves behind the West-centric of the field of social work. From this perspective the way the old division of the 'First developed' and the 'Third non-developed' or the more suitable division of 'centre' and 'periphery' is presenting categories of countries becomes inaccurate. The 'centre' finds its counterpart in the 'periphery' and the 'centre' harbours people from the 'periphery'. Many established scientific and non-scientific discourses frequently used within the research and practices of social work face difficulties in an increasingly globalised world and field. Social work research cannot ignore the discriminatory discourses of modernity and development included in the belief and theories of a singular Western modernity, which should be copied by every country around the world. Since the modern world have been developed from colonialism, slavery, wars and mass-killing (Kamali, 2006, 2008, 2012; Lawrence, 1997), it is highly important to consider the way such devastating phenomena have influenced, and are still influencing, our societies. In this perspective, the simple distinction of the local and the global is fruitless and does not help us to understand and study a glocal world in which everything which is local is globalised and everything which is global is localised. This also includes social problems and should even include their solutions.

Although a huge body of research within the field of social sciences, including social work, have been committed to the linear development and modernisation agenda, during recent decades some critical research have increasingly been questioning the validity of many post-Enlightenment development and modernisation claims (Arce & Long, 2000; Burkett & McDonald, 2005; Dominelli, 2010; Gray, 2005; Haug, 2005; Ife, 2013; Joas, 2003; Kamali, 2006; Kuruvilla, 2005; Lawrence, 1997; Mohan, 2007; O'Brien & Penna, 1998; Sewpaul, 2007; Williams & Sewpaul, 2004). Such research critically examines the established theories of modernity and the dominance of the theories and practices of a West-centric development agenda. This includes a critical analysis of the Enlightenment ideals and their impacts on modern institutions and how these philosophical and theoretical perspectives have influenced the modern project and its institutions and organisations including the national institutions of social work.

The theoretical perspectives of multiple modernities, postcolonialism and critical development studies are guiding this work. Such theoretical frames, which critically examine the biased belief in a singular Western modernity and development agenda and the way the modern world and its inequalities are formed, help us to understand the way such inequalities are reproduced and continuing to divide the world between the 'haves' and have-nots'. Such perspectives help to critically examine the conventional models of large-scale changes and their social consequences. In the following chapters, the ways institutional and structural arrangements reinforce inequalities and social

problems will be analysed in a comprehensive manner. In this sense, besides taking into consideration local and human consequences of such global inequalities, the social work practices will also be examined.

Methodological concerns in studying global inequalities

Studies of global inequalities and social problems rooted in structural and institutional mechanisms and global socioeconomic transformations have a relatively long history, at least as long as the studies of modernity. Although there are some common features, research in the field of social work, like many areas of social sciences, is a contested and diverse field. One of the lines dividing researchers in social work studies goes between those who believe in the objective role of research and researcher in production of knowledge about globalised social phenomenon and others who argue that neither research nor researcher can be neutral or objective. This work contests both the dominance of empiricist-positivist approach to studies of global inequalities and social problems and the ultra relativist-subjective stance. It is argued that research is not value-free, but contextual and formed by both the researchers' and the research participants' values and the context in which the research is conducted (Lalander, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mishler, 1986; Paterson et al., 2003).

Although global inequalities and social problems have always been a part of human societies, global modernity and colonialism have reinforced such inequalities around the world. For example, recent decade's acceleration of forced global migration is a result of structural transformations which have reinforced and increased global inequalities and social problems for many people in 'the periphery' or non-Western countries who have no choice but to emigrate to 'the centre' or Western countries (Castles, 2011 Dominelli, 2012; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). Studies of global inequalities and social problems are taking place in such global circumstances and should consider the global unequal power relations, as well as its consequences for the outcomes of research processes.

In this work, I argue that the choice of research questions and methods in studies of global inequalities and social problems is very much situated in a socio-political field where even the results of the study will be used with direct consequences for many people's life chances. A theoretical bias which affects the choice of approach in studies of social work is the belief in the existence of an 'objective' and 'subjective' reality. However, such a dualistic division restricts a comprehensive and reflexive methodological approach and has been widely criticised in the social sciences including social work (see e.g. Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Turner, 1994). The traditional research approach based on a simplistic understanding of the positivist paradigm, with a strong belief

in an 'objective reality' outside of the researcher's control has been challenged by new critical perspectives arguing that social sciences are too complex to be limited to 'scientific rigidity'.

As Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) writes, innovative research is many times created not by adapting to the predetermined limits implicit in different disciplines but with recognition and respect for positions, discourses, contexts and power relations. However, neither a complete constructivist nor relativistic approach which denies the existence of any objective material realities would be very helpful from the perspective of dealing with the social realities of people's lives. Also the result of the subject's actions, which is often termed as the 'objective world' is not always the intention of the acting individuals and groups, but may be unintended consequences of their actions. A reflexive research tradition avoids making strong distinctions between subject and object, but looks at the reality as a result of interaction between subject and object (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Mills, 2003).

The methodological approaches used in this work is characterised by such a reflexive and critical approach of social theory which includes critical knowledge and analysis about the socio-political field of what is studied, by not ignoring the structural factors that affect the field's 'disposition', to use the term of Pierre Bourdieu. This means that analysis of structural transformations and power relations are essential to understanding 'social realities' and social problems.

In this respect, I try to use a reflexive approach that goes beyond the dichotomy of 'objective' and 'subjective' worlds, from a situated researcher position (Haraway, 1988; Lewis, 2000; Mulinari, 2005) using a reflexive methodological approach (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). A situated research position means that the researcher has no position of abstract and objective observation, independent of the 'research object'. A reflexive methodological approach means that the objective nature of reality is the outcome of the subject's behaviour. Inherent in this reflexivity is the attention to the ways in which research and research participants are socially situated with wider global and historical power relations.

However, although transformative research has the potential and possibility to fight different forms of inequality and injustice in the world, it is always at risk of being limited by the established paradigms and categories of the mainstream 'scientific traditions' of academia (Gunaratnam, 2007; Livholts, 2001). For example, the documentation and demonstration of processes and practices of social inequalities and social problems may involve ethical risks at the levels of both research practice and representation of the people involved. In this respect, from the privileged position of the researcher, there is, for example, a risk to reproduce 'ethnographic objectification' of 'the others' as an 'underclass' being judged to be inherently biased, racially coded or 'methodologically vacuous' (De Genova, 2002; Mills, 2003). Cultural otherisation of people with immigrant background in general

and with non-European, non-Western, non-Christian background in particular has been historically a part of the legacy of social sciences (Goldberg, 1993).

Accordingly, by considering global and historical power relations as crucially intertwined in the process of conducting research, this means that established concepts used in the research areas have to be critically examined. In this work, I try to avoid the use of problematic and oppressive categories and definitions that are most often justified by methodological rigidity (Bourdieu, 1992; Hansen, 1995, 2000; James, 2006; Lalander, 2011; Livholts, 2001; Mohanty, 2003; Tapscott, 2003). For example, the discourse of development is often reproduced within a set of material relationships, activities and powers which are social, cultural and geopolitical (Crush, 1995; Sachs, 1992). Concepts such as 'developing country' or 'third world woman' which are frequently used belong to discriminatory discourses (Escobar, 1995; Mohanty, 2003). Another example that could be mentioned in relation to this work is 'illegal' immigration or other commonly used terms like 'irregular' or 'clandestine' which correspond to an unjust world order which mystifies, stigmatises and criminalises some people in relation to others (De Genova, 2002).

In addition, no such category can be isolated from other categories and their social contexts because no human being or group can be defined by one characteristic only. 'Illegal', undocumented immigrants, for example are not only undocumented immigrants but also women, men and children from different parts of the world, from different classes, etc. Although using particular categories of ethnicity, such as 'West African' in order to conduct research with individuals and social groups who might identify or be identified by these categories, we can neither take for granted the meanings or the effects of these identifications, nor can we ignore their intersections to other categories of difference such as class and gender (de los Reyes et al., 2003; Gunaratnam, 2003; Yuval-Davis, 2006). In addition, one can question the claim that 'West Africans' have 'their own cultures' which is often used as a characteristic connected to their ethnicity or 'African culture'. Cultures are contextual and changing and no group has a single culture common to all (Tomlinson, 1999), connected to their 'nation', ethnicity or imagined 'race'. Homogeneity of cultural utterances depends on intersections of ethnicity, class and gender since culture is a battlefield in which inequalities are both reproduced and challenged.

Although, in the different studies of this work, I argue for the importance of the role of discourses for scientific analysis of the material, such a position does not mean that discourse should be regarded as 'reality in itself' by claiming that 'everything is discourse'. Neither means that 'subject position is everything', which is sometimes claimed by some postmodern-influenced theorists (for such criticism see e.g. Calhoun, 1995; Kellner, 1988). Rather, discourse is considered to be an

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inseparable part of the reproduction and legitimisation of power relations and structural inequalities and injustices in society.

It is also relevant to discuss how theoretical and methodological approaches influence social interventions and strategies of social work practices, but also the privileged position of the researcher in examining and conducting research about 'the others'. Many questions about my own role as a white researcher with western background and my 'right' to conduct research and generate 'knowledge' about 'the others' in or from non-Western countries and communities have occupied my thoughts during my work: How can white scholars like me contribute to the understanding of the experiences of racialised groups? Can privileged groups comprehend the experiences of the non-privileged and, if so, under what conditions and with which methodological practices? Similar questions concerning the self reflexivity and the role of researcher in the research process have been raised by many others (Anderson, 1988, 1993, Collins, 1990; hooks, 1984, 1990; Livholts, 2012; Loomba, 1993; Reay, 1996; Spivak, 1999). Posing such methodological questions is largely about turning the focus from identifying oppressed groups to identifying the structures and power relations that create and maintain oppression; let it be western dominance, class elitism, patriarchal or white privileges (see e.g. Ahmed, 2007; Bourdieu; Goudge, 2003; Mills, 2003; Mohanty, 1991; Pease, 2010). Also making the privilege of one's own position a research topic involves a necessary critical self-reflection which will also affect the outcome of the study (see e.g. Goudge, 2003; Jönsson, 2012; Livholts, 2010; Pease, 2010; Reay, 1996).

As the methodological considerations and the argumentations in this work will show, I am partially critical of the 'academic elitism' which contributes to the reproduction of unequal power relations and privileges maintaining limits for doing research and writing against injustices and oppression through its established paradigms and categories and given 'scientific traditions'. However, I strongly believe in the transformative potential of ideas in social theory generated in scientific centres and universities, to struggle against different forms of inequalities and injustices. This helps me to take a scientific position including an ethical responsibility in my efforts to generate knowledge about and in that way to fight global injustices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The studies included in this work and their overall theoretical perspectives are influenced by three theoretical approaches, namely the theories of multiple modernities, postcolonial studies and critical development studies. Such theoretical perspectives provide important guidance in understanding global inequalities, privileges and unequal power relations in general, and the role of social work in combating social injustices on a global level in particular. This also includes the linkage between personal experiences at the individual level to what is happening on a global basis. Such tensions between macro/micro, structure/agency and global/local, which has long been widely discussed throughout the philosophy of sciences, are increasingly debated also in the fields of social work (Alphonse et al. 2008; Dominelli, 2010; Ferguson et al., 2005; Ife, 2013; Webb, 2003).

The recent structural transformations caused by the globalisation of the neoliberal economic doctrine together with the retreat of the welfare states have reinforced and increased inequalities and global social problem across the world (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004; Soss, et al., 2011; Wacquant, 2009;). The neoliberal 'global development project' has led to destructive consequences, such as the destruction of many people's traditional living conditions in local communities, increased poverty and forced migration. Therefore, the global 'systemic' crises and large scaled human suffering have generated critical reflections about the way we constitute knowledge that is adequate for our common world and sustainable development for all.

Although there is no consensus, many scholars of social work research, education and practice are arguing for the inclusion of multilevel approaches where local and global conditions are concerned, embracing common conceptions of humanity and of social justice. However, this requires adaptation of a critical approach and reflexive position in studying social change, development and global inequalities. In this regard, the concept of global 'development' itself, which is highly influenced by the established theory of a single Western modernity, must be critically analysed. Furthermore, the conceptual framework that posits 'development' and globalisation as a continuation of colonialism beyond its formal end, needs to be critically examined to provide perspectives on social injustices, structural inequalities and increasing social problems.

Modernity and its theoretical legacies

Theoretical discourses in the social sciences are not neutral, homogeneous or non-political. They are not a bounded autonomous arena of social action, but are a part of a larger reality, which includes the structures of knowledge of the modern world

(Wallerstein, 2004). The concept of global development shaped by modernisation theory posits that the problems which harm many non-Western countries are due to their inability to complete the process of modernisation understood as Westernisation of the world (Kamali, 2006, 2012). This biased understanding of modernity as a singular and homogenous process taking place in the entire world (Kamali, 2006; Tilly, 1975; Wallerstein, 1974) is also used as an explanation for the existence of many current social problems in the world. In other words, the 'non-development' of non-Western countries is supposed to be the result of their inability to adopt and implement a western model of modernity. For centuries, such constructed 'truths' have been established in many Western academic circles and political arenas. However, as a result of colonialism and the globalisation of media and communications, many social scientific and West-centric 'grand narratives' have become 'mediatised truths' about 'us' and the 'others' (Kamali, 2012). The social sciences have played a significant role in establishing and legitimising such imaginations of the East/West dualism. Many of the classical 'grand narratives' of the social sciences have created theories structured by a selective history-telling, in which the only way to and through modernity is an imagined Western singular modernity formed by development, progress and humanism. The need for societies to move from one stage to the next in line with science and modernity following the logic of linearity, has justified global inequalities. As Wallerstein, (2000: 195–196) argues:

> The social sciences were swept along in the tide. No one was seriously questioning the fundamental premises of knowledge. The many maladies of the system – from racism to sexism to colonialism as expressions of the manifestly growing polarization of the world, from fascist movements to socialist gulags to liberal formalisms as alternative modes of suppressing democratization – were all defined as transitory problems because they were all thought to be capable of being brought under control eventually, as so many turbulent deviations from the norm, in a world in which the trajectory always returned to the curve of linear upward-moving equilibrium.

Modernity defined as features, which divided the modern era from the pre-modern or traditional one, has been formed not only by the emancipatory ideas of the Enlightenment, characterised by the hope of individuals achieving material wealth and social autonomy under peaceful circumstances (Bauman, 1998), but also of wars, mass-killings, colonial occupations and exploitation, and slavery (Kamali, 2006, 2008, 2012; Lawrence, 1997; Williams, 1944). Among the features of the processes of modernity, which led to the establishment of institutions of modernity, 'industrialisation of mass-killing' or the institutionalisation of the permanent military power, and 'capitalism and market economy', discussed by

Giddens (1990), have been of crucial importance for the current world order. An established 'truth', which is part of the mainstream educations and literature on modernity, is the belief in the Western roots of modernity. One of the most influential social scientists of the modern time, Max Weber (1968), draw the conclusion that modernisation based on capitalist rationality was not possible without the existence of Christian Protestantism. In other words, modernity could not be developed in non-Christian and non-European countries. This West-centric understanding of modernity, which underpins the tradition of *a* single modernity, has been subjected to many critical examinations. Recent research shows that such biased assumptions of modernity influence social sciences including the education and practices of social work in (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012; Williams & Sewpaul, 2004). This has created an established assumption of the *uniqueness* of Western modernity and civilisation (Kamali, 2006). As Yack (1997) puts it, the assumption of modernity as a coherent and integrated whole is intellectual interventions in reality, which creates 'fetishism' for the singularity and homogeneity of modernity. In this way, modernity is purified from its negative consequences, such as wars, slavery and colonialism. The role of wars for the establishment and global spreading of modern institutions have normally been ignored within social sciences (Joas, 2003).

Recent research shows that neither capitalism and modern military organisations nor modernity itself are singular, western and homogenous processes, with their roots in European Protestantism (Kamali, 2006; Kaya, 2004; Pomeranz, 2000; Taylor, 1999; Wong, 1997). In fact, and in contrary to the established assumptions of the Western roots of modernity, capitalism and modern military organisations were much more developed in the Islamic Ottoman Empire than in other parts of Europe, called 'the West' (Kamali, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the fact that modernisation of Western countries went hand-in-hand with colonial and imperialist wars both within and outside of Europe are mainly ignored (Lawrence, 1997; Wallerstein, 1974; Williams, 1944). Instead, it is presented in the social sciences as a history of progress integrated into the assumption of the superiority of the 'West' and the 'singular' Western culture. The problem of West-centric and selective 'grand narratives' about the modern 'superior role' of 'the West'[5] is still haunting us by non-critical acceptance of such narratives and by the exclusion of alternative literature and analysis of the emergence of multiple modernities in the world.

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[5] The notion of 'the West' is used in quotation marks to illustrate the uncertain use of the term. As discussed by Edward Said (1978), there is not a single 'West' with identical common features, but complex societies which received privileges from a colonial past and an imperialist present. It is as little a single homogenous 'West' or 'Occident', as it is a single and homogenous 'non-West' or 'Orient'.

Accordingly, the West-centric understanding of modernity has been criticised for disregarding the world historical development of global structures that constrain national or local developments along diverse paths and for an historical division of 'tradition' versus 'modern'. In this respect, the theories of multiple modernities (Eisenstadt, 2000; Kamali, 2006, 2012), aim to achieve a conceptual break with theories of modernisation and its West-centric approach assuming that all countries should potentially follow single path of Western-guided evolutionary development from 'tradition' to 'modern' and criticise the same for disregarding the world's historical development of global structures that affects national and local developments along diverse paths. As Kamali puts it (2012, p. 244):

> Neither European nor non-European modernities have resulted from singular or identical developments and models. Modern transformation in Europe created a variety of modern institutions and political formations, resulting in for instance British, French, German, Italian and Scandinavian models of modernity. Each of these models has also had different forms and conditions at different periods of time, making it difficult, if not impossible, to consider even a single country's modernisation process as a linear, homogeneous process of development.

Liberalism and the Scandinavian model of modernity

The liberal model of modernity reinforced by some of the Enlightenment philosophers, such as Adam Smith in his famous work *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) is perhaps one of the most socioeconomic changes in human history. Such a development pushed for a colonial and postcolonial process towards civilising homogeneity and universal sameness (Goldberg, 1993). According to Smith (1776), the market and its essential individual rights and freedoms, which transfer the individual to a 'middle economic man' who thinks in the terms of rationality and profitability, ensure progress and development for each country. In 1976, Margaret Thatcher, the 'iron lady of neoliberalism' in her development options for economic growth, published in her book, *Statecraft: Strategies for a Changing World* (2003, p. 444) made a direct connection with her involvement with global economic and social issues by saying 'The Third World is very much like the First World – just poorer: what works for the West will work for the rest as well'.

A short overview of the recent EU documents on the current 'global politics for development' indicates that not much has changed (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). Such West-centric beliefs and projects for combating poverty and global problems find their resistance in narratives provided by participants from 'the rest' or the 'Third World' in Thatcher's discriminatory discourse. The people's experiences of the West-centric modernisations and development projects in Southern India and

African countries, which are presented in this work (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), show how such ideological and biased beliefs in Western blueprints destroy local communities and maintain inequalities and injustices, which limit individuals' opportunities to improve their living conditions.

Economic growth lies at the heart of liberal modernity. In Africa, Asia and South America, neoliberal policies and new relations of production, consumption and accumulation have served to enrich the corrupt economic and political elite and to exclude the vast majority of the people (Amin, 1990, 1997; Bond, 2000; Frank, 1966). It is within this context that traditional ways of living in many local communities comes to articulate a significant critique of the internal contradictions of modernity and its West-centric understanding of development and progress (Frank, 1967, 1969; Manzo, 1991). These changes in the discourse and practice of development correspond to the structural developments experienced by most postcolonial societies as a result of, first, colonisation and then, liberal policies promoted by Western countries through development programs and initiatives.

The focus on individualism in the liberal imagination of the world has contributed to the increasing inequalities and social problems among 'the losers of modernity' in the non-West as well as in the Western countries (Bauman, 1998; Beck, 1992; Kamali, 2008; Wichterich, 2000). As a result, professional and voluntary social work has occupied a central role in the life of many people who are facing difficulties in their lives. Implicit in the liberal model of modernity – the tension between the state and civil society – is the belief that individual freedom is in conflict with the expectations of the community and the state. Thus, the civil society is believed to be the best way of compensating for socioeconomic inequalities and social problems to ensure both the retreating of the welfare state and the freedom of the individual. Following the model of liberal modernity, the market economy has some dysfunctions, which create social problems. Policymakers and politicians should compensate for and take care of such social problems trough redistribution of resources in society (Bauman, 1991; Durkheim, 1984; Popple & Leighninger, 2005). In such circumstances, NGOs and other actors of the civil society organisations are seen as the ultimate alternative to the state and more 'flexible agents' for increasing the welfare of people. This indicates that the state does not have an ultimate responsibility for providing welfare to and combating social problems of individuals. The recent establishment of the neoliberal belief that individuals should be responsible for their positions in society and that the roots of their social problems are in their own actions (Foucault, 1978–1979; Wacquant, 2009) not only influenced Western countries, but also led to the destruction of many modern and traditional welfare structures and institutions in non-Western countries (Ferguson, et al., 2005; Sewpaul, 2013).

Many non-Western countries are not only suffering from the neoliberal reforms of their often corrupted states in cooperation with Western organisations and institutions following the neoliberal promises of international organs and Western countries, but also from the unequal and discriminatory 'agreements' forced on those countries. For example, agreements between the EU and many African countries have resulted in the destruction of traditional living conditions of people in local communities, in various forms of exploitation of local resources and have created huge economic and social problems in these countries (Eriksson Baaz, 2005; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012; McMichael, 2008). Such interventions and agreements indeed deprive local people by destroying their traditional and established working opportunities, such as small fishing industries, and force them to become consumers of the global market. The multiplicities of development and modernisation are ignored.

In line with the liberal model of modernity and as a result of the destruction of local communities and the traditional solidarity structures, voluntary social work is increasing globally (Jönsson, 2014a; Kuruvilla, 2005; Midgley, 1997). As a result of the introduction of market-based reforms during the past decades, many people are facing increasing difficulties. Although, during early years of the post WWII, many countries, such as the social democratic states of Scandinavia and England, had taken key sectors of the economy, such as health care, education and housing out of the market because basic human needs should not be mediated through market forces and access limited by the ability to pay, it is rapidly changing in the Scandinavian countries and was changed in England several decades ago. While Margaret Thatcher managed to change all that in England, Sweden resisted longer despite the strong endeavours of the capitalist class to take the neoliberal road. However, even in Sweden, one of the most developed welfare states in the world (Esping-Andersen, 1990), the neoliberal changes have led to the retreat of the Swedish welfare state from its traditional and legislated responsibilities. This has led to a situation in which welfare services are increasingly taken over by NGO actors and private sectors (Jönsson, 2014a).

This reorganisation of the welfare state means that we are gradually moving back to the traditional system of 'poor relief' and charity work coloured by the traditional philanthropic and religious ideology of taking care of weak individuals in society instead of people having rights and being entitled to a normal life and minimum existence in the frame of the modern social service system and its institutions. The latter has been central in the Swedish modern development and the role of the state and the public sector for providing welfare for all members of society and improving the socioeconomic conditions of less privileged influenced by the ideology of *folkhemmet* (The People's Home) which was developed during the 1930s and emphasised social citizenship for every member of the society

irrespective of their socioeconomic position. In contrast to the liberal model of modernity, the primary responsibility of the nation (welfare) state is providing comprehensive welfare benefits and service, which has constituted the very basis of the Scandinavian model of modernities. The development of the welfare state with its socio-political goals and aims of social programs has, in contrast to the liberal model, mainly been based on the need for reducing the social costs of the market and economic liberalisation, such as growing social problems. It maintains that the state has a legitimate role in the redistribution of resources and in reducing the socioeconomic gaps between different social classes.

Although the dynamics of neoliberalism has varied from place to place and over time as well as between theory and practice and between different states in the world, there are some general narratives about the role of the state in the era of neoliberalisation of the world. David Harvey, (2005, p. 2) mean that neoliberalism has to be viewed as:

> [A] theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedom characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.

Accordingly, the neoliberal reorganisation of society can be described as 'the need to create good business and investment climate for capitalist endeavours and that neoliberal states typically favour the integrity of the financial system and the solvency of financial institutions over the well-being of the population or environmental quality' (Harvey, 2005, p. 70–71). As the world is increasingly characterised by conflicts and increasing global social problems, such as the return of colonialism or recolonisation, climate changes, new colonial wars and ethnic conflicts, destruction of local communities, poverty, and forced migration, there is a need to understand the global and local impacts of such neoliberal processes.

Modernisation must be understood, not simply as Westernisation of the world in accordance with Western blueprints, but as multiple modernisation attempts in order to modernise culturally, politically and socioeconomically different societies (Eisenstadt, 2002; Kamali, 2006, 2012). Modernisation attempts are not experienced by all as an inclusive process, but rather as an exclusionary phenomenon. In many cases, certain unprivileged groups experience modernity as something from which they are excluded and otherised at the most fundamental level (Kamali, 1997, 1999, 2006, 2008, 2012). The otherisation of certain groups, included in the ideas and mechanisms of modernity itself, is not simply an experience of poverty or unemployment, it is the inability to imagine your society and therefore imagine yourself in it as a desirable human. For example, in this work, being 'the others' of

European countries is confirmed by many of the interviewed people with immigrant backgrounds, who are harmed by the modern development of the world and current injustices. In one of the studies namely 'Fishing for development: A question for social work' included in this work, Muhammad[6], from Gambia provides an example of the living conditions of undocumented immigrants, depending on their positions at the borders of various citizenship regimes rather than on their status as human beings 'Human rights are only for white Europeans, only, only, only. It is not for Africans, no black man, no Asians, or South Americans' (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012, p. 10).

The modernisation processes in each country have entailed the political projects for the creation of a national and homogenised culture shared by every citizen of that country. Modern education has been used to frame the cultural borders of a nation against those of another (Goldberg 1993; Kamali 2008; Wallerstein, 1990). In this respect, modern organising of social work in accordance with Western models is presented as the only way to progress, promising development, inclusion and integration, but the more it is pursued the more otherised people become. In the Swedish context, although with good intentions, people with immigrant backgrounds are mainly considered to have unchangeable cultural properties, which are essentially different from 'our modern culture' (Eliassi, 2010; Jönsson, 2013; Kamali 2002, 2006b; Sernhede 2007; Ålund & Schierup, 1991). Liberal modernity's focus on individual rights, freedoms and aspirations often clash with local understandings of the importance of community and traditional solidarity as important properties for making a society and its continuation possible. Social work and control was, and is, dependent upon the interconnection of these spheres. Social work should be a profession for promoting human rights and equal opportunities beyond colonial and postcolonial discriminatory discourses, patterns and practices for everybody.

Multiple modernities, development and postcolonialism

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the West-centrism of social sciences is one of the most important sources of the imagination of the uniqueness of 'the West' and its imagined singular modernity. Many of the 'classical' scholars, including Marx, Weber and Durkheim, have presented modernity as a singular development that took place in Europe and occurred almost identically and equally in all European countries. However, modernity has not been a singular and homogeneous 'master process' wherever modern transformations have taken place. There is no unique European modernity, but various paths of modernisation (Kamali, 2006). Modern

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[6] All names of the respondents mentioned in this dissertation are not their real names.

transformations took place in different parts of the world and in various ways and, aside from their common institutional properties, generated many different institutional and cultural forms and constellations. Neither European nor non-European modernities have resulted from singular or identical developments and models. In a world of rapid global transformations, globalisation of neoliberal politics and development, which leads to increasing 'ethnic' conflicts, environmental disasters, displacement of a huge number of people in the world, and forced migration, necessitates adequate theoretical knowledge and methods for understanding and working with such global social problems. In such circumstances Kamali (2012, p. 8) argues:

> Any effort to understand modernities in general, and the 'modern West' in particular without analyzing the role of colonialism, the slave trade and modern wars in the modern development of Europe becomes a selective and self-celebrating presentation without much historical evidence.

The early development of the theory of multiple modernities (Eisenstadt, 2002) had the problem of not recognising the role of the colonial past for modern developments and its consequences for inequalities and injustices in the current postcolonial order of the world (Kamali, 2012). Such a view of modernity leaves many questions of the modern era and its global events unanswered. Colonial wars, violence and postcolonial oppression perpetrated by militarily and economically strong Western countries have left a permanent imprint on the global modernisation process. Therefore, it is almost impossible to understand either modernity itself or related global developments without analysing the ways in which such events have created an unequal world divided between the haves and the have-nots. Although the West-centric social sciences have created a well-established imagination of the 'uniqueness of the West' and its singular modernity over a long period of time, no country – Western or non-Western – ever developed a modernity model on its own without interacting with a globalising world that does not stop at national borders (Kamali, 2012).

Many countries around the world created their own paths of modernity and development, partly based on so-called Western models or their own (Delanty, 2006; Eisenstadt, 2002; Kamali, 2006). Socioeconomic and cultural patterns and contexts of each country on the one hand, and different countries' place in the colonial world on the other, have formed their paths to and through modernity. Many have been prevented to develop genuine and their own modernities while others succeeded. The established theoretical approach about the singularity of modernity entails a belief in a linear development which determines human history. In accordance with the theories generated by the classical scholars of social

sciences, such as Comte, Marx, Weber and Durkheim, human societies develop from 'primitive' to 'developed' societies. This is considered almost as a historical determinant for all societies. Because the Western countries started the process of modern development and progress, all other countries should follow the western examples and change their societies in accordance with the Western countries' structures and institutions. Such a theoretical approach ignores the West-centric agenda of modern development and the role of colonialism and imperialism in the globalisation of western dominance in the world.

The strong belief in the ideology and practices of a linear and universal modernity and development in accordance with Western models has even influenced the social work practices around the world (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). Many donors and international organisations providing aid and scientific advices to development projects aimed at developing non-Western countries are bearing the burden of the Enlightenment epistemologies and theoretical terminologies. The understanding of development in the imagined geographies (Power, 2003) of the 'third world' is very much based on the division of the inferior 'underdeveloped world' and the superior 'developed world'. The development agenda and its connecting discourses are strongly formed by reproducing the notion of 'the other' as essentially different and in need of development interventions. In such circumstances, people in, or with backgrounds from these areas are mainly seen as powerless, passive, poor and ignorant by the more powerful actors influenced by the West-centric and exploitive development perspectives (Bond, 2005; Crush, 1995; Ericsson Baaz, 2005; Escobar, 1995; Goudge, 2003; McEwan, 2001; Sachs, 1992). Such an understanding of global development for empowering people in or from non-Western countries is also a part of social work discourses and professional experiences and knowledge related to the everyday social realities and problems of many people (Goudge, 2003; Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012; Jönsson, 2013; Jönsson, 2014a).

Typical portrayals of the 'third world 'which have become 'mediatised truths' about 'us' and the 'others' are emaciated children, crying women, and men engaged in war and violence (Dunbar, 2006). The 'mission of saving' the 'third world' people in general and the 'third world women' and children in particular, are well integrated parts of the ideology and practices of development, also in social work (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Jönsson, 2013; Jönsson, 2014a; Mohanty, 2003; Momsen, 1991). In this respect, however, there is a risk that the 'saving women mission' ignores men's experiences and living conditions in the contemporary globalised and postcolonial world (Connell, 1998, 2009; Kuntsman, 2008). This work demonstrates the lives of those men (mainly) from African countries leaving their impoverished local communities and migrate to Europe in hope of a better life become subjected to oppression and racial discrimination in European

countries (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). The living conditions of these racialised and oppressed groups should be researched and debated. The colonial image of the 'third world man' is often the one of the 'oppressor' who should be re-educated or changed (Abu-Lughod, 1999). One example, discussed in one of the other studies of this work namely 'Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work' (Jönsson, 2014a) is the social work discourses in which social workers see the problems and difficult living conditions of undocumented families as based on the responsibility of the fathers/men of the families. Indeed, the social worker quoted in Jönsson, (2014, p. 15) goes so far as to explain the undocumented family's everyday social problems linked to global structural transformations as patriarchal structures of oppression. Social worker, Eva, argues:

> They have many problems, I mean perhaps not the men, but women and children, who did not decided to leave their countries and come to Sweden. They have been put in this difficult situation because of the decision made by the men in the family. They have no choice. We try to help them [the women and the children] as much as we can.

Similar explanations have been ascribed to very different kinds of social problems of people with immigrant backgrounds in this work (Jönsson, 2013, Jönsson, 2014a), which nevertheless share their position in the superiority of the postcolonial, inherently West-centric perspective in the culturalised construction of 'the others'.

Such discourses of the traditional and irrational East versus the modern and rational West have a long history in the European intellectual tradition and in the European modernity (Kamali, 2006; Loomba, 2005; Said, 1978). The established West-centric approach of the development of 'the others' has been criticised for many decades; for its West-centric discourses in shaping development interventions in the 'third world' and for making both 'the West' and 'the non-West' as homogenous, essentialised, undifferentiated and fixed categories (Crush, 1995; Escobar, 1995; Young, 1990; Said, 1987). In this respect, among other disciplines, postcolonial studies have criticised West-centrism and the politics of representation in the ideology and practices of development mainly for its construction of 'the non-West' and 'the other' (Bhabha, 1994; Said, 1978; Spivak, 1999).

However, many global, national and local challenges to social work, such as poverty and destruction of local communities, are rarely analysed in relation to current structural socioeconomic and cultural transformations influenced by a colonial past and the conditions of the postcolonial present of the world order,

which serve Western countries' interests. The celebration of the singular Western modernity, which should be taken as a development model for non-Western countries, continues to dominate the debate on development and even its heir sustainable development. The debate on sustainable development often ignores the structural mechanisms, which reproduce global inequalities and non-sustainability; the West-centric essence in the globalisation processes with its homogenising development agenda and exploitation of many non-Western groups and nations around the world (Adams, 1995; McMichael, 2008). The recent increasing militarisation of the world and the change of undesirable non-Western regimes by Western and former coloniser countries and their allies show that the colonial era is re-established in new forms. The re-colonisation of the world is nowadays legitimised by 'the West's' 'democratic mission' in non-Western countries and entails the old colonial development discourses about the 'backward and traditional others' (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Kamali, 2012).

However, postcolonial perspectives and explanations in relation to global events and global social problems have been criticised. Many policymakers, politicians and even academics claim that it is meaningless to continue to define our globalised world in relation to the dynamics of European colonialism and decolonisation or using the history and legacy of European colonialism as the focal point of the analysis of current globalised problems. Critics argue that globalisation has so radically transformed the world that many of the central concepts such as 'centre' and 'margins', used in postcolonial studies, have lost their relevance in today's globalised world (Gikandi, 2001; O'Brien & Szeman, 2001). They argue that today's global and rapid socioeconomic, political and cultural transformations can all the better be described in terms of transnational networks, regional and international flows and suggest that the end of geographic and cultural borders and paradigms indicates a radical break with the perspectives of colonisation and anti-colonialism.

Although the term postcolonialism can be criticised for its suggestion of a 'post-era', which indicates the end of colonialism, it is still an appropriate term to use to frame a world order in which former colonial powers, which constituted the core of what is usually called 'the West', continue to dominate the world by old and new means. Although former colonial powers left many colonised countries and areas, they continued to benefit from their military, socioeconomic, political and even cultural hegemony and power. The modern colonialism, in contrast to the pre-modern colonialism, did not only occupy a country and take their lands and resources, but also restructured their economies in accordance to the economic needs of the colonisers (Loomba, 2005). This is a reason behind the dependency of former colonies to former coloniser countries' economy and society. Also the role of colonisers' cultural hegemony, including their language, for the reproduction of

colonisers' socioeconomic and political dominance over colonised people, has been recognised by early anti-colonial scholars, such as Frantz Fanon. Fanon (1952) claimed that the modern colonialism influences not only the people in the colonies, but also colonised people who are living in the heart of the colonial power, in Paris. According to him, learning a language entails learning its inherent power-structure and discourses, including discourses about a 'superior' Frenchmen and an 'inferior' African. Already on the eve of anti-colonial struggles, scholars such as Fanon recognised the global power and influence of colonial powers. The anti-colonial struggle was not only aimed at regaining the occupied lands, but also the occupied minds. According to Fanon, the anti-colonial struggle in itself emancipates the colonised minds from the colonised discourses of a superiority of colonisers and inferiority of colonised people.

However, many of the controversies around postcolonialism and globalisation has to do with the fact that globalisation has been defined differently depending on the definers. Many critics of postcolonialism consider globalisation as a completely new era in human history. Scholars, such as Beck et al. (1994) and Giddens (1990), are among those who believe in globalisation as a consequence of capitalism and modernity. Such theoretical assumptions are, however, criticised by others, such as Robertson (1995), who believe that globalisation is nothing new, but an integrated part of human societies long before the emergence of capitalism and modernity. One reason for the pre-modern history of globalisation is the global spreading of world religions, such as Christianity and Islam. Robertson's (1992, p. 8) definition of globalisation is 'the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole'. According to Robertson, the global cannot be global except as multiple versions of the local. Hence globalisation is always also glocalisation (Robertson 1995), the global expressed in the local and the local as the particularisation of the global.

Postcolonial studies provide important knowledge about the colonial legacy of the world and the development of an unjust and unequal world with real consequences for many unprivileged people. It also plays an important role in critically analysing the impact of the West-centric knowledge production about 'the others'. The question of the uneven access to the means to exercise power is central for understanding the current world order. Both postcolonial and critical studies of other theoretical approaches of global development improve our knowledge about the mechanism of the reproduction of inequalities. As Kothari (1988, p. 143) argues, 'where colonialism left off, development took over' in order to continue reproducing the colonial powers' privileges in former colonies. The continuation of the colonial powers' global privileges is reinforced by the reproduction of the 'colonial discourse' about 'the others' and a 'racist culture'

rooted in the legacies of colonialism and the Enlightenment (Eze, 1997; Goldberg, 1993; Loomba, 2005; Said, 1978).

However, it is also necessary to place postcolonial and development studies within the history of decolonisation and anti-colonial struggles and movements both in colonised areas and in Europe. The intellectual struggle against colonialism has been an important part of the struggle against the dominant and colonial discourse against 'the others'. It has also created alternative critical discourses and research traditions. It is intellectuals' and activists' struggles that helped making the voices of the oppressed heard, and it also helped us to understand the legacy of colonial structures in the world. However, I do not intend to defend postcolonialism as a 'meta narrative' of the current world, but as an attempt to grasp the complexity of our late modern world, and the mechanisms behind its global inequalities. It is difficult to understand the current debates in postcolonial studies without making the connections between political movements across the globe and the history of the social sciences in the West (Loomba, 2005).

In this work, knowledge and policies of the established West-centric approach of development are challenged. It intends to generate knowledge about the mechanisms by which the inequalities and injustices, which harms many people around the world, are maintained and reproduced. Such a standpoint requires revealing the ways and mechanism through which Western modernity and colonialism have influenced the production of knowledge including the knowledge of development and development practice. It is argued that any efforts of social work to re-envision the field of education and practice through the more theoretical attention to globalisation, global policies and power relations and how this impact on socioeconomic inequalities, globalisation has to be related to the capitalist system and the neoliberal ideology in a Western-dominated and postcolonial world. This is also important in order to understand the increasing violence, conflicts and wars not as an exception to the globalisation of modernity, but as an inseparable part of modernity itself (Appadurai, 1996; Kamali, 2012).

However, this necessitates going beyond simplified divisions of 'the West' and 'the non-West', as the ruling political and economic elites of many non-Western (postcolonial) countries share the main interests of Western countries as a result of the globalisation of capitalism and neoliberalism. The global monopoly of Western countries limits the possibilities of the diverse and multiple modernisation programs, which are influenced by the historical, socioeconomic and cultural conditions of each country and could help to serve the interests of non-Western people. As a result, the multiplicities of developmental patterns formed by local conditions are mainly ignored and the belief in Western blueprints of modernity constitutes the basis for international relations including the constitution of the

agreements and development projects launched by the EU and other international agents.

Therefore, local communities can never be understood only from its local conditions but based on how the 'global capitalist world system' works from the activities of the global development agenda in which the local is only an exception (Wallerstein, 2000).

EMPIRICAL CONTEXTS

Global inequalities and their local and human consequences

In this section, the global inequalities based on unequal power relations and uneven development of different societies and their consequences for local people and their living conditions is further discussed and illustrated. The established world order and global dominance of the West-centric development agenda and modernity and the unequal distribution of the world's resources have created tremendous problems for many people living in local communities witnessing the destruction of their traditional living conditions while the promised development and prosperities are not realised. Many people leave their impoverished local communities and migrate either to their countries' large cities or to Europe in hope of better life chances. In Europe they are often faced with marginalising mechanisms, which have resulted in strongly segregated societies. Increasing global migration and inequalities create major challenges for the established social work which is still very much guided by the traditional dichotomy of national and international social work.

West-centrism and the destruction of local communities

The capitalist world economy plays a central role in the process of globalisation and involves a hierarchy of wealthy 'core' nation-states which control and fragment other nation states outside the core, i.e. the so-called poor 'periphery' nations (Wallerstein, 1974). Global political and economic organisations such as the UN, the EU, the World Bank, IMF, and OECD are all controlled and influenced by influential Western countries and are reproducing global socioeconomic conditions of the world. The EU is a major actor which plays a central role in the process of globalisation. It increasingly takes the role of a federal nation state with global interests and has an enormous power to act, both within and outside the EU.

The EU plays an important role in the global field which McMichael (2010) calls the 'development industry', by which the non-Western countries are increasingly used as a laboratory of development experiments. Many such experiments have destructive consequences for local communities and create more problems for local people than they solve. The EU with its growing economic power is launching many development projects and making agreements with many non-Western countries and presenting them as an action of 'global politics for development' which helps 'poor' countries out of 'poverty' and 'stagnation'. This claim must be critically examined in order to increase the knowledge base of development projects and to understand their consequences.

Although many non-Western countries in general and former colonised countries in particular are categorised as the so-called 'developing world', they vary in terms of their socioeconomic structures, institutional patterns, socio-cultural backgrounds and political systems. This is mainly based on their colonial past and their multiple modernisation programs and patterns. However, many of these countries share a similar history of colonisation as 'by the 1930s, colonies and ex-colonies covered 84.6 percent of the land surface of the globe' (Fieldhouse, 1989, p. 373). As part of their colonial legacy they have been and are continuously popular targets for many development initiatives. A postcolonial world order has created a global structure by which many Western countries, based on their economic dominance and privileges and in cooperation with their non-Western allies, continues to launch development projects in non-Western countries. Many of such projects are legitimised as a way of helping non-Western and 'non-developed' countries to be modern and developed in accordance with the Western models of modernity and development.

Many of these disadvantaged countries marked as 'undeveloped' areas are at the same time confronting many destructive consequences of globalisation, disintegration of their societies and rapidly emerging social problems. Global social problems have tremendous destructive impact on disadvantaged countries in terms of destruction of many local communities and local structures. Globalisation has intensified the decline of traditional ways of living in many local communities (Alder & Sumaila, 2004; Dominelli, 2007, 2012; Esteva, 1987; Shiva, 1997). These development initiatives are mainly based on a biased and West-centric linear understanding of modernity, which is one of the main reasons behind the negative consequences of such projects for non-Western local communities (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). Development projects generally ignore the multiplicities of developmental patterns formed by local socioeconomic and cultural conditions.

Many of the traditional living conditions of people living in rural areas of non-Western countries mainly depend on natural resources, such as agriculture or fishing. These sectors, which are of vital importance for the long-term sustained socioeconomic growth of local communities, are increasingly exploited by international actors. Exploitation of these resources leads to destructive consequences for local communities' livelihoods and force people to become involved in other activities in their struggle for survival. Such realities have been studied from the critical environmental perspective, but not so clearly in relation to people's social conditions, although both aspects are intertwined. Environmental crises surely make the everyday lives worse for the local populations' access to basic resources, such as fish. However, environmental crises such as these are closely intertwined within the 'global capitalist world system' (Hornborg et al.,

2007; Wallerstein, 2000), which is a contributor to the emergence of such a crisis. In addition, environmental and socioeconomic problems for local communities do not just happen, but are produced and patterned by powerful and mainly global actors. Problems, such as unemployment, poverty, lack of health and educational opportunities, frustration and social tensions between the local populations losing their lands or traditional ways of income and life, and forced migration needs to be understood based on global capitalist transformations (Adepoju, 2003; Dominelli, 2012; Hornborg, 1998; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012; Khan & Dominelli, 2000). Migration (internal and external) in this concern is 'forced' because such migration processes are closely related to people's search for jobs and income opportunities.

According to social workers working in such areas, 'families do not have the money to afford their children's education and healthcare and are living under miserable and inhuman conditions' (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012, p. 514). They argue that the working condition for social workers are worsening because of the weakening role of the state and the little concern of the authorities and governmental organs for the increasing social and local problems. Therefore, many social workers are engaged in the traditional solidarity and social work practices organised by NGOs and religious groups (Kuruvilla, 2005; Sarr, 2005). Other studies show that social workers are involved in the formation of cooperatives by linking various stakeholders, coordinating activities at different levels, promoting collective action in meeting the needs of harmed and marginalised groups (Dominelli, 2012). Such efforts of social workers, serve to address global conditions of uneven development. However, despite the structural roots of many social problems, some researchers see the answer to increasing social problems to be organising local movements. They believe that many and small local movements will make global changes (Dominelli, 2010, 2012; Lavalette & Loakimidis, 2011; Pease, 2002).

Global conditions, actors and interests, which create or contribute to the emergence of social problems, must be critically analysed even when it comes to social work practice in local communities. This includes that social workers in their efforts to combat local problems based on global inequalities should consider the principal of 'thinking globally, acting locally'. This means that social workers cannot effectively work with local consequences of global inequalities without including knowledge of the destructive consequences of local development projects designed by those guided by West-centrism and a belief in the linearity of modernity and development. For example, the role of the capitalist world market in overfishing of African waters with destructive consequences for local fishermen and women needs to be critically understood in order to be able to work effectively against the exploitation of local communities. Even the EU politicians interviewed in one of the studies included in this work (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012, p. 510) admit

that there are such mechanisms behind the overfishing of African waters. The EU politician Anna says:

> I believe that the main objective is to get fish for ourselves. It's not to help West African countries. Documents can look very ambitious and good, however, this is about self-interest. And it's the same with the other partnership agreements. It's self-interest governing.

Such environmental and socioeconomic disasters have impact on livelihoods and local opportunities. So how is it even relevant to say that such unequal relationships belong to the colonial past? Is this socio-political control and economic exploitation of land and goods not a continuation of the old colonial relations? Fishing in African waters is a project going back to colonial times. However, people I have interviewed and learned from in local communities describe these development efforts as a continuation of colonisation of their countries. As Idrissa from Senegal says:

> Colonialism has not ended. They have just changed the process, to continue to colonize in a different way. One should not think that Africans are free to do what we want. It is not true. Powerlessness and dependence relations are produced and reproduced. Africa has been colonized and is now re-colonized in a different way where the sectors of fisheries and agriculture are just two examples of this (Jönsson and Kamali, 2012, p. 10)

By using the theoretical frames of multiple modernities, I argue in this work that this is generally a consequence of the globalisation of Western-centric modernisation programs and its various institutions. In a postcolonial world order, the West-centric development agenda in non-Western countries continue to enforce such development as a way to guarantee the reproduction of Western countries' socioeconomic and political privileges.

   A growing debate on development, its projects and practices and the need to create more equal relationships within development projects and programs has been articulated through various concepts such as 'empowerment', 'participation' and 'partnership'. This is mainly because of the failure of established development projects and the fact that non-paternalistic and equal relationships have proved to be difficult in relation to the West-centric definitions of needs, practices and goals of the projects. Although there are few studies which have analysed and theorised 'the problems of partnership', a common critical position seems to be that new terms, such as participation and partnership, serve as political slogans to hide other implicit and explicit motives of the donors and the unequal power relations

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in such projects. This means that there is a contradiction between the message of partnership and donors' images of self and partners, which portray a superior, active and reliable self in contrast to an inferior, passive, unreliable partner inscribed in the partnership discourse (Ericsson Baaz, 2005).

According to such perspectives, real partnership fails to be realised in practice simply because the 'developers' never intended to create a more equal relationship in which local actors progressively take the lead. In addition, it is well known that the majority of the dialogues about development agreements take place between elites where the representation of the targeted people can be questioned, and many at the top of development projects positioning themselves as market-oriented modernists. However, without saying that the perspectives of partnership always have latent motives, to reproduce unequal power relations, based on my experience of analysing many such agreements, they have more to do with strategies of neoliberal management for the development of 'non-developed' countries than to challenge unequal power relations (see also Crewe & Harrison, 1998). The most obvious motive for establishing partnership agreements is the desire to enhance the efficiency of development efforts in accordance with development models created by Western organisations and institutions. The partnership discourse in this concern is related to the West-centric understanding of development. As the EU's document concerning Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPA) under study in Jönsson & Kamali, (2012) show:

> Overcoming poverty and ensuring food security in West Africa are major challenges, both for the governments of the region and for international donors, such as the EU. But the EU's FPAs are not part of that problem. Indeed, they may be part of its solution.

Ownership and responsibility are frequently used concepts in relation to partnership i.e. partners should assume greater responsibility for their own development. The supposed lack of development is attributed to partner's dependency understood as the need of the implementation of the Western model of modernity (Kamali, 2006, 2012) in order to develop the societies and its people. Representations of development and aid usually feature Western countries doing the non-Western countries a favour; this is often accompanied by arguments that more (or less) should be done, but invariably along the same (modern) lines, usually communicated in terms of:

> If only these countries could get their act together, stop fighting vicious civil wars amongst themselves, throw out their corrupt governments, organise themselves

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more efficiently and, what's more, be on time for once – then they could start to make progress and modernise themselves' (Goudge, 2003, p. 6).

It is argued that the 'development industry' (McMichael, 2010), although it is increasingly homogenised, is too differentiated and heterogenic to come to the conclusion that development projects have done little to improve the lives of the targeted groups (Crewe & Harrison, 1998; Ericsson Baaz, 2005). According to such perspectives, assessing intentions is a much more complicated task than comparing policy with outcomes; such as the fisheries agreements disguised as 'mutual interest and key to development' (European Commission Fisheries Factsheet, 2010; European Commission Fisheries Policy, 2008) and their real consequences in destruction of local communities, increasing social problems and forced migration (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). However, I would argue that despite the intentions of such development initiatives such programs are encouraging people to view their existence and the solutions to their problems as in the hands of the modern development agents. Instead of seeking alternatives to the uneven and West-centric development agenda, new development alternatives, such as partnership for development, are used to reproduce the same view of the world, by, as Esteva, (1985, p. 78) has put it, to 'cover the stench of "Development" with "Alternative Development" as a deodorant'.

Another argument is that although it is with good intentions that development projects are launched and coordinated as a way to solve problems related to poverty and other serious social problems, the problems of non-Western people and their everyday experiences of unequal power relations are still not considered as our problem. Such projects are still based on the strong belief in the ideology and practices of a linear and Western universal modernity and development. This has resulted in the biased and wide-spread belief that the lack of development and modernity in many non-Western countries depend on the failures of those countries and people to follow the Western paths to modernity (Kamali, 2006).

There are multiple modernities and development paths within the web of the capitalist world system, to use Wallerstein's (1974) theoretical approach. Rarely could any modernisation project be launched by non-Western countries without the influence and intervention of colonial powers. As mentioned earlier, colonialism has been a major historical event which had changed human societies forever and created a postcolonial and unjust world order (Loomba, 2005). Colonisation largely refers to political control and exploitation of land and goods in countries outside Europe. However, colonialism is not only the conquest and control of the other people's land and goods, but also a restructuring of colonised people's and countries' societies (Loomba, 2005). It has been one of the most

influential historical transformations in human history with consequences lasting long after the formal end of colonialism.

Globalisation, community development and empowerment

The West-centric modernity and its neoliberal development agenda and practices, which have been discussed earlier in relation to 'partnership', have also led to the establishment of many development projects legitimised as 'empowerment' of otherwise 'un-empowered' non-Western people. In this concern, concepts such as 'empowerment' make up the core of the discourses on development projects. Projects such as these are growing in popularity in a time when conceptualisation of development has 'generally moved away from holistic theorisation towards more empirically informed and inductive approaches' (Mohan & Stokke, 2000, p. 247). In this respect, the new 'localism' in development studies tends to 'essentialise the local as discrete places, which host relatively homogeneous communities or, alternatively, constitute sites of grassroots mobilisation and resistance' (Mohan & Stokke, 2000 p. 264). This has led to the production of many empowering practices in social work, guided by the modern West-centric development agenda implemented in very different contexts. It has particularly led to 'the emergence of 'the local' as the site of empowerment and hence as a locus of knowledge generation and development intervention' (Mohan & Stokke, 2000, p. 247–248). The authors have identified two main strands of development thinking and interventions namely the 'revisionist neo-liberalism' and 'post-Marxism', which are relevant to discuss in this work.

The 'revisionist neoliberalism' is seen as the return of an anti-statist agenda. In early development economies, the interventionist state was assigned a key role in correcting market failures and ensuring economic efficiency, growth, macroeconomic stability and social development (Escobar, 1992). The neoliberal influences on the development theory brought to this a dramatic shift, as the state came to be seen as a barrier rather than a driving force in the development process. However, further development showed that the increasing socioeconomic gaps in societies undergoing neoliberal restructuring necessitate the intervention of the state. This has led to a shift within neoliberal development strategy from a singular emphasis on market deregulation to an emphasis on institutional reforms and social development (Peet & Watts, 1996; Sachs, 1992). In many Western countries, the transformation of the family structure and the labour market has already resulted in increasing intervention of the state in individuals' daily lives. As a result, professional social work has occupied a central role in the lives of many people who are the losers of modernisation processes and are facing difficulties in their lives. Civil society's organisations, usually called NGOs, have emerged in

order to compensate for the retreat of the welfare state in Western countries, and the lack of welfare state in many non-Western countries.

The policies of neoliberalism can in many ways be understood as an extension of the West-centric modernisation theory and its fallacies. Proponents of neoliberalism acknowledge that neoliberal policies do cause destructive interruptions and disadvantages to certain populations, but argue that these destructions will be helped through the economic growth that will eventually affect all parts of the society (Amin, 1997, 2005; Kamali, 2006). It is argued that, in 'undeveloped' countries, this growth will further lead to democracy and the protection of human rights (Ross-Sheriff, 2007). However, so far, the evidence of its consequences, i.e. destruction of local opportunities, unemployment and reductions in social and human rights, suggests that growing inequalities are not temporary, but permanent fixtures of neoliberalism (Amin, 2005; Ferguson et al, 2005). This has led to the increasing emergence and role of NGOs for compensating the retreat of the (welfare) states in many countries.

NGOs in local communities are widely regarded as empowering agents because they support local people initiating the development processes from the bottom up, as well as related participatory approaches. NGOs try to involve targeted people in the process through raising awareness, forming groups, etc. (Kang, 2010). Many NGOs are filling the gap by providing basic services to local people when the welfare states have retreated. This is showed in my study of empowerment projects in a local community in Southern India (Jönsson, 2010). The project concerned above all to help and improve the living conditions of 'the poor', by conducting monthly mothers' meetings in order to educate and motivate mothers in the areas of child and health care. This networking has led to some important improvements for the position of women. Kavita, one of the mothers participating in the study, explains how she experienced the meetings:

> Before starting participating in these meetings I never raised my voice, and never spoke to other people that I had no relation with. Now, it is different. Now I like to participate in meetings and interact with people, it is giving me good self-esteem (Jönsson, 2010, p. 401).

Another type of networking project discussed in the same study is self-help groups involved in microfinance programs. NGOs' microfinance programs are often used to provide basic services, such as income generation for self-employment, housing (Anzorena et al., 1998), health education (Pandey et al., 2012; Strobach & Zaumseil, 2007), community based savings and loan groups (Larance, 2001; Midgley, 2008; Sooryamoorthy, 2005). Such projects can provide individuals, families and the communities better economic status and improve living conditions. My studies

(Jönsson, 2010, 2014a) show that social workers and other actors in such organisations feel frustrated over the living conditions of many marginalised groups and the passivity of the welfare state for not taking their responsibility. Many social workers are involved in civil society organisations such as these and do an important social work including helping marginalised groups to cope with their situation, such as the lack of access to basic needs. Accordingly, NGOs strengthening and increasing role in community development should not be ignored. However, although leading to some improvements, such organisations and their activities also have their limitations and do not target and influence the structural and institutional basis of the reproduction of inequalities.

The development of a tremendous growth of NGOs in the current neoliberal era have created a rather uncritical celebration of such organisations and their work (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2007; Howell & Pearce, 2001) without considering the limitations of many of these organisations in supporting the West-centric development concept and the recent neoliberal transformations affecting many non-Western countries (Earle, 2005; Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson, 2014a; Kang, 2010; Mohanty, 1992; Tvedt, 2002). Many of these projects are characterised by a strong belief in the linear development agenda as the ultimate means for human and social development and welfare. The arguments are mainly based on the belief in the Western blueprints for development of all people and communities around the world (Kamali, 2006). In other words, development programs and projects using the Western models and designs will result in better living conditions and prosperity of people. It is also often assumed that it is NGOs that are based on their locality 'closest' to those most in need of development projects.
However, as Nyamugasira, (1998, p. 300) points out:

> NGOs have often created their own abstract constituencies; are socialized in the value systems and thought patterns of the global elite; and project their own construct of the issues purported to be those of the poor while they consciously or unconsciously protect their own interests and those of their kind. It is not a question of Northern versus Southern NGOs, as is often portrayed; it is the poor versus both.

Although many NGOs have achieved micro-level improvements, the systems and structures that determine means of power and influence and material resources locally, nationally, and globally, remain largely intact (Jönsson, 2010; Mehra, 1997). Embedded in the critiques of the neoliberal approach in development is that goals of social justice have been replaced by the goal of development, which is synonymous with economic growth, modernisation, increased production, privatisation and consumption (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Kreitzer & Wilson, 2010), as an adaptation to the capitalist agenda of the global market (Forrest, 1999). This is

what the contemporary agenda of global development and community empowerment means.

This neoliberal emphasis on community development and empowerment can be compared with the trends within more radical development studies. For many post-Marxists, empowerment is rather a matter of collective mobilisation of marginalised groups against the disempowering activities of both the state and the market (Friedmann, 1992). The focus then shifts to local political actors and a celebration of their difference and diversity rather than their common relationship to the means of production where social movements become the primary focus for political agency in society. Unlike the ideology of classical Marxism with a strong belief in the priority of class struggle as the only way for organising a better society and for the social inclusion of oppressed groups, 'Post-Marxism' focuses on the multiple power dimensions based on class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality for the reproduction of societal inequalities (Goldstein, 2005). On the contrary, the neoliberal model of empowerment, conceptualisation of participation and empowerment is based on a harmonised model of power. Power exists with individual members of a community and can increase with the success of individual and collective goals. This implies that the empowerment of the powerless could be achieved within the existing social conditions without any significant negative effects upon the established power structures and relations. Through the transfer of relevant knowledge, skills and resources within the existing socioeconomic and cultural power, structures are reproduced, rather than changing unequal conditions for marginalised groups (Inglis, 1997).

Accordingly, despite good intentions to 'empower', the real consequences of the neoliberal social work are often 'disempowering' and the promised development and prosperities are not realised (Babajanian, 2005; Dorsner, 2004; Jönsson, 2010; Midgley, 2008; Saraswati, 2005). Without redistribution of power through social and political participation, empowerment cannot be truly achieved. The radical notion of empowerment focuses on social mobilisation in society as a challenge to both the state and the market. 'Conscientisation' (Fanon, 1952; Freire, 1974) and collective identity formation around common experiences of marginalisation are key elements in this process. Although in a time of neoliberal influences and of the triumph of individual-based social work, the more radical concept and practices of empowerment launched by critical social philosophers, such as Paulo Freire, is marginalised other critical approaches have increasingly challenged the legitimacy of the non-realised promises of neoliberalism.

Postmodern and post-Marxist critical scholars have contributed to the emergence of a more emancipatory social work, which challenges the constraints of development and empowerment approaches by confronting the paradoxes, dilemmas, limitations and weaknesses of meta-narratives of modernisation

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theories and practices of social work (Leonard, 1997; Pease, 2002; Pease & Fook, 1999). Postmodern scholars claim that a reconstructed notion of empowerment to the origins of the concept introduced by Paulo Freire as a history of radical social movements, focusing on social justice, political and social equality and individual and group liberation from structural oppression can be a force for social change. However, the postmodern perspectives remain limited, because although they may achieve minor success at the micro-level, the systems and structures that determine the unequal access to resources and the means to exercise power remains largely intact.

As I have suggested above, social workers and NGO actors do not feel particularly powerful even in Westernising their societies – especially when the mechanisms of poverty and marginalisation are increasingly connected to the immeasurable more subtle processes of neoliberalism and globalisation (Jönsson, 2010, 2014). The established discourse of development which is very much guided by a neoliberal and West-centric understanding of global development and empowerment, is in many cases legitimising the deterioration of the living conditions of people living in non-Western local communities. Development projects in which successful development is synonymous with economic growth and consumption are facing many structural barriers in their emancipatory efforts and run the risk to ignore structural mechanisms which reproduce poverty and non-sustainability. Priyanka is a teacher who was involved in working with a range of social and economic development, improving people's health and organizing educational programmes in the projects, which have been studied in the article 'Beyond empowerment: Changing local communities' (Jönsson, 2010). She gives an example in relation to the well- established micro-credit organisation in the local community:

> All of the women who are members are of course strong and intelligent but they cannot manage tasks as they are illiterate, always depending on a literate, to maintain the reports required by the bank (Jönsson, 2010, p. 402).

Therefore, empowerment of marginalised groups requires a structural transformation of economic and political relations, i.e. emancipation in terms of critically analysing, resisting and challenging structures of power (Inglis, 1997).

The concept of emancipation has been used widely during the anti-colonial struggles in order to describe various efforts to obtain political rights or equality. This indicates that disadvantaged and marginalised people should get access to the means of power and influence in society and thereby free themselves from the oppressing and dominating structures and take control of their own lives. What both the strands of 'revisionist neo-liberalism' and 'post-Marxian' have in common

is that states and markets should not be solely responsible for equal distribution of power and equality and welfare growth, but local actors, knowledge and intervention are key features for development. Others argue for the existence of a post-development era that should be based upon localised and non-capitalist practices (Escobar, 1995; Esteva, 1987; La Touche, 1994; Pieterse, 2000).

Key political concepts of development arenas are decentralised service delivery, participatory development, social capital and social movements. All these themes and perspectives, which are over-lapping rather than mutually exclusive, hold out the promise of bringing about more localised, relevant and, ultimately, sustainable development. In such circumstances, there is a tendency to essentialise and romanticise the 'local' at the expense of local social inequalities and power relations, and to view 'the local' in isolation from broader economic and political structures. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the political use of 'the local' by various actors (Howell & Pearce, 2001; Ferguson & Lavalette, 2007; Mohan & Stokke, 2000).

However, such limitations of the discourses and policies of empowerment and development, which have been discussed so far and which also include a lack in awareness about the postcolonial and post-development critiques of the established Western development discourses, are not only reproduced by 'outsiders' of development interventions, such as international NGOs, but also by local organisations sharing the belief in the ideals of the West-centric development models, which lack the critical and postcolonial perspectives about targeted people in such programs (Jönsson, 2010; Nyamugasira, 1998). Social work organisations both in urban and rural areas are still highly influenced by the former colonial structures and ideologies in many ways. The colonial ideologies and perspectives are still in effect and they often glorify the 'West' by legitimising the dichotomy of the developed 'West' and 'undeveloped' and 'backward' countries in the 'East' (Goudge, 2003; Loomba, 2005; Mohanty, 1991; Said, 1978). Such biased understanding of a West-centric development ideology influence many non-Western people. In this concern, even many non-Western leaders of the development projects launched in non-Western countries position themselves as belonging to a westernising and modernising elite irrespective of their political orientations (Jönsson, 2010).

The global homogeneity of social work education

Increasing trends of globalisation have caused a lot of debate on social work education and practice, questions about the importance of unifying social work through the creation of global education standards to facilitate communication between universities and to formulate common evaluation criteria for social work

practice across diverse contexts (Gray & Webb, 2008; Hessle, 2001; Sewpaul & Jones, 2004). This in turn has raised questions about such conduct in relation to socio-cultural traditions and contextual factors that create different forms of social work practice, social policies and methods that may be specific to particular regions and localities. Questions such as these will surely always be debated.

However, the major international organisations of social work, such as IFSW, IASSW and ICSW, agreed in their strategic document 'The Global Agenda' (2012), upon the fact that globalisation has necessitated global standards in social work education and practice to respond to the local impact of global forces. It states that 'it is important to promote education and practice standards in social work and social development that enable workers to facilitate sustainable social development outcomes' (IFSW, et al., 2012, p. 2). Everyday global social problems deeply rooted in the structure of the existing global world order are defined as major challenges for social work education and practice in years to come. Accordingly, the global-local standard debates in relation to social work education and practice have expressed the importance that such standards are understood in terms of the dialectics of local conditions (Sewpaul, 2006). This means that the relationship between local concerns and global forces that affect them are addressed. It also means that social work curricula should be revised in accordance with the statements and recommendations of 'The Global Agenda'.

In many countries in general, and in Western countries in particular, social work education has aims to prepare social workers and social work students for international practice, international policy development, policy advocacy and professional exchange (Dominelli, 2010; Healy, 2001; Lam et al., 2007). The fieldwork placement of students of social work is recognised as one of the major components of social work education and a major determinant of its quality (Domakin, 2013; Lam et al., 2007). Just as in social work curricula in Sweden, many schools of social work in Western countries have international components in their programs, which suggest a widespread appreciation of the values of international education for practice. The focus is mainly on international courses, experiences, and/or exchanges that prepare social workers and students to learn about and tackle the social problems of the 'others' with new insights, innovative approaches, and demonstrated practices as globally aware professional social work practitioners. However, such practices are very much based on the traditional dualism of national and international social work and the social problems of 'us' and 'them' (Jönsson, 2014b).

This is based on the assumption that having been qualified in social work in one country makes you capable of easily practicing social work in another (White, 2007). This raises questions, in turn, about the recognition of qualifications acquired in a country other than the one in which a social worker practices and of

what is universal common in social work education and what is specific and different locally. It also highlights the importance of practitioners learning about local conditions, practice traditions, legislation and policies. The fieldwork placement in non-Western countries is still very much connected to the biased understanding of 'learning about the others' or what is called acquiring 'cultural competency' (Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Jönsson, 2014b).

Economic globalisation and the dominance of neoliberalism are playing an increasingly prominent role in the politics of universities and educations. The global alliance between universities and the global market that maintains and strengthens the link between universities and other networks within global capitalism, is in turn threatening the independence of universities. Critics of the economic impact of globalisation on universities and other educational institutions claim that in recent decades there has been a major shift in the vision and mission of universities. From being a public and 'free' arena, universities are increasingly becoming entrepreneurial institutions for the benefit and interest of dominant instrument rationality where the goal of science is defined rather by the global market and privileged groups than by the science itself (Bourdieu, 1984; Mohanty, 2003; Von Wright, 2005). This is a development where social sciences is expected to generate 'innovative and useful' knowledge, economic growth rather than scientific knowledge and social change, based on goals that are not their own but which they are expected to serve. Education and knowledge has been transformed into a commodity on the global market (Mohanty, 2003). This tendency towards a continuous rationalisation of efficiency seems to go hand in hand with ever-increasing economic growth as a main goal in our global 'capitalist world system' (Wallerstein, 1974). This is a transformation which has come to influence and challenge the educational system and its institutions in many ways in terms of competition, efficiency and arrangement with national and international settlements and needs (Becher & Trowler, 2001). In the context of higher education, such changes, coupled with the increasing globalisation, lead to the increasing 'degree of hierarchy, individualism and competition within and between universities' (Strömquist, 2000, p. 69).

The neoliberal market-oriented context in which educational institutions operate has come to mean an expansion of a 'managerial ideology' based on the fundamental assumptions on neoliberalism in which the ideological discourse of social change is in remission, i.e. 'the market reshapes 'the social'' (Dominelli, 2010, p. 58). It implies a move away from socio-political goals and aims of social programs to bureaucratic norms and the use and benefits of administrative techniques (Blomberg & Petersson 2010). In such circumstances, there is a tension between those who strives towards greater collectively and social inclusion and those who maintain distance by identifying and categorising 'client groups'. In

such circumstances we can see the tensions between the structural and individual perspectives of social work, as discussed in earlier chapters. In the latter, global social problems are portrayed mainly as individual and global power relations and privileges are mainly ignored.

As discussed earlier, social work and its education has for many years embraced the US model with individual-oriented social work and its casework tradition and the ideology of New Public Management (NPM) at an operational level. It contributed to the development of the so-called 'evidence based practice' (EBP) characterised by specialisation and marketisation. This neoliberal adjustment balance classic questions of help vs. control or social change vs. social control (Garrett, 2008; Kemshall, 2001; Matthies, 2009; Penna, et al., 2000). The triumph of managerism has narrowed the space of social work through centralisation, marketisation and privatisation of social services, through organisational and conceptual medicalisation, diagnosed-based social work, and the reduction of social work to administrative actions (Blomberg & Petersson 2010; Dominelli, 1999, 2010; Ferguson, 2008; Harris & White, 2009; Mishra, 1999).

As Powell (2001) argues, the recent emphasis on the ethics of and professionalism in social work has sometimes acted as a substitute for critical analyses of the managerial politics of social work. He argues that the political task of social work is to respond to both the reality of exclusion and the underlying injustices, which should imply a politics of conscience. Consequently, social work's espoused ideals and priorities concerning social justice, democracy, equity, equality and emancipation have been devalued to obstacles to economic development and market-based reforms (Ife, 1997). This has been at the expense of paying attention to relevant socio-political issues, established power structures reproducing injustices and global social problems in a neoliberal era. Many disadvantaged non-Western countries are, to a great extent, harmed by the economic globalisation (Beck, 1999) and the dominance of neoliberalism, together with the retreat of welfare states which have reinforced and increased global inequalities and social problems (Dominelli, 2010; Ferguson et al., 2005; Lyons et al., 2006; Sewpaul, 2006). In such circumstances, neoliberal capitalism has brought market discipline into social work at the local level (Sewpaul, 2006). As a result, it has supported demands for increased professional accountability, individualisation, the bureaucratisation of 'risk assessments' and managerial control.

A major challenge for many non-Western countries is the lack of contextualised education and knowledge about such global transformations and how they affect the life conditions of many people living in local communities. Social work education in African countries and India is very much influenced by modern Western countries' educational systems and curricula (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson &

Kamali, 2012). This is equally true even for other non-Western countries (Abram & Cruce, 2007; Alphonse et al., 2008; Sewpaul, 2003). Globalisation has not merely been economic, but has also meant globalisation of other modern institutions, such as democracy, military and educational systems (Giddens, 1990). In such circumstances, even social work education has been globalised and many Western universities' educational curricula have been adapted by non-Western countries' universities. The globalised education of social workers often fail to see the specific and particular situations and historical structures of local communities and does not adjust the universal education of social work to local conditions (Alphonse et al., 2008; Sewpaul, 2003, 2005). This was also illustrated by social worker and educator Diabira participating in the study 'Fishing for development: A question for social work' (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012, p. 515):

> There is no part of the educational courses of social work, or very little, which deals with the exploitation of Africa, local conditions, relations with Europe, the roots of social problems, inequalities, poverty, crime and so on. [. . .] The content of the education is very much the same as in Europe.

This refers to the westernisation-indigenisation debate which has criticised the relevance of Western social work to the non-West, 'third world' or 'developing contexts' in Africa, Asia and South America (Gray et al., 2008; Osei-Hwedie, 1995; Walton & Abo El Nasr, 1988).

However, critical questions about the relevance of social work as a Western invention, which is considered to be invented in a modern, developed and industrial environment and transferred to traditional, developing or industrialising countries (Midgley, 1981, 2012), run the risk of reproducing the same discourses they are criticising when using the same conceptualisation of 'modern', developed' and 'traditional'.

Such debates in social work often lack problematisation of colonial discourses such as 'developing contexts in Africa'. Inherent in the critique of 'professional imperialism' in social work education, has also been the concept and the discourse of culture in relation to 'the others' in non-Western countries and communities. Cultural otherisation of people with non-Western background has historically been a part of the legacy of social sciences, such as anthropology and sociology, in a scientific process of otherisation of non-European, non-Western, non-Christian people. Later disciplines, such as ethnic studies and social work studies, have also adopted such discriminatory 'scientific' perspectives and theories (Goldberg, 1993; Kamali, 2002, 2008; Razack, 2009; Sewpaul, 2006). Otherised groups of people according to postcolonial ideas, are highly defined and categorised in relation to their place of birth and imagined cultural properties, which entitles people to

belong to 'a culture' different from 'ours'. Such understanding of culture and cultural difference can be traced back to its colonial roots (Loomba, 2005).

There is a lack of theoretical discussions on the globalisation of the Western education of social work in relation to Westernisation of many non-Western and former colonial countries, and how the contextual institutional arrangements and historical specificities of non-Western countries are in many cases ignored or seen as obstacles to development (Kamali, 2006). Even though the discussions have focused on the export of West-centric knowledge to non-Western countries, the establishment of educational knowledge which does not include multiplicity and contextual particularities of many non-Western countries has not been focused on to any greater extent (Critelli & Wilett, 2010; Gray, 2005; Yan & Tsang, 2008).

The global commitments of social work, guided by documents such as 'The Global Agenda' for social work, encourages moving beyond the binary divisions, such as the national and international and 'ours' and 'others'' social problems. Social workers or social work students in many Western countries are not immune to global processes of change, but unavoidably influenced by global transformations and the globalisation of the neoliberal ideology. In Scandinavian countries in general and in Sweden in particular, social workers are mainly the employees of municipalities and the government. Many of them, interviewed in this work, (Jönsson, 2013, 214a) acknowledge the globalised condition of social work in one way or another, but think that knowledge about global transformations behind social problems 'is not very relevant to social work at the local level'. However, even if they are a part of the public sector and official authorities, they are equally a part of a welfare state which is retreating from its traditional central positions and responsibilities for non-privileged groups' living conditions in the country.

However, it is not only Swedish non-privileged citizens who are harmed by the retreat of the welfare state, but also an increasing population of non-citizen immigrants living in Sweden. Increasingly, many social problems in Swedish society today are rooted in processes of global change in the form of environmental changes, wars and conflicts, destruction of local communities, poverty, and forced migration. The situation of many of the so-called undocumented immigrants is one example of the fact that many local social problems are the results of global structural transformations, oppression, exclusion and poverty (Bloch & Chimienti, 2011; De Genova, 2002; Khosravi, 2006, 2010; Sassen, 1999). As discussed in the articles (Jönsson, 2013, 2014a), Swedish social workers can see trends of an increasing number of individuals and families coming to the Swedish social services as a result of wars and conflicts, destruction of local communities, economic crises in Europe, and climate changes. Many of these groups of immigrants, however, cannot realise their dreams and desires for better living

conditions and are facing marginalisation, unemployment, exclusion and discrimination (Jönsson & Kamali 2012; Kamali 2008).

Recent structural transformations caused by the globalisation of the neoliberal economic doctrine together with the retreat of the welfare states, which have reinforced and increased inequalities and global social problems, increasingly force social work in Sweden to recognise global processes of change. However, such global-local linkages are rarely part of the development of established nationalised social work discourses and practices (Jönsson, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). Social work practitioners in Sweden lack adequate knowledge about structural mechanisms and global socioeconomic transformations behind globalisation of social problems and social change-oriented theories and practices are still marginalised in the established practice of social work. The main body of social work education and practice is still very much influenced by nationalised, functionalist and neoliberal management ideology (Jönsson, 2013, Jönsson, 2014b). Social work with people with immigrant background is in many cases influenced by a 'multicultural' understanding in which such social problems are defined and dealt with as cultural problems (Eliassi, 2006, 2013; Jönsson, 2013; Kamali, 1999, 2002; Wikström, 2007). The cultural deviations of 'the others' as a mirror-image of the normal 'us' is part of a colonial discourse which has reshaped our understanding and image of people from former colonies (Essed 1991; Goldberg 1993; Loomba 2005; Mohanty 2003). Although the theoretical perspectives guiding national social work are heterogeneous and sometimes controversial, the theoretical legacies with their concepts and categories rooted in the colonial past have strongly influenced social work practices (Kamali 2002; Ranta-Tyrkkö 2011; Razack & Jeffery, 2002; Wikström 2007).

Culturalisation of social problems of people with immigrant background has influenced social work education and its practices since the Swedish 'multicultural reforms' in the middle of 1970s (Kamali 1997). Although the establishment of 'multicultural thinking' in Sweden in general and in social work practices in particular has created a more liberal attitude towards people with immigrant background, it has also reinforced otherisation processes against them. Culture has become a touchstone for belonging either to the 'traditional immigrant group' or to 'our modern culture' (Kamali 2002; Ålund & Schierup 1991). Such understanding of 'essential cultural differences' between 'us' and 'them' has also influenced many arenas of social work and led to the establishment of 'culture competency' in social work and many 'multicultural' projects and social programs conducted by social authorities. A general awareness of these issues was often apparent in the interviews in this work, with social workers working in marginalised areas in Swedish society, as Anita says in the study, 'Social work beyond cultural otherisation' (Jönsson, 2013, p. 164):

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> Many of these families [with immigrant backgrounds] have very complex social problems such as experiences of trauma, poor education, illiteracy, health problems and their cultural difference creates obstacles for social workers; we need therefore cultural competency in order to be able to work with them.

The implementation of social programs and projects in marginalised areas are often legitimised by the concept of urban development and combating segregation based on multiculturalism and the understanding of marginalisation as the consequence of individual choices (Kamali, 1997, 1999, 2002; Molina, 2006). Social problems, such as poverty, criminality and marginalisation are often described in individualised and culturalised terms. Such multicultural understanding of cultural diversity has reinforced cultural otherisation of many non-Western immigrants and has created a market for 'cultural competency' in social work practice.

In this work (Jönsson, 2013) I have examined several projects in marginalised areas working with 'culturalised problems' of 'the others'. In this short description, the organisation and Women's Aid Centre called 'Somaya', repeat the stereotypes I found elsewhere in relation to people with immigrant backgrounds in general and immigrant women in particular: that they are vulnerable and passive, cannot cross their cultural boundaries, and are in need of saving, etc. Needless to say, the existence of marginalisation and social problems is not linked to structural and institutional mechanisms but is presented as a result of the 'cultures' of their clients:

> We are able to communicate with [immigrant] women and girls in their own languages; we are experts in questions related to domestic violence, such as honour-related violence and oppression. Our aim is to be the first organisation in Sweden which offers guidance and protection to abused women and girls with immigrant backgrounds and/or women/girls with Muslim identity. We are the first non-profit organisation to increase the awareness of honour-related violence (Jönsson, 2013, p. 162).

It is commonly held that social workers need 'cultural competency' in order to be able to understand and work with individuals and families culturally categorised as 'the others' (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Dean 2001; Garcia & Van Soest, 2006; Kamali, 2002; Ortiz & Jani, 2010). In accordance with such culturalisation of 'the others', 'cultural competency' can be obtained in two ways: either through multicultural education and courses in 'cultures of the others', or by involving social workers with immigrant background in working with 'clients of their own'.

In this perspective there is a stereotypical perception of people with immigrant background.

Accordingly, not only people with immigrant background are reduced to 'cultural beings', but also social workers with the same background are considered as a homogenous group necessary for providing cultural explanations to immigrants' social problems. Stereotypical categorisations of groups and their social problems through cultural discourses are often legitimised by the need of social workers to highlight the uniqueness of each individual (Dominelli, 2002a; Kamali, 2002). Culture is often presented as a homogenous property of a nation which should be protected by the nation state. However, as Tomlinson (1999) has argued, cultures are changing, are contextual and not based on national or ethnic belongings. Cultural production, as a national arena engaged in the reproduction of majority groups' privileges, constitutes a battlefield in which inequalities are both reproduced and challenged. People who are categorised as minorities or immigrants are highly heterogeneous and engaged in the intersection of different power structures, such as class, gender and ethnicity. This forms the socioeconomic and even cultural place of each individual in our late modern societies. Many social workers working with individuals and families with immigrant background advocate 'cultural competency' in their daily work and people with immigrant background and their 'cultural properties' are seen as obstacles to change-oriented social work (Eliassi, 2006, 2010, 2013; Jönsson, 2014a; Kamali, 1999, 2002).

As a result of the globalisation of the mainstream and West-centric social work education, the perspectives of the global history of colonialism, slavery, wars and exploitation that have formed our modern world and its inequalities are lacking. It also lacks critical theories of how late modernity treats its own dysfunctions in 'the West' and ignores the huge problems 'the West' created for many non-Western countries in following the established notion of an imagined Western singular modernity. Therefore the perspectives on and knowledge of how such global structural conditions continue to guide social work education and practice remain mainly ignored. This is one of the major challenges for social work in the early twenty-first century, which requires responses to the postmodern/postcolonial critique and the growing awareness of different expressions of globalisation. Such a challenge is not only important for the improvement of social work practices in the non-West, but for all social work engaged in the realisation of 'The Global Agenda' for commitment to action beyond the division of 'ours' and others' problem. As Walter Lorenz (1994, p. 2) puts it:

> Going beyond the 'national level' in social work cannot be the personal hobby of a
> few specialists who are dealing with migrant and refugee groups or with ethnic
> minorities…or of a few idealists who want to promote international exchanges to

widen their horizon and to learn more about methods and practices in other countries. On the contrary, all social work is enmeshed in global processes of change.

Accordingly, such perspectives must be comprehensive, inclusive as a continuous overall learning process in social work education and not as an 'ad hoc' knowledge limited to specific groups of 'qualified' researchers and students, social workers or 'clients'.

Although modernisation and globalisation of the education and the profession of social work as a process of adjustment to the requirements of a globalised world, and the capitalist system have resulted in far-reaching global economic, environmental and social inequalities, it has also created spaces for alternative voices and discourses to be heard and have an influence. This includes other forms of political mobilisation, so-called 'new social movements' such as the environmental movement, solidarity groups, feminist, antiracist and global protest movements (Escobar, 1992; McMichael, 2008; Reisch & Andrews, 2002; Thörn, 2004), which also influence the field of social work. Although these are often regarded as alternative voices and 'subordinate knowledge' (subjugated knowledge in Foucault's terminology) in relation to the established discourses in social work (Hartman, 1992), these movements have increasingly come to challenge existing power relations and knowledge production in relation to educational discourses. Also in the field of pedagogy, critical pedagogy advocates the awareness that education at all levels is associated with a basic political position for monitoring and improving social justice. This means that education links theoretical knowledge with critical reflections and social actions for change.

Paulo Freire (1972) argued that all education includes both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. Freire's interpretation implies a critique of the perspective that sees education as a simple accumulation of knowledge whose purpose is to be sold on the world market in exchange of social development (see also Ledwith, 2001; Mohanty, 2003). Such a market-oriented understanding of social work education is one of the consequences of the neoliberal market-oriented agenda in social work practice and education which is dominant both in Europe and beyond.

Globalisation and national basis of social work

Social work in many Western countries has been organised by national governments and NGO actors. Social problems have mainly been understood as national problems which could be solved by national authorities and actors within the national borders of a nation state. Globalisation and its neoliberal agenda have, however, changed the socioeconomic conditions for the development of social

problems beyond national borders. Such globalised social problems challenge the way social work is committed to work towards social justice on a global scale beyond the division of national and international social work which is still very common, irrespective of its global commitments. Social work has taken important steps forward in accordance with social work and its late modern challenges and the way global codes of statement have been articulated in relation to this. However, how can social work with its roots in nation state based interventions and practices realise such global commands beyond 'ours' and others'' problems in line with global conducts of social work?

Despite some recognition of global transformations and increasing global social problems which influence the traditional methods and practices of social work, there are still many discrepancies between the established traditions and the theoretical basis of social work on the one hand and the increasing complexities of localised social problems on the other. In Sweden, with a relatively strong welfare state, social work is increasingly faced with challenges of global transformations.

Many scholars have drawn upon Ulrich Beck's work (1992) to discuss the transformation of 'risks' and global social problems in the current political context, such as 'the global terrorism', human trafficking, climate changes, and the 'mass migration' from non-West to Western countries. However, the focus on 'risks' has significant political implications. In the 'risk society' risks and insecurities are viewed as inevitable structural threats that can only be solved through cosmopolitanism, a world based on the negotiation of certain norms (Aradau et al., 2008). According to this cosmopolitan vision, 'the West' creates its own problems in Europe and worldwide, but also has their own solutions to these problems (Eisenstadt, 2002). 'More Europe' is seen as the one and only solution to the increasing globalised problems, such as the retreat of welfare policies, restriction of immigration policies and consequences of a neoliberal economic world order (Hansen, 2009). This notion of modernity and belief in the superiority of Western values and rationality is basically what constitutes the myth of West-centrism as discussed earlier, i.e. the belief that the 'West' and 'Western civilisation' has superior qualities compared with non-Western societies (Amin, 1990; Eisenstadt, 2002; Kamali, 2006). The 'Europeanised' asylum policy is a clear example of what the European cosmopolitans mean with 'more Europe' (Hansen, 2009). The West-centric development agenda for combating poverty and global problems declared by international organs, such as the EU, is another example (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). Another relevant example is when universal laws such as the human rights declarations are challenged when it comes to 'national missions' and national self interests such as keeping away 'illegal' immigrants from the borders of Fortress Europe. Europe has equipped itself with regional protection programmes, coast defence capacities against real as well as perceived 'national threats' and 'risks'. In

several countries, xenophobic parties have gained popularity supporting anti-immigrants ideas and control of borders. Anti-immigrant sentiments are increasing and immigration is framed as a threat to European 'cultural homogeneity', modernity and welfare (Kamali, 2008).

Forced migration from non-Western countries is increasingly presented in the public discourses as a major socio-political problem for many Western countries restricting their immigration policies. Many people who emigrate from poverty, conflicts, wars, and environmental disasters in order to find better life chances find themselves 'illegal' in European and other wealthy nation states (Bloch & Chimienti, 2011; De Genova, 2002; Sassen, 1999). During the last decades 'illegal immigrants' has emerged as a global phenomenon and a 'problem' for almost all the wealthy nation states in the world (De Genova, 2002).

Historically, the nation (welfare) state has been formed by the principles of the defence of the entitlements and privileges to those who are defined as citizens (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This is increasingly challenged when migration brings together people who are excluded because of their legal status as non-citizens. The central principle for the state 'welfarism', and social work, has been the right to citizenship, which entails the citizens' political and civic rights (Ife, 2012; Mishra, 1999; Van Ewijk, 2009). However, even within the context of welfare nation states, citizens' rights to social citizenship are circumscribed within power structures, resulting in differential experiences of social citizenship. In this sense social citizenship consists of both a status as a human being and a set of practices and discourses (Lister, 2003). The principal problems of social citizenship are deepened as the notions of liberalism insist on seeing some members as non-members even though the universal values and international declarations speak of equality (Wallerstein, 2003). In this concern, power relations, such as class, gender and ethnicity, can be sites of exclusion from experiencing equal social citizenship (de los Reyes, 2006; Sager, 2011; Zine, 2009). Such borders as well as the boundaries are constructed by national and in some cases international laws, practices, and discourses, which construct and reconstruct the 'illegality' of and the oppression against undocumented immigrants (De Genova, 2002; Khosravi, 2006, 2010). Immigrants defined as the 'illegals' are today living in many European countries and fighting for their and in many cases their families' survival. They are making the marginalised underground labour force of many European countries (Perocco, 2010).

Sweden as a relative newcomer among the member states of the European Union is also witnessing an increasing number of undocumented immigrants living and working in the country. The difficult living and working conditions of the undocumented immigrants, such as working in the so-called 'irregular market' without any access to legal support, generates social and health problems among

them, which require the intervention of social authorities and the welfare states. The undocumented immigrants have no unconditioned rights to such services since they are not considered to be 'legal residents' in the country. Lacking Swedish citizenship or residence permit in Sweden, they are mainly excluded from municipal social services, social rights and access to basic socioeconomic support, equal employment opportunities, health care, housing and education. Therefore, many undocumented immigrants have to rely mainly on the help from NGOs with limited resources. In such circumstances, social worker as a human rights profession is facing an increasing conflict between national laws and rules framing their work and the international ethical principles for social work (Jönsson, 2014a). In the study ' Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work' (Jönsson, 2014a) I examine the tensions between the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work influenced by the Universal Declarations of Human Rights (IFSW, 2012) and related international conventions and the social work practices with undocumented immigrants in Sweden. Some direct connections were made by the interviewed social workers when answering questions I posed expressly about what they perceived and how they felt about such practice challenges in relation to their role as social workers. In the study, social worker Nina said that:

> Many social workers are not interested; keep their mouth shut about injustices which they do not have to deal with, loyal to the organisation of social work. They can help, but they do not. If the migration board has made a decision they would never question the reasonableness of that decision (Jönsson, 2014a, p. 19).

However, others considered the discriminatory practices to be on the agenda – either on their personal agenda as social workers struggling for the anti-oppressive politics and practice of social work but above all on the structural political agenda. Social worker Johan illustrated in the same study his position to tensions between national laws and practices guiding the Swedish welfare services and the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work practical challenges:

> Although I am working in this system, I am willing to cross the boundaries, even break the law in order to help people. But it should not be a parallel activity that can continue forever without changing the structures (Jönsson, 2014a, p. 21).

Given the circumstances of social work, both as a global profession guided by the universal ethics and values and as the servants of the nation (welfare) state, many social workers face 'loyalty problems'. This is based on the discrepancy and sometimes conflict of interest in the realities of people's lives and the national laws

and rules structuring the official social work institutions and practices. Such conflicts of interest become apparent when official social workers meet for example undocumented immigrants who are not legally entitled to receive support from social workers. According to social worker respondents in the study (Jönsson, 2014a), there is no common sense, attitudes and working methods among municipal social workers concerning such groups in society and 'their' social problems. Many of them do not 'fit into the system' or the priorities of the government concerning 'vulnerable groups'. They are mainly excluded from the regular social work in Sweden and have to rely on irregular social work such as deprived voluntary organisations' function at the margins.

However, the NGOs and civil society organisation can never act as powerful and as effective as the welfare state organisations. As mentioned earlier, nevertheless, there is often an uncritical celebration of the large number of NGOs and its institutions and activities with conflicting interests. The neoliberal advocates of NGOs, also in the Nordic countries, often try to present them as a suitable alternative to the retreating welfare state. The neoliberal ideas about social work have since the 1990s influenced many aspects of the Swedish welfare state. Many economic reforms introduced by governments, both by social democrats and their rival right wing governments, weakened the Swedish welfare state in order to reduce the costs of governance (Larsson, et al., 2012). It was argued that the strong welfare state makes people passive and dependent on welfare subsidies (Kamali, 1997). Since the main body of social work in Sweden is the responsibility of the government and the municipal authorities, such a development has influenced the social work in both education and practice. Of course, the global triumph of the neoliberal ideology not only influenced Sweden, but also many countries around the globe.

RESEARCH METHODS

In the previous chapters, the broader contexts of the studies were discussed. In this chapter, the methodological arguments underlying the choices of the methods of collecting empirical material for the four part-studies of this work are presented.

Since this work is not a monograph based on a single study, but a combination of different but interrelated studies published as articles in peer-reviewed journals, several methods and techniques for collecting and analysing empirical material have been used. The main objective and main research questions of each study have guided the selection of methods. The methods of the collection of empirical materials used in different studies are qualitative semi-structured interviews, participant observations including, field notes and the analysis of official documents. The first study (Jönsson, 2010) is based on interviews and participant observations. The methods of collection and analysis of the empirical material used in the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) are interviews, participant observations and the analysis of official documents. The third study (Jönsson, 2013) is based on interviews and the analysis of official documents and the fourth study (Jönsson, 2014a) is based on interviews and participant observations. Qualitative content analysis has been used in all studies to analyse the empirical material consisting of interviews, participant observations and official documents.

The different studies included in this work is informed and influenced by methodological contributions of ethnography. Ethnographic studies are very much an interdisciplinary field including multiple sites of observation and participation that crosses the divisions of the 'local' and the 'global', the 'life worlds' and the 'system world' (Marcus, 1995). This is clearly acknowledged in this work where people's living conditions as well as the socio-political conditions of social work practices are contextualised and related to the larger social order and global structural transformations, such as the globalisation of a linear development agenda and the globalisation of neoliberalism.

In addition, ethnographic methods and strategies have proved to be very useful in social work research (Burke, 2007; Floersch et al., 2012; Lalander, 2011; McNamara, 2009; Pösö, 2010; Ranta-Tyrkkö, 2010). In this work, ethnography has relevance primarily for its holistic and inductive aim to capture several aspects and dimensions of global inequalities and their local and human consequences. This has been useful in examining the different and multilevel subjects in this work, including social welfare, rural community life, the consequences of development practices, the lived experiences and the daily life of marginalised groups. Ethnographic methods also provide valuable opportunities to identify the relations between theory and practice (Hammersley, 1990; Shaw, 2011). It helped explore the discrepancies and controversies between established theories and discourses of

social development and social work as integrated parts of its daily practices. This hopefully has important implications for the development of new theoretical perspectives and methods of practices relevant for the globalised field of social work.

Using a strategy based on a combination of different methods and techniques for collecting empirical material helps to fill the gaps and limitations of various methods and it is a fruitful way of capturing several aspects and dimensions of global inequalities, systems of privileges and power. It helps, for instance, to understand the multiple intersections and relations between social structures and personal biographies, between discourses and material relationships, activities and powers and between individual and structural changes whether local or global. It also urges the researcher to be self-reflexive about her or his research position in relation to the context of the studies. All scientific studies in general and the studies of human societies and of unprivileged people in particular urge researchers to consider the ethical aspects of their work. This will be discussed in the following section.

Ethics, social justice and social work

Social justice and the improvement of unprivileged people's living conditions are of central importance for social work research and methods of practice. This should guide all aspects of social work including the research and its socio-political outcomes. Many international declarations in the field of social work have stressed the necessity of the ethical principles in social work based on human rights and social justice.

Social work ethics have been widely addressed and debated by many scholars of social work. These debates include various perspectives on knowledge, skills and values necessary for a progressive work for the improvement of living conditions of unprivileged groups. Commonly occurring themes and questions concern the tensions and dilemmas related to the professional codes, methods of practices, research and theory development in social work (Banks, 2012; Gray & Webb, 2010; Hugman, 2003; Pettersson, 2013). Different discussions concerning social work ethics largely represent the contradictions between different worldviews, discourses, perspectives and orientations, which influence the practices of social work. Consequently, given the different orientations and traditions, there is no single ethical framework guiding all practices of social work, but a multiplicity of competing perspectives. Therefore, it is not clear how social work ethics and the Principles of Global Statements of the Ethical Principles of Social Work (IFSW, 2012) in its everyday practices should really be included in social work.

There are many reasons for a progressive and change-oriented social work to be critical of and reflexive to many established theories and practices of social work in order to develop new theoretical perspectives and methods of practices aim at the improvement of the living conditions of unprivileged groups. For example, one of the areas that social work needs to be a part of is structural changes constituting the national basis of social work practices, which are the basis for the inclusion of those who are defined as citizens and therefore entitled to help and protection and the exclusion of non-citizens living in the same country (Jönsson, 2014a). Social work should not accept the fact that the nationalist values of the national codes of ethics of social work in a country legitimise the exclusion of certain marginalised groups, such as undocumented immigrants, from all social service and human rights reserved for citizens. Such tensions between Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work (IFSW, 2012) influenced by the Universal Declarations of Human Rights and related international conventions and the nationally based social work practices indeed necessitate further development of the contested field of social work ethics. In order to carry out empirical research on ethical principles in social work a broadening of the field is required. It needs to go beyond the obligations of a state for its citizens with its focus on merely national professional codes of ethics towards more embedded and situated approaches, which include the government's responsibility for everybody living within its jurisdictions.

The research in this work is guided by the belief that social work research and the principles of social justice are closely interrelated. Such guidance for research and practice is also declared by international organs of social work making the commitment that 'principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work (IFSW, 2013). In such circumstances, locating ethical research within the frame of social justice imposes not only certain values on research practice but inevitably draws on specific beliefs about the world and how it operates (Humphries, 2008).

Throughout the work and the four studies I have tried to consider such values, including the structural mechanisms behind global inequalities and social problems resulted from global socioeconomic, cultural and political transformations. Social structures that are oppressive and are maintained through global privileges and power relations and supported by a range of legitimising strategies and interventions in social work are studied and addressed in various ways in this work. I have focused on specific topics of uneven global development as well as the unequal opportunities for people in need of social intervention in relation to the national basis of social welfare services. Taken for granted understandings and practices have been examined in terms of their relationship to wider global socioeconomic and political structures.

Such an approach to ethical research practice differs to some extent from the traditional scientific positivist ways, which consider the 'objective codes' of ethics for scientific research mainly to be the behaviour of the individual researchers. Ethics, however, according to the positioning of this work is not just concerned with methods to collect empirical material or 'data', rather it is fundamental at every stage of the research process, taking account of the context in which it takes place and the ethical dilemmas in the process of conducting research. Conventional codes of ethics are somehow of limited use for qualitative work like this where, for example, validity and reliability is considered differently. Validity as they relate to methodological concerns in qualitative research is about trustworthiness and representation (Dennis, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Manning, 1997; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). According to Deutscher, (1969, p. 34) validity 'addresses itself to the truth of an assertion that is made about something in the empirical world'. The empirical material in this work is generalised through theoretical description (Hammersley, 1990) by identifying patterns and processes of social realities. The notion of the 'neutral and objective researcher', which is widely used in social sciences including social work, is challenged in this work.

According to conventional methodological traditions and established 'field ethics', the best empirical material is produced through minimal involvement of the researcher and her/his interaction with the participants in the research. Rather, researchers should be 'neutral' and 'objective' and not ally themselves with any group and avoid choosing side when facing difficulties and inequalities. However, this is not very compatible with the values of social justice, where the researcher should always choose the side of the oppressed (Du Bois, 1966). Let it be social work research, practice or education. Paulo Freire (1998, p. 93) has summarised the values of social justice as an intertwined part of social work education, which also challenges the neutral and objective role of change oriented teaching:

> I cannot be a teacher if I do not perceive with even greater clarity that my practice demands of me a definition of where I stand. A break with what is not right ethically. I must choose between one thing and another thing. I cannot be a teacher and be in favour of everyone and everything. I cannot be in favour merely of people, humanity, vague phrases far from the concrete nature of educative practice. Mass hunger and unemployment, side by side with opulence, are not the result of destiny.

In this respect, social work research that simply measures the outcomes of social problems remains limited without considering the context of institutional and structural arrangements which reinforce inequalities and social problems.

Qualitative social work research is often criticised for inadequately attending to ethical considerations in its published works (Peled & Leichtentritt, 2002).

However, this is partly because of the standard editorial guidelines in many journals, which are mainly not compatible with many qualitative studies. That is why I try, in this part of the work, to develop a limited discussion of the ethical considerations presented in different studies included in this work.

As I have argued earlier, I try in my work to move beyond the positivist-constructivist dualism. In order to not get caught in the division of 'positivist' and 'constructivist' dualism, Peled & Leichtentritt, (2002, p. 148), identify the following five aspects, which should guide the research ethics in social work:

> (a), research ethics are an integral aspect of the research act and of each of the phases of the research process; (b), ethical research empowers participants, particularly those of vulnerable and disenfranchised groups; (c) ethical research benefits participants; (d) ethical research prevents harm for participants and involved others; and (e) ethical research requires researchers' technical competence.

Such ethical guidelines have been valuable for my four studies in preparing, conducting, writing and communicating the research.

Some of the studies are subjected to the Swedish act of ethics *Etikprövningslagen* (SFS 2003:460), 13 § and the act of protection of sensitive personal data *Personuppgiftslagen* (SFS 1998: 204). Such legal control aims to protect the personal integrity of participants in research projects where their ethnic background, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs and trade union membership are concerned. The application for the research in this work has been reviewed and approved by the regional Ethical Review Board (*Etikprövningsnämnden*) situated in the city of Umeå in Sweden.

All of the research participants and respondents in the studies of this work have received sufficient information about the aim of the studies, relevant themes and questions addressed. All participants have provided verbal or written consent to participate in the studies. All information given by the respondents are confidentially reported and research publications have been written in a manner that takes into account the information given by the participants, and the research results are not reported in a discriminatory or disrespectful manner. I have tried my best to be reflexive to my power position as a white privileged researcher from the 'West'. This awareness is important in order to not increase inequalities, which already exist when privileged people like me conduct studies in which unprivileged, marginalised and otherised groups are involved. It is obvious that I was not in an equal position in relation to my informants, such as poor women in the local communities in India or undocumented immigrants living at the margins of European societies. However, such a reflexive position is also important when conducting interviews with privileged social workers, a group that often bears the

burden of social injustices and inequalities in society but who often are highly criticised for reproducing the same. In many ways, the use of interviews and participant observations as method and empirical material require a high level of trust which makes the researcher ethically responsible to provide justice to the collected narratives of the participants of the research. However, given the values of social work research for social justice, the empirical material provided by the respondents must also be critically analysed. I do not believe in giving voice to just any stories considering all perspectives as equally valid, many of these voices themselves may be discriminatory, unethical and oppressive.

My experiences from conducting interviews in this work show that in many cases, already privileged groups and elites want their stories to be 'the real version'. In other cases, individuals saw themselves as self-appointed experts and representatives for the social problems under study while others' understanding of the same was totally different. Such dilemmas raise critical questions to the ethics of social work research when trying to understand the voices of marginalised individuals and groups. Therefore, I believe it is important to combine interviews with people in different positions with the methods of participant observations, which can make the material richer and provide information about being reflexive to the different living conditions and experiences of research participants.

Here I will provide an example from the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), which illustrates such ethical dilemmas. Many African immigrants risking their lives to reach Europe have comparatively high expectations on European societies which they think could provide them with equal rights and equal opportunities. They come to Europe to have a better life. However, many of them have told their stories about a widespread racism and discrimination which haunt them in their daily lives. However, it should be mentioned that a few interviewees did not agree completely with the majority, who considered racism and discrimination a problem in Europe. They tried to downplay the problems of racism and discrimination in their daily lives. The main reason behind that could be the fact that they did not want to be victimised, just like they said. However, one of the interviewees denied completely the importance of racism. The reason could be his strong belief in a linear modernity and global development project which would lead the world to a better place for all, including Africans. This diversity of attitudes and reflections on racism and discrimination should also be considered in combating the mechanism of the reproduction of inequalities and injustices, racism and oppression wherever they take place.

Methods and techniques for collecting the empirical materials

This section concerns the use of interviews, observations and documents as empirical material and discusses the different techniques of collecting empirical material based on semi-structured interviews, participant observation and field notes. The selection of research participants and empirical material has been strategic and target-oriented. Contacts with interviewees have been taken through personal networking and in cooperation with different governmental and non-governmental authorities, organisations, institutions and associations interested in participating in the studies, and who were helpful in providing further contacts. Collection of other empirical materials, such as official documents has been taken from official websites.

Given the interest in capturing different 'voices from within', the contexts of the globalised social problems both from the perspectives of disadvantaged people and of the actors of different social work activities, semi-structured qualitative interviewing has been a preferable core method in all of the studies. In addition, three out of the four studies have provided good opportunities for the use of the method of participant observation to explore the conditions and circumstances that shape the everyday experiences of marginalised groups as well as social development and social services. Taking field notes has been a complementary method for the documentation of interviews and observations as well as of personal experiences and reflections on the same.

Interviews

I have conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews with open-ended questions in all four studies**.**

The first study (Jönsson, 2010) included a total number of 27 interviews conducted with local service providers such as the project leader (1), social workers (2) and school teachers (4) who were involved in the local work with education, health and social and economic investments and development programs for families and particularly for women and children in the local communities of the Karnataka state in Southern India. I was interested in the interviewees' description and understanding of their work and methods of practicing social work, the objectives and models of social development in such activities and how such activities were organised and maintained. Because I was also interested in how individuals and families from local communities evaluate the effects of such projects and programs for their life conditions, I conducted (20) interviews with different women who participated in the local projects of self-help groups and mothers' meetings.

The second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) included a total number of 15 interviews. Two interviews was conducted with EU politicians providing information about the EU's arguments behind EU documents concerning development and aid to empower local communities and more specifically the EU's fishing and migration policies in relation to African countries. I also included 11 interviews with individuals with immigrant backgrounds from African countries now living in England and Sweden with experiences of fishing connected to the EU's policies, to find out how individuals and families from targeted local communities evaluate the effects of such projects and programs for their living conditions. As I was also interested in the condition of social work and social workers in such transformations, I conducted one interview with a social work educator/social worker and one interview with a social worker who could provide me with information about the situation of social work education and social work practice in relation to global transformations which affect the life conditions of many people in local communities and leads to increasing social problems such as lack of education and health care, criminality and forced migration.

The third study (Jönsson, 2013) included a total number of 10 interviews, which included discussions with social workers working in marginalised areas in Swedish society and the large cities of Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm. Interviews with social workers were focused on the way social workers understand the social problems of people with immigrant background in marginalised areas and how the perspectives of 'multiculturalism' and its working methods of 'cultural competency' is practiced as a specialised field of work.

The fourth study (Jönsson, 2014a) included a total number of 22 interviews conducted with municipal social workers (10) and NGO actors (12) with experiences from working with undocumented immigrants in the Swedish cities of Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm. The interview participants did share their experiences of the living conditions and social problems of undocumented immigrants in Sweden. They provided information about social work activities, practices and programs organised and maintained within the framework of the Swedish social care system targeting undocumented immigrants.

The numbers of individuals to be interviewed was not decided in advance, but as a result of the content of the information obtained during the process of interviews. This was based on the 'saturation' principle, according to which the researcher continues to collect empirical material as long as no more new information is obtained and the material is 'saturated' (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Semi-structured and 'open-ended' interviews were preferable because they allow opportunity for exploration and give the respondents considerable freedom to develop their reasoning and information on a given question or theme (Hammer & Wildavsky, 1989). I have used a focused interview guide based on simple and

factual questions in the beginning and more interpretive and critical questions in the end. The interview guides were designed so that they could be managed in 20–30 minutes if necessary. Even if a majority of the interviews in the studies lasted between 45–90 minutes this assured me to get the material I really needed if the respondent was busy and could only give me a limited amount of time. This happened in some cases. For example when some of the mothers who were interviewed in study one (Jönsson, 2010) had to hurry back to their work in the fields, and during an interview with a politician with a busy schedule in study two (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). These are both examples of circumstances which required flexibility from me as a researcher when participating in people's lives and everyday realities. To which extent the respondents are ready to communicate with you about different things that might be interesting for your study cannot be taken for granted or standardised.

The majority of the interviews were recorded by the use of a digital voice recorder. In some cases, however, it was difficult to record, for example, during an interview at a very crowded marketplace in London following a man's daily work at the market place in study two (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). This was also the case in study one (Jönsson, 2010) when interviewing a woman who participated in the micro-credit organisation in her house, where many people in the rural village were gathering and talking. It would be very difficult to sort out the interviewees' voices among the others. Writing field notes during and immediately after these interviews was an important supplement to interviews in cases such as these.

It is widely held that qualitative interviewing is an interdisciplinary core method for gathering in-depth information about the realities and experiences of individuals and groups. In the interactionist tradition this is often from a position where 'the primary issue is to generate data which give an authentic insight into people's experiences' (Silverman, 1993, p. 91). In doing so, I agree with the critical perspectives of Silverman, (1993) saying that we should be cautious about the 'romantic' impulse which identifies 'experiences' with 'authentic', in order to call upon interviewees' experiences and produce authentic accounts of social worlds. Bearing this in mind, the primary issue in this work is to understand the interviewees' narratives and situated knowledge of globalised social problems and its local and human consequences imbedded in different discourses, material relationships, activities and powers. In such circumstances, I hope to be able to generate knowledge which could be useful for the understanding of globalised social problems and their local consequences, for the improvement of people's living conditions as well as for social work activities. In this respect, as I have discussed earlier, I do not consider the social realities under study as only discursive constructions with constructed narratives. I have been inspired by the interactionist tradition, which argues that interviewees construct not only

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discourses and narratives irrespective of a 'real world out there', but are highly bounded with 'objective conditions of life' around them. Researchers from this tradition (Dawson & Prus, 1995, p. 113) do not believe that there is

> [a] singular objective or absolute world out there'... [they] do recognize 'objectified worlds.' Indeed, they contend that some objectification is essential if human conduct is to be accomplished. Objectivity exists, thus, not as an absolute or inherently meaningful condition to which humans react but as an accomplished aspect of human lived experience.

Accordingly, I see narratives, which emerge in the processes and contexts of interviews, as situated in existing social realities and imbedded in material relationships (see also, Charmaz, 1995). Sometimes the interviewees' situated knowledge is also influenced by so-called 'objective researchers' who have considered themselves as 'objective knowledgeable' individuals who are doing research on 'objective entities' of research, i.e. respondents. To illustrate such problematic circumstances, I will return to an example in study two (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) when Adisa, from Senegal said:

> I have been represented by people like you so many times before… I have met so many people who want to hear my stories, and it always ends up with the same - 'I know exactly how you feel…Everything will be just fine, when you return to Africa'.

The study involved open-ended interviews with individuals with immigrant background who had experiences of the EU's fishing agreements in some African local communities. I had, in cooperation with an NGO in Sweden, arranged a meeting with Adisa, who lived as an 'illegal' immigrant in Sweden, in order to arrange an interview with him. Once there, he had changed his mind about participating in the study. However, he provided valuable information about his observations of the 'objective researcher' who do not understand much about the daily conditions of lives of the people who are hiding from the police and trying to survive in a harsh and exploiting labour market.

Without trying to analyse and understand such resistance in its context, such narratives are at risk of being reduced to merely individual subjective expressions, rather than an insight into people's experiences providing rich material for the understanding of the existence of social realities. Adisa's reaction to the inquiry of participation in the study needs to be understood in relation to existing structural problems, such as global inequalities on the one hand, and discrimination and paternalism in the European societies, on the other. Such oppressive structures in combination with a life littered with difficult experiences, which forced him to

migrate from one country to another, would make his resistance more than understandable. Besides, I believe I was seen as a representative for the 'white host society'.

Accordingly, interviewees' response to interviewers is also affected by the position of the interviewer in the existing structural and institutional power relations. This means that the interviewee's perception of who we are and what we represent in relation to the structural and institutional arrangements of the society plays an important role for the collected empirical material, analyses of the material and consequently for the whole study. This is because a scientific study is as good as its collected empirical material 'data' (Haraway, 1988). Accordingly, the narrative outcomes of a study could be different in another context and it could be different if someone else was the interviewer (Anderson, 2003). In other words, 'the story is being told to particular people; it might have taken a different form if some else were the listener' (Riessman, 1993, p. 11).

In this respect, some scholars argue that in order to make legitimate knowledge claims, researchers should 'have lived or experienced their material in some fashion' (Collins, 1990, p. 232). Personal experiences of inequalities, marginalisation and discrimination based on class, gender and ethnicity, have been considered important and in this work I have tried to address differences and taken-for-granted privileges by focusing my analysis on understandings of what people who are facing inequalities and social problems share, as well as focusing on the differences between them. This includes my own privileges and the ways which they affect the research processes in different ways. However, other postcolonial feminists such as Loomba (1993, 2005) and Spivak (1999) have questioned such connections between solid determinations and individual subjectivity in the understanding of the histories and perspectives of marginalised groups based on class, gender and ethnicity. In addition, the existence of social differences and unequal power relations and privileges between the researcher and research participants do not automatically mean that the empirical material of the interviews are lacking in information about social conditions and important knowledge of the globalised conditions of social work. I also believe that such information emerges equally from the achievement of mutual understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee when discussing their positions and questions of the studies.

However, we cannot ignore that marginalised groups have insights and experiences of social realities that are different from the more privileged groups in relation to the question of racialisation for example:

> There are certain aspects of racial phenomena, however, that are particularly
> difficult, if not impossible, for a member of the oppressing group to grasp

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empirically and formulate conceptually. These barriers are existential and methodological as well as political and ethical. We refer here to the nuances of culture and group ethos; to the meaning of oppression and especially psychic relations; to what is called the Black, the Mexican-American, the Asian and the Indian experience (Blauner and Wellman, 1973, p. 329).

This must be equally true in this work. However, the question is not whether I as a white Western well-educated scholar should attempt to know the experiences of the racialised or marginalised 'others', but rather to contribute to the understanding of the experiences of such groups in relation to the themes and questions of the studies. It is also important to say that in this work, I am not 'studying' marginalised and otherised people but trying to understand and raise consciousness of the living conditions of such groups in the context they live in. In this respect, Margaret Anderson, (2003, p. 51) means that:

We should not assume that white scholars are unable to generate research with people of color as research subjects, but we must be aware that to do so, white scholars must work in ways that acknowledge and challenge white privilege and question how such privilege may shape research experiences' .

Therefore, I believe that what you do with your privileges in terms of fostering social justice and change-oriented practices is much more important than any attempt to maintain 'identity politics' suitable for 'ethnic projects'. However, as I have argued earlier, there is a need to reflect on the more complex power relations based on the intersection of class, gender and ethnicity for the reproduction of global inequalities in studies across differences and how it may affect the research process. However, as also mentioned earlier, given the conventional style of the majority of scientific journals, there is limited space to discuss such methodological concerns, i.e. to be reflexive in research methods and the processes of collecting and analysing empirical material. For example researchers do not usually report questions of privileges in conducting interviews, nor do they discuss interviewees' experiences about being interviewed or the characteristics of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. There are, however, others who consider the question of inequality and privileges important to be addressed in social research (e.g. Anderson, 2003; Goudge, 2003; Gunaratnam, 2003; Lalander, 2011).

In this work, interviews have been an important method to include different voices and perspectives on structural inequalities, community development projects and programs and the practices of social work, including its knowledge production. In such circumstances, the collected material of the interviews includes

not only narratives from marginalised groups in rural India or undocumented immigrants in Europe. It also includes narratives of professionals such as social workers, educators, project leaders, NGO actors as well as dominant groups and 'elites', such EU politicians. In different ways this has been a challenging project, to move between different social realities at local levels and to understand the role of global inequalities and power relations in the lives of the participants in the studies included in this work. However, making the connections between local social problems and their global conditions helps to understand and critically analyse the discrepancies and controversies between established theories and discourses of social development and its local and human consequences crystallised in many people's daily lives. Accordingly, politically correct public discourses behind the neoliberal and linear global development agenda concerning development for empowering local communities, have been critically analysed in this work (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). The ignorance of the socioeconomic conditions and political decisions, which is the basis for many inequalities and social problems, and explaining such problems by the discourse of the 'cultural difference' has been critically studied in this work (Jönsson, 2013, 2014a).

However, conducting interviews with people from communities with different languages than the researcher sometimes challenges the reflexivity of the research. In this work, I have used an interpreter only when conducting interviews in Southern India, in the process of the first study (Jönsson, 2010). All other interviews for the second, third and fourth studies have been conducted either in English or Swedish without interpreter.

However, there are some important discussions relevant to this work and the use of interpreter. Edwards, (1998) and Temple et al., (2002) critically examine the use of a interpreter and argue that this involves special considerations for the interviewer regarding both the interpreter and the interviewee as the research becomes subject to 'triple subjectivity' i.e. the interaction between research participants, researcher and interpreter. The authors discuss a number of related themes such as the process of otherisation in politics of identity, belonging, and the use of the discursive repertoire of 'us' and 'them'. I have compensated for the weaknesses of using interpreters by the method of participant observation for the first study. This minimises the shortcomings of using an interpreter for conducting interviews.

I am aware that in my study in Southern India (Jönsson, 2010) the different positions of the interviewer, interviewees, and the interpreter and their positions on the axis of power relations might affect the outcomes of the narratives in interviews. Furthermore, the goals of the interview might become distorted by the different positions of the people involved in the interview, such as when the interpreter has an influential role in the development project targeting groups in

the community to which the interviewee belongs. In this respect, without the use of a trained professional interpreter, there is a risk that the interview becomes a conversation straying from important subjects and that it becomes controlled by the interpreter rather than by the interviewer. This makes the reflexivity in such research important. Accordingly, as argued by Temple et al. (2002, p. 9) 'to assume that there is no problem in interpreting concepts across languages is to assume that there is only one baseline, and that is the researcher's own'.

Consequently, communication in interviews, in participation observations or other methods which examine the living conditions of people and the conditions and circumstances that shape their experiences across different languages involve more than just a literal transfer of information. It includes important aspects of conceptualising, categorising and incorporating values and beliefs. Using a particular language or form of language makes class, gender and ethnicity important aspects of identity; speaking for and translating others in interviews therefore becomes a socio-political issue (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1992). One example of this, which has been critically discussed in postcolonial studies, is that the English or French language does not have words or concepts to describe colonial oppression (Achebe, 1975). However, the colonial legacy is still significant as colonial discourses are still in effect in the current 'postcolonial' world order.

Field notes

The empirical material presented in the different studies of this work draws primarily upon the material which I have collected through interviews to explore the themes and questions of the studies. However, I have continuously been writing ethnographic field notes as an important research strategy to record the empirical material, collected through interviews and participant observations and my reflections on these events as well as the research process. The form, meaning, use and construction of field notes in research have been widely debated in different fields of study (Emerson et al., 2011; Sanjek, 1990; Van Maanen, 1988). Based on the different views of what field notes are and the skills needed, there are many different ways of writing and acknowledging field notes in research. Some scholars make sharp distinctions between records of 'data' of fieldwork and personal thoughts and reflections such as diaries. In this work, I have kept writings of my own experiences and reflections on the themes and questions studied, and on the material which I have collected. Using the method of field notes has relevance as a way of providing insight into the realities of the social problems and social work activities under study and into the process of doing research about global inequalities in itself.

I have included selected field notes in the texts of the articles (in the running text) which includes the following types of field notes: The daily processes of activities – such as visiting the everyday life of some of the respondents (undocumented immigrants) in Jönsson & Kamali, (2012) and following the local social programs of NGOs in Jönsson, (2014a); Special events – such as the mothers' meetings and micro-credit meetings in Jönsson, (2010); A personal/reflexive diary – which includes both my thoughts and reflections on going into the field of research, being there and reflections on my own role in the research process. Many notes are based on keywords and themes but also on relatively detailed summaries of events, patterns and structures, combined with my own reflections and reactions on the same. Strategies in taking notes have been guided by the research focus in the different studies, but also my own critical reflections on what I have listened to, participated in, or observed. The field notes contain many reflections and comments, also on my own role in the research process related to methodological and ethical issues among other things.

Due to the limited spaces in scientific journals, which do not give much opportunity to expand on the presentation of qualitative empirical materials, much of the writings that record what I have learned about everyday situations in terms of local consequences of global inequalities, unequal power relations and privileges which are part of our normal structures and daily lives, are not presented in the studies. For this reason, it is worth providing a few more examples in this part of the work.

One of the field notes written in London, June 2010, in the personal/reflexive diary, display methodological considerations of privileges in my research (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) about consequences of the EU's fishing agreements in African countries and forced migration:

> I am really not sure, 'How can *I* contribute to the understanding of the experiences of otherised groups such as undocumented immigrants? How can *I* realise the experiences of people who risk their lives in boats to Europe knowing that they may die on the way and remain anonymous as 'identity unknown' or merely named as 'African nationality' meanwhile Europe has equipped itself with more protection programs against such undesired immigrants? Who am *I* to do that?

I am in the position of a white academic woman living in one of the richest countries in a postcolonial world. For this reason, I do social work research from a very privileged position. Purely based on my citizenship and national belonging, I was privileged to move freely across countries to do research in marginalised areas and with people for whom such mobility is mainly a distant 'dream'; for the children running after me screaming 'An American, English!; for the young men

and women working in the fields eager to talk about the 'developed West'; the female teacher who cried and wanted to be my sister so that she could move to Europe. When participating in the local projects and ongoing activities and programs in order to collect empirical material, I was doing it within existing social structures of power and privileges. For example, there was an established understanding that whiteness is synonymous with prosperity, beauty and progress based on an established postcolonial and West-centric understanding of development and privileges. In such circumstances, being a 'stranger' – a white, well educated, Western woman – conducting research in local communities in non-Western countries have consequently implied that I was welcomed by many with open arms, however, by others with suspicion looking at me as an instrument of control and oppression.

I believe to examine the impact of the intersection of class, ethnicity and gender in empirical research involving themes and questions of unequal power relations (Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1995; de los Reyes et al., 2003) is often difficult. It demands recognition of the history of the world's global inequalities and its consequences for the realities of people's daily lives. I will not ignore the presence of gender as a structuring property, when a man engaged in the project in India suggested that we share a hotel room when visiting another project in another city, or when I was excluded from discussions about project activities where men are usually the ones to discuss and to take important decisions.

The following field note, written in Southern India in May, 2008, indicates the existence of the difference of colonial privileges even today. These notes were taken while conducting the first study (Jönsson, 2010), and after I participated in the follow-up work of the projects concerning children's and women's welfare in the rural areas:

> We [me and an Indian social worker] visited the Bodajjana Bande [the name of a small rural marginalised village] school today, to meet the children, the teacher and the mothers of the self-help groups. Poor Purnima was condemned for not taking her responsibilities of the improvement of the school and the children...The mothers were not interested in collectivisation, most of them were not at home but out working with stonecutting and agriculture... I interviewed one mother with eight children, also she was condemned ... for not taking her children to the school. Education was for her not the primary issue, 'but to survive' in her own words. Her children 'were needed in the agriculture...' Some tribal men with status promised us that they would 'do better' until our next visit. We were served tea in the school. Loads of children, as usual were gathered to see the white lady who had came to their village. I was angry. Before leaving a naked little boy came in front of me, staring at me. ... [the social worker] laughed and said: Look what a black child, he

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looks like an African, poor thing [...] I was angry. Maybe the teacher in Myasarahatti [another small rural marginalised village] can meet me tomorrow...

The contents of my field notes show several examples of how power relations, domination and oppression are reproduced, both through my own 'white' existence of privilege and by local actors who internalised the colonial discourse and privileges. The lack of a postcolonial and critical perspective among many local social workers, resulted in the use of colonial discourses, such as 'poor black people' and define impoverished people as 'ignorant and passive' in need of education without considering the social structures and barriers which maintain the 'poorness' of the villagers. The question of whiteness was equally an obvious factor both in relation to my own reactions to the curious children but also in relation to the situation with the little boy, racialised as 'the other' and as an isolated, inferior and dehumanised object by saying 'He looks like an African, poor thing ...'. Irrespective of shared colonial history and discourse, the privileged position of the Indian male social worker led to the reproduction of oppressive discourses and practices based on class, ethnicity and gender.

Another example from my personal/reflexive diary emphasises the role of 'normal everyday structures' for the reproduction of unequal power relations and privileges. These field notes are from April, 2010, when I was travelling to the Swedish city of Stockholm to conduct some interviews with individuals with experiences of the EU's fishing agreements in local communities in African countries (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012). The field notes are not particularly related to the study, but to my reflections on studying the social everyday life in open/public spaces (Madanipour, 2010; Yücesoy, 2006) on my travels preparing that study. The field notes are presented from the perspective of the third person (my own) in accordance with the guidelines of the edited book in which the article, including the following field note is published (Jönsson, 2012a, p. 114–115).

It is seven thirty in the morning, the day after her arrival; she is sitting in the Radisson Royal Viking Hotel's breakfast restaurant in downtown Stockholm, reading the newspaper and nibbling on a piece of toast. There are plenty of imported foods and vegetables from all over the world. What a waste, what a privileged greed. She, having a working-class background, cannot stop thinking about those have-nots who are sleeping hungry and dreaming of a piece of bread; there are not many of them in privileged Stockholm maybe, but elsewhere in the world. She takes a small sip of the aroma-rich Brazilian coffee and looks at her environment with its many lucky-looking women and men. Scribbles a few critical comments on a non-ecologically produced bleached tissue. She notes that all those who are serving the guests are women and men from the so-called 'global South', that is, India, Africa, Central and

South America, and Southeast Asia. The majority of those who are actually being served are white middle- or upper-class men from extended western countries. Europeans and Japanese dressed in suits, reading The Financial Times and Dagens Industri. While conversing about their businesses, they are grazing from the global buffet. Two men in suit and ties are sitting next to her. 'Any news?' asks one of them, who is not looking in Dagens Industri. She does not hear any relevant answer. Looking out over the hotel's restaurant, the man continues: 'By the way, we are at the Royal Viking Hotel. . .' With a meaningful smile he adds: 'do you see any Vikings here?' 'Well no,' says the other man and laughs loudly. She supposes that they define 'Viking' as a Scandinavian, an inhabitant of Sweden, Norway or Denmark, and normally male. There is no doubt that the hotel servants, those who pick up the guests' dirty plates and knives, clean their rooms, take out their garbage and take their orders do not fit into that definition of a 'Viking', and perhaps not even the well-dressed Japanese do. However, the Japanese are not categorized and otherized in the same way as people from the 'global south', since they are well-dressed businessmen, reading the Financial Times and sharing the same privileged lifestyle. She notices crew from Thai Airways sitting at two long tables having their breakfast. For certain they are not labelled as 'Vikings' either, but are categorized as a group who should welcome the vagabond 'Vikings' on their vacation to the 'Thai exotic holiday paradise'.

In open/public spaces such as hotel restaurants, it is relatively easy and unproblematic to take notes. However, it has not always been unproblematic to write field notes during interviews and participant observations. For example in the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), during an informal conversation while drinking coffee in the streets of London, I felt that it was inappropriate to write anything down directly, even though such meetings in several cases have provided me the most unexpected and valuable information. It is also relevant to say that 'it is sometimes better to establish a relation of mutual understanding or trust, and maintain eye contact, by seldom taking notes and not utilising a tape recorder during participant observation and interviewing as argued by Fenno, (2008). I agree. However, through meetings and discussions, which took place outside the formal set-up, I was on several occasions able to capture other aspects and dimensions of the interviewees' lives and experiences. In other more formal sessions it seemed quite appropriate to take notes almost throughout the session, for example, when participating in the networking projects of self-help groups in study one, (Jönsson, 2010) and when conducting interviews with municipal social workers and NGO actors in the studies three and four (Jönsson, 2013; Jönsson, 2014a).

My presence in local communities, participation in local events, my attending local social programs and activities and following the everyday lives of people has

been useful in examining the rural community life, development practices and social welfare, the lived experiences and the daily life of marginalised groups. I could pick up local issues and events of concern, partly outside the limits of formal interviews, where I had to merely rely on the respondents' own explanations of different things.

Participant observations

The method of participant observation has proved to be very useful in different fields of qualitative research involving observations of and involvement in the lives of people, providing valuable insight into everyday realities. There are many different approaches to participant observation, but usually they seek 'holistic', contextual and dynamic approaches to qualitative studies by emphasising the importance of analysing social change (Abu-Lughod, 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1983; Lalander, 2011; Whyte, 1993). The method links interpretative understanding of social behaviour, patterns and activities with explanations of its causes and effects. The researcher usually participates in the daily life of the group, community or organisation under study. A cornerstone of participant observation is meeting people in their regular environment, which means that the researcher goes to the people, places, environments they want to study.

In this work, I have used the method in three of the studies. In the first study (Jönsson, 2010) I participated in the local communities of rural Southern India sharing the everyday life of the community and the people. I participated in the daily programs and activities of the organisation under study. Such activities have been school activities for children, mothers' self-help groups and micro-credit meetings. In the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) I shared the everyday living with some of the individuals with immigrant background living as undocumented immigrants in England and Sweden. I followed the day-to-day living of some of the people and their work on the 'irregular market', a few of whom I later invited to participate in formal interviews. In the fourth study (Jönsson, 2014a) I followed the local social programs of some NGOs in their work in providing services to undocumented immigrants in Sweden. For example, I spent time with local organisations and followed their activities for undocumented immigrants providing medical help or assistance with legal issues, shelter and money for food or assistance related to their exploited situation on the 'irregular' labour market. I mingled with the visitors, organisers and voluntary members of the activities.

These activities illustrate different levels of participant observations which have been important as a complement to individual narratives. This has been useful in providing me with important insights into people's everyday social realities and

living conditions, and to understand patterns and dimensions of community life and social work activities. When participating in these activities, I have used some basic analytic operations carried out in participant observation, namely the selection and definition of problems and concepts, the check on the frequency of phenomena, and the incorporation of individual findings into a model of the project/community/activities under study (Becker, 1958).

One problem, which has been discussed in relation to 'traditional' techniques of participant observation, is that the researcher is mainly 'looking from the outside and in' to collect 'objective facts' (Paterson et al., 2003). This runs the risk of, in the words of Pels & Salemink's (1999, p. 4) 'essentializing selected traits of observer and observed, producing dehistoricized representations of either subject, or object, or both, that obscure, obliterate, or transform the relationship negotiated in practice'. This necessitates reflexivity at all phases of participant observations and to question personal beliefs and actions using critical and postcolonial perspectives (Abu-Lughod, 1988; Said, 1978). Accordingly, studies of social realities in local settings require knowledge of the global, historical and structural properties of society which influence people's living conditions and individual experiences, such as wider socio-political and historical relations. At the practical level, this means that participant observation is a multi-level method, involving complex analyses of individuals, groups, and communities (Dennis, 1993). I constantly moved between macro and micro levels, between historical and contemporary, structural and personal contexts, and the respondents constantly moved in their own narratives from the personal to structural level and from the past to the present. I was both observing and listening to features of people's everyday lives in terms of earning a living, family life, community activities, and experiences of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, injustices and discrimination.

Another, well known dilemma in participation observation is the difficulties in obtaining access to particular fields and social environments that may be relevant for your study. In addition, even if you have access to a social field, it does not mean that you will also have access to specific individuals. In my work, I have used key informants in order to find contacts with interviewees and research participants. The principle of selection of key informants was that they 'should occupy roles that make them knowledgeable about the issues being researched and be able and willing to communicate with the researcher' (George & Reve, 1982, p. 519).

In some of the studies the interviews and observations were supplemented by the use of official documents as important sources of information.

Official documents

In study two (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), I have used the EU's fishing documents, such as European Commission Fisheries policy documents and Fisheries Partnership Agreements to complement interviews and observations. Such documents have been important sources of empirical material to illustrate the core arguments behind the EU's discourse of global partnership and more specific fishing agreements (FPAs) between the EU and some African countries. The analysis of official documents guiding such development activities included selecting and reading official reports, policy documents and factsheets about partnership agreements and development initiatives in local fishing communities between the EU and African countries. I have argued that the types of discourses I describe in Jönsson & Kamali, (2012) cannot be separated from the goals and perspectives of such discourses and policy orientation, which are influencing the definitions of, as well as the solutions to, poverty. For example on page number 7, when the EU (2008) declares that:

> Overcoming poverty and ensuring food security in West Africa are major challenges, both for the governments of the region and for international donors, such as the EU. But the EU's FPAs are not part of that problem. Indeed, they may be part of its solution.

The examples offered in the study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) are taken from The Common Fisheries Policy, (2008) and the Fisheries Partnership Agreements Factsheet, (2010), randomly selected from many cases of the EU fishing in African waters during a 5-year period. I have not understood these documents as valid accounts of the realities of such projects and programs in local communities but rather as a 'documentary reality' (Smith, 1974), indicating that development discourses do not exist in a vacuum. Both at a conceptual and practical level, in such a discourse and neoliberal policy advocacy, the neoliberal and underlying West-centric agenda is downplayed and consumer-based development ideas are advocated. Further readings of official EU documents and reports guiding global development show that the discourse of development is very much guided by a neoliberal and West-centric understanding of global development, which deteriorate the living conditions of people living in non-Western local communities. Accordingly, in the study 'Fishing for development: A question for social work (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), the documents provide valuable material which can be analysed in relation to how individuals and families from local communities evaluate and experience the EU's claims and bureaucratically documented arguments supporting the view that such projects and programs are 'of mutual interest and key to development' (European Commission Fisheries

Factsheet, 2010; European Commission Fisheries Policy, 2008) and for the improvement of their life conditions.

To complement the source material of interview transcripts in the third study (Jönsson, 2013), I have used documents published on the websites of different organisations involved in 'culturally competent' social work programs and activities. In this study, such documents have been valuable sources of information for questions related to culturalisation of social problems of people with immigrant background and the establishment of 'culturally competent' social work projects targeting social problems of marginalised groups with immigrant background. The analysis of such documents included selecting and reading official documents about projects designed for people with immigrant background in Swedish society, such as Women's Aid Centres and other initiatives working with domestic and honour-related violence and oppression as well as health care and specialised social work with individuals and families with immigrant backgrounds. I have argued that the types of discourses I describe in the studies included in this work (Jönsson, 2013) cannot be separated from the 'multicultural' understanding and practices which influence the definitions of, as well as the solutions to, marginalisation and social problems such as poverty, criminality, violence and oppression.

The examples offered in the study are taken from the Women's Aid Centre and voluntary organisation 'Somaya' (http://www.somaya.se/), the projects 'Elektra', 'Sharafs hjältar och hjältinnor', (Metro, May 29, 2006), who work with so-called honour-related violence and, 'Orienthälsan' (http://www.orienthalsan.nu/) a centre for psychosocial and clinical evaluation which were randomly selected from several cases of 'culturally competent' programs and projects in Sweden during a 10-year period. I have understood these documents as valid information of the content of established culturally competent projects and programs, indicating the ways in which such activities would like to present the content of their social work specialised in work with individuals and families with immigrant backgrounds. The analysis of such documents attempts to generate knowledge about whether or not the established governmental and municipal project-based 'cultural competent' programs and activities are related to the structural and institutional mechanisms behind marginalisation and social problems.

Selecting and representing the empirical materials

The use of qualitative research strategies and ethnographic methods such as participant observations and interviews generate huge amounts of different and multi-level empirical materials. The large number of interviews, the comprehensive fieldwork and participant observations, documents and field notes,

posed a huge challenge to transpose so much empirical material into texts and further into articles in a sufficient manner suitable for publication in scientific journals of social work.

The selected quotations presented in the four articles, namely Jönsson, (2010, 2013, 2014a) and Jönsson & Kamali, (2012) are taken from the qualitative materials of interview transcripts, my own field notes based on my observations and participations in the everyday life of people, and from official documents. The empirical materials, which are illustrated in the texts, are the selected examples in which the consistencies and meanings of the empirical materials both in its manifest and latent forms (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) are related to the themes and research questions in the different studies. Emerging significant themes contributed to the outline of patterns which emerged from the analysis of the empirical material collected for each study. The analysis of the empirical materials indicates that the constant presence of global inequalities and how they are reproduced and patterned within the globalisation of modernisation and the 'capitalist world system' (Wallerstein, 1974) is mainly downplayed in many social work theoretical approaches and practices.

My studies confirm that many aspects of the organisation and education of social work are highly influenced by a West-centric understanding of the local and global social problems. The four articles presented in this work are studies which in different ways illustrate the problems of the West-centric 'modernisation of the world' and its local and human consequences. Many of the texts from the interviews and other sources of material reflect a number of themes, which are of central importance for this study. Among such themes are the creation and maintenance of the dominant images of the neoliberal and West-centric understanding of global development and empowerment and the apparent use of the colonial discourse in constructing 'the others' in need of development, education and social services without considering the social structures, barriers and power relations, which maintain inequalities and injustices, create social problems and limit individuals' opportunities to improve their living conditions. The studies also show that the West-centric educational programs, practices and the recent neoliberal developments create organisational and discursive barriers for the development of new strategies for social workers to improve the living conditions among marginalised groups confronted by the weakening role of the state in providing basic social services.

Analysing the empirical materials

The method for analysing collected materials consisting of interviews, observations and documents in this work is based on qualitative content analysis including its

discursive and ethnographic aspects, and was used in all of the four studies. Given the variation and broad representation of empirical material in the work, it has been a challenging project. However, in this section and with examples from different studies, the process of analysing the material will be discussed and illustrated.

As mentioned earlier, qualitative interviews, participant observations, field notes and documents generate huge amounts of empirical material and it takes a lot of time to transcribe and code such materials. I have used a selective method for transcribing relevant material throughout the whole process of collecting and analysing the material. This means that I have not only transcribed material merely during a specific 'analysis phase', instead the coding and categorisation of the material has been a continuous process, carried out also while collecting the material (Fasick, 2001; Lindsay & Connell, 1995). Accordingly, I have used selective coding, not transcribing everything in this work. However, I have gone through all material collected for different studies, listened and read through all interviews, field notes from observations and documents and basically summarised the content and coded it using coding frames for the themes of the studies.

Given the research questions guiding the work of the different studies, I knew which 'codes' I was primarily interested in. For example, given the interest in discourses, I had 'discourse categories', given my interests in the different activities and practices of social work, I had 'activities/practices categories', and I had 'social problems' categories with the subcategories 'consequences', 'responses' and 'challenges'. Furthermore, during the research process, I have gone through the empirical material many times in order to identify categories, concepts and properties and their interrelations. Inspired by Glaser & Strauss (1967) 'open coding' and 'constant comparison' has been useful techniques to identify general categories such as institutions, work activities, social relations, social outcomes, etc. (examples will be provided later).

I have used field notes during and soon after the participation in different activities and observations, to ensure that reflections remain fresh. I have reviewed the field notes and developed their initial impressions of the interactions and discussions with more carefully thought-out comments and analyses. After completed interviews or participant observations, I have listened to the digital voice recorder and have revised field notes and observations in accordance with the discussions and interactions occurring in the interviews and observations in form of a primary content analysis.

Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis is a method that may be used with either qualitative or quantitative empirical material and in an inductive or deductive way. Although the content analyses method goes back to quantitative research of the early 1950s (Berelson, 1952) it has come to be used in many qualitative analyses of data (Altheide, 1987; Budd et al., 1967; Desantis & Ugarriza, 2000; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Nandy & Servela, 1997; O'Brien et al., 1997; Patton, 2002). Qualitative content analysis was developed primarily in anthropology, qualitative sociology, and psychology and during the last few decades its use has shown steady growth in many fields of study (Neundorf, 2002).

The qualitative content analysis may be contrasted with 'conventional' or more quantitative content analysis in relation to collection, analysis and interpretation of empirical materials. Quantitative content analysis has its origin in positivistic assumptions about objectivity and has been used mainly to determine the 'objective' content of empirical material. However, qualitative content analyses intend, in many important ways, to preserve the advantages of quantitative content analyses but with a more qualitative interpretation. Accordingly, the method does not ignore objective realities and contexts, and emphasises an integrated view of social structures and personal accounts, discourses and material relationships. In this respect, qualitative content analysis makes it possible to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political contexts of the empirical material consisting of interviews, observations and documents and their meanings and consequences (Downe-Wamboldt 1992). It also includes a concern for the manifest and the latent aspects of the material in structuring and categorising the empirical material (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). The manifest content analysis focuses on the most obvious and straightforward meanings of a text, while latent content analysis is extended to an interpretative reading and captures the deep underlying meaning of the text (Babbie, 1992; Catanzaro, 1988; Morse & Field, 1995).

Usually, the themes and main ideas of the texts are analysed as manifest content and context information is analysed as latent content. The analysis also includes discursive aspects of the generated themes in order to provide a deep understanding of categories and themes which are generated in order to structure huge amounts of empirical material (Franzosi, 1989; Stone et al., 1966; Van Dijk, 1993). Emerging discursive themes helped to capture the relationship between the narratives of the interviewees reflecting the thematic subjects of the study. Examples of such discursive themes are 'the discourse of development' in the first and second studies (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), the 'discourse of partnership' in the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), 'the colonial discourse' in all four studies (Jönsson, 2010, 2013, 2014a; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), 'discourse

of cultural difference' in the third study (Jönsson, 2013), and 'the victim discourse' and 'the discourse of illegality' in the fourth study (Jönsson, 2014a). Qualitative content analysis can be used to document and understand the communication of meaning, as well as to verify theoretical relationships. Therefore, qualitative content analysis can be applied as a systematic and reflexive method for analysis of various empirical materials such as interviews, observations and documents.

 Qualitative content analysis consists of reflexive processes between concept development, sampling, collection and coding of empirical material and analysis and interpretation of empirical material. The aim is to be systematic and analytic, but not limited to methodological rigidity or what Bourdieu (1992) call a fetish of objective truth-seeking and evidence of what is studied. The research process necessitates reflexivity in different ways; for example, in relation to concepts embedded in terminology often used in official documents, public and social work discourses, linked to particular understandings of the world including normative judgments and loaded categories. Examples of such discriminatory categorisation in the empirical material are 'third world people' and 'illegal immigrants'.

However, this work is not based on a completely anti-categorical approach, which rejects any categories necessary for analysing structural and institutional mechanisms, such as discrimination or exclusion in its various forms. Categories are important to bring some kind of order to an otherwise fluid, moving and changing reality. However, they must be critically deconstructed and analysed in order to help understanding the reproduction of an unequal social reality. From this methodological perspective, the point is not to deny the importance of categories, but to focus on the process by which they are produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted (Davis, 2008; Lewis, 2000). This is an analytical resource using the method of qualitative content analysis, in making sense of the multiple and shifting meanings of social realities within empirical research.

The process of organising the collected empirical materials has included open coding, creating analytical categories and abstraction (Burnard, 1991; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Some categories have initially guided the study while others were allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. Thus, qualitative content analysis is embedded in constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings and meanings (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The main idea of the procedure is to formulate a principle of definition, derived from theoretical background and research questions, which determines the aspects of the textual material taken into account. Following this principle the material is worked through and categories are created. The clustering of categories such as 'institutions', 'work activities', 'social relations' and 'social outcomes' has resulted in the generation of themes. Illustrations of such themes are the following:

- Emerging themes in the first study (Jönsson, 2010): *'the position of women in the family and in the community'*; *'working and living conditions in the community'*; *'effects of micro-credit strategies'*; *'effects of project concerns children's and women's welfare in rural areas'*.

- Emerging themes in the second study (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012): *'destructive consequences of global fishing development agreements'*; *'destruction of local communities'*; *'migration processes'*; *'social work in local fishing communities'*.

- Emerging themes in the third study (Jönsson, 2013): *'the position of marginalised people with immigrant backgrounds in Swedish society'*; *'cultural otherisation in social work'*; *'intentions and consequences of cultural competent projects and programmes'*; *'the adequate knowledge for working with globalised social problems'*.

- Emerging themes in the fourth study (Jönsson, 2014a): *'citizenship-based rights'*, *'governmental respective nongovernmental social work with undocumented immigrants'*, *'tensions and discrepancies between nationalised methods of social work and global characteristics of undocumented immigrants' social problems'*.

As mentioned in the introductory part of this chapter, ethnographic methods provide valuable opportunities to identify the relations between theory and practice (Hammersley, 1990; Shaw, 2011). The importance of the inseparable relationship between theory and practice has guided this study, since the field of social work is often considered as merely a 'practical profession', which is not able to give theoretical explanations of social phenomena based on structural inequalities by its own theoretical activities. Qualitative content analysis aims to identify, supplement, and add theoretical claims by simultaneously obtaining categorical and unique empirical material for every case studied in order to develop analytical constructs appropriate for several examinations.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDIES

The studies included in this work are briefly summarised here in terms of main objectives, design and major findings.

Article one and the study 'Beyond empowerment: Changing local communities' (Jönsson, 2010) published in *International Social Work, 53* (3), 393–406 examines social work practices and their relation to the modern development agenda and more specifically the empowering potential of local social projects concerning social work for children's and women's welfare in rural areas of Southern India. The results of the study are based on participant observations in programs and activities of local social projects in local communities in Southern India, and interviews (27) with women (mothers) (20), and teachers (4) participating in such local projects and with social workers (2) and a project leader (1) involved in the projects. The material is analysed using the qualitative content analysis method. The main objective of the study was to explore the empowering potential of local projects concerning children's and women's welfare in rural areas of Southern India and the following questions have guided the study: 'How do individuals participating in the project evaluate their participation?' 'Are there any structural hindrances for the achievement of the objectives of the local project?' 'Does the project improve women's position in the local community?' The results of the study show that the empowerment projects in the rural areas of Southern India follow the established modernist understanding of linear development and empowerment which is incompatible with local conditions. Such projects mainly have their focus on the micro level, and the change of behaviour and knowledge among the targeted groups, and not on the change of structural conditions that generate social problems and injustices. Furthermore, the results of the study show that there is a lack of critical analytical and practical tools for resisting the structural mechanisms of marginalisation in order to promote emancipatory ideals and practices. The results show that although there were some positive effects of networking and the exchange of experiences for women who participated in the project, the structural and institutional mechanisms which reproduce gender inequalities and poverty are not subject to any change. It is argued that social work practices which aim to change the living conditions of marginalised groups should go beyond modern development goals and consider structural barriers which limit people's power and influence in societies. The study 'Beyond Empowerment: Changing local communities' has been republished as a 'best practice example' in an edited collection of international social work (Jönsson, 2012b).

Article two and the study 'Fishing for development: A question for social work' (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012) published in *International Social Work, 55* (4), 504–521 examines the role of social work in politics for global development and the EU's

fishing partnership agreements with a few African countries and its consequences for local communities and individual life chances. The results of the study is based on 11 interviews with people with immigrant backgrounds from African countries (Cameroon, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Senegal and South Africa), who had experience of fishing connected to the EU's policies for global development, now living in Europe (Sweden and England). Interviews were also conducted with EU politicians (2) involved in the EU's development aid, fishing agreements and migration policies and with social workers (2) who have worked in African fishing communities in Africa (Senegal and South Africa). The interviews were supplemented with participant observations and by visiting the respondents in their everyday lives and following their daily work. The results of the study are also based on analyses of official EU documents such as the European Commission Fisheries policy documents and Fisheries Partnership Agreements. The material is analysed by qualitative content analysis method. The main objective of the study was to examine how the EU's fishing partnership agreements influence individual life chances in a number of African fishing communities and if the agreements lead to forced migration from African fishing communities to Europe. Furthermore, the role of social work in such global transformations has also been explored. The following questions have guided the study: 'How do immigrants from fishing areas in some African countries experience the fishing agreements between the EU and their countries of origin?' 'How do the immigrants experience their migration to, and assess their current lives in, Europe?' 'How can social work play a role in working with the individual consequences of such global transformations?' The results of the study show that the EU's development partnership and fishing agreements have destructive consequences for African fishing communities, leading to increasing social problems in the local communities and to forced migration to neighbouring areas and countries or to Europe. Furthermore, the results show that for many immigrants crossing borders and entering Western countries often becomes a struggle for survival and many are facing marginalisation and discrimination living in Europe in their new countries. It is argued that social work should cooperate in alliances to change the West-centric education of social work, for mobilisation of people against negative consequences of fishing agreements between the EU and African states and for anti-discriminatory social work in Europe. It is argued that social work needs to be actively engaged in emerging global social problems and to work with their causes and consequences.

Article three and the study 'Social work beyond cultural otherisation' (Jönsson, 2013) published in *Nordic Social Work Research, 3* (2), 159–167 examines social work practices, programs and projects in marginalised areas targeting people with immigrant backgrounds. More specifically, the understanding of the social

problems of people with immigrant background and the need for 'cultural competency' is examined in relation to globalisation, increasing inequalities and marginalisation in Swedish society. The results of the study are based on interviews with social workers (10) working in marginalised areas in the Swedish cities of Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm and analyses of official documents published on websites of 'culturally competent' social work programs and projects. The material is analysed using the qualitative content analysis method. The main objective of the study was to examine and critically analyse the role of the culturalisation of the social problems of people with immigrant backgrounds as a basis for launching specialised culturally competent projects and programs and the following research questions have guided the study: 'How are social problems of people with immigrant backgrounds 'culturalised' and made different from 'our' social problems'? 'What are the core arguments for the establishment of culturally competent projects targeting the social problems of marginalised groups with immigrant backgrounds?' The results of the study show that 'cultural competent' social work practices and projects follow the 'multicultural' understanding of people with immigrant backgrounds and their social problems. Such projects mainly have their focus on the individualised and culturalised representations of social problems in combating social problems and work for integration, without challenging the mechanisms behind marginalisation and the social problems of many people with immigrant backgrounds. Furthermore, the results of the study show that it is commonly held that social workers need 'culture competency' in order to understand and work with people with immigrant backgrounds, which reproduce the culturalisation of people's social problems and the belief in the existence of essentially different cultures as an obstacle for the improvement of people's living conditions. It is argued that social work should combat the culturalisation of social problems as one of the obstacles for developing new methods of work that combat the marginalisation and exclusion of disadvantaged people.

Article four and the study 'Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work' (Jönsson, 2014a) (accepted for publication in *British Journal of Social Work, 44*(4), June 2014) examines nationalised social work in relation to increasing social problems caused by the last decades' socioeconomic and structural transformations and its consequences for individuals. More specifically, the working practices with undocumented immigrants in the framework of the Swedish social care system are examined in relation to the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work. The results of the study are based on interviews (22) with municipal social workers (10) and NGO actors (12) working with undocumented immigrants in Sweden (Gothenburg, Malmö and Stockholm). The material is analysed using the qualitative content analysis

method. The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of and the tensions between Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work influenced by the Universal Declarations of Human Rights and related international conventions and the social work practices with undocumented immigrants in Sweden. The following questions have guided the study: 'How do social workers apply the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work in their work with undocumented immigrants?', 'How informed are social workers and the NGOs of the problems of social welfare of undocumented immigrants?', 'Are there any social programs for the improvement of the life conditions of undocumented immigrants?' The results of the study show that the Swedish social work practices are controlled by Swedish laws and regulations which in many cases constitute obstacles for the recognition of undocumented immigrants' increasing social problems in Sweden. Many social workers controlled by the institutional frames of governmental social work exclude undocumented immigrants from access to welfare subsidies and social work practices. The recent neoliberal development and reorganisation of the Swedish welfare state, including social work, have reduced the professional possibilities for providing services to undocumented immigrants. Paradoxically, the same developments have created new possibilities for other actors such as NGOs and individual professional social workers to make alliances in order to apply the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work and improve undocumented immigrants' living conditions in Sweden. This has led to the establishment of some projects and programs aiming at helping undocumented immigrants in various ways.

The lack of clear laws and rules which regulate working with undocumented immigrants make municipal social workers take on different positions when facing the problem of undocumented immigrants. The results show three clear positions taken by municipal social workers: The first position, the *conformist position*, is taken by those who by referring to national laws and regulations legitimise the passive position of not helping undocumented immigrants. The other position, the *activist position*, is taken by those who try to find creative ways of either ignoring the legal limitations in order to help undocumented immigrants or to actively be involved in the debates and activities to increase legal protection of undocumented immigrants. The third position, the *middle position*, is taken by those who try to find loopholes in social work laws in order to improve the living conditions for undocumented immigrants. A general finding of this study is that there is often a lack of adequate knowledge about the global transformations behind increasing migration and the phenomena of undocumented immigrants on the one hand and the knowledge of the relationship between the Global Statements of Ethical Principles and the daily practices of social work, on the other.

FINAL REMARKS

Globalisation is increasingly including all countries and communities in a global overwhelming socioeconomic, cultural and political transformation, which influence almost all aspects of human life. In many ways, the last decades' rapid global transformations have awakened people, nations, and states to acknowledge the global roots of local problems, such as poverty, ethnic conflicts, environmental crisis, forced migration, unemployment and racism and discrimination. Policymakers, politicians and academics are highly involved in debates on how to tackle such challenges. Many of these debates place such challenges within the theory of globalised 'risk' factors (Beck, 1992). Risks, such as 'global terrorism', global warming and 'mass migration' from non-Western to Western countries are considered as structural threats that can only be solved through certain re-organisation of modern societies. This is mainly based on the continued belief in the rescuing and historical mission of the Enlightenment optimism and the West-centric modernity as the final organisation of society towards development and wealth. There is a belief in the 'self-managing' modernity, which means that modernity not only creates its own problems, but also generates their solutions (Eisenstadt, 2002). According to such an understanding, modernity becomes the destiny of human societies and the end of history, either in its holistic form (Fukuyama, 1992) or in its late stage (Beck et al., 1994; Giddens, 1990).

In accordance with the theoretical frame of this dissertation, such 'organisation of modernisation' refers mainly to a biased understanding of modernity as a singular, peaceful and homogenous process, which is universally applicable everywhere (Kamali, 2006; Tilly, 1975; Wallerstein, 1974). In line with such an understanding, problems which harm many non-Western countries and result in 'global crises' affecting 'us' in the West, are considered to be due to non-Western countries' inability to complete the process of modernisation. Modernisation is accordingly understood as a Westernisation of the world (Kamali, 2006, 2012; Latouche, 1996). Such established understandings of the world, also embedded in the grand narratives of the social sciences are widely communicated in the global media, politics and academia. Due to many uncritical theoretical approaches, which deny the influence of the colonial past and legacy in the context of globalisation, the analysis of global social problems is mainly carried out without recognising the strong imprint that Western countries have had on the global modernisation process in terms of colonial wars, violence and postcolonial oppression perpetrated by militarily and economically strong Western countries (Kamali, 2006, 2012; Loomba, 2005). These are structures that cannot be considered as belonging to the past but as present institutionalised power relations covering the whole spectra of globalisation and development. The belief in the 'Western

mission' of saving and modernising the world has created an established West-centric agenda of modern development. The global development agenda, often legitimised as various empowerment-oriented and neoliberal investment-related activities for the development of the 'non-developed', has rather resulted in uneven development, disintegration of many non-Western societies, economic crisis, increasing ethnic conflicts, mass unemployment and increasing poverty with serious consequences for many local communities around the world.

Two of the articles of this work (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), are based on studies of development projects highly influenced by the West-centric understanding of modernisation and development. Such projects have either been launched by the EU or by national actors, supported by international donors and NGOs. Such projects are highly influenced by the biased understanding of the linearity of modernity in which development and modernisation are seen as entirely Western models, which should be implemented in accordance with Western blueprints. National historical legacies and other context-specific circumstances and structural properties are either ignored or considered as a problem for development and progress. The consequences of the countries' colonial past, global structural inequalities, as well as local structural and institutional properties, which prevent changing local communities and improving people's life chances, are not influencing the organisation, design and practices of such development projects.

The design, ideological frames and practices of the first project in Southern India, which is studied in the first article included in this work, 'Beyond empowerment: Changing local communities' (Jönsson, 2010), were very much influenced by two modern perspectives of social work and development of local communities. The first ideological frame of the project was very much a Marxist/Maoist ideology with a very strong belief in the organisation of individuals in projects in order to 'modernise' them and make them understand the way their society could be developed. There was a mixed belief in the modern Anglo-American way of organising social work and a strong Marxian belief in the priority of economy and work as the only way for development and a better society. The concept of 'backwardness' was frequently used in a discourse of belief in development which other Western countries achieved. This was very much depended on the established understanding of modernity as a linear, homogenous and identical process of 'following Western examples'. The involvement of the NGOs with voluntary social workers was very much legitimised by a mixture of romanticising the deeds of the anti-colonial hero of India, Gandhi, and a Maoist ideological belief in mobilisation of rural areas and people for development and change. The modern idea of 'organisation of society to change people', discussed by Eisenstadt (2002) and Kamali (1998, 2006), highly influenced the development

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projects, which I studied, in Southern India. Social problems were often considered as 'individual problems', which could be organised away from rural areas, if only individuals, mainly women, participated in the projects. Structural properties, such as the uneven development of Indian society, its colonial past and the patriarchy, were not addressed. Paradoxically, the project of providing loans with low interest (micro-credits) to families, in order to help them develop their own economic activities, led to more problems for the families. Many men used the loan and spend it on alcohol consumption and women were forced to get help from literate people in order to manage the payment of interests and the loans. Although the empowerment projects have resulted in some socioeconomic improvements for some individuals and families, they have had many disempowering effects in local communities. As shown in a couple of studies included in this work (Jönsson, 2010; Jönsson & Kamali, 2012).

The second study, 'Fishing for development: A question for social work' (Jönsson & Kamali, 2012), examined the consequences of the development projects launched by the EU in some African countries. The shortage of fish in European waters forces the EU to search for fish in other parts of the world. Countries with huge economic problems and which are in need of international investments become so-called 'partners' in such fishing projects. The fishing projects, which EU legitimises as sustainable actions for developing African countries, have destructive consequences for many local families who have lived off fishing for centuries. Losing this possibility to support themselves, many leave the small fishing communities and move to large cities in search of better life chances. However, the large cities do not have enough work opportunities to offer all immigrants from rural and fishing communities. Some decide to leave their local communities and immigrate to Europe to find a job and income opportunity and to be able to send money back to their families who are left behind. In many cases the development projects lead to the destruction of local communities, increasing poverty, separation of families and forced migration.

The failure of many development projects which prove themselves to be ineffective in combating poverty and structural inequalities in many local communities around the world, have adopted new discourses and concepts. One such concept is sustainable development which has been well received in the discourse of development supposed to solve the development problems of un-developed, as well as developed, countries, such as negative socioeconomic effects on local communities and environmental problems. However, in accordance with the theoretical and ideological basis of the modern development agenda the success of mainstream sustainable development is in Adams (1995, p. 93) words 'due very largely to the compability of the technocratic, managerial, capitalist and modernist ideology it draws from northern environmentalism with Western

economic development theory and development practice. Sustainable development has become the celebration of innovative ideas of 'green capitalist' consumer-based development (Bruno & Karliner, 2002; Jaffee, 2007) guided by a neoliberal and West-centric understanding of global development rather than a movement based on global solidarity and a promotion of equality and social justice for everybody, irrespective of their place of birth and nationality. Many of the discussions on new challenges for sustainable development focus on the symptoms rather than the causes of the problems, which harm many people around the globe. Social problems are considered as empirically local and individual facts, without much connection to structural conditions and the neoliberal re-organisations and transformations of many societies.

Recent neoliberal transformations have not only influenced non-Western countries, but also Western countries, such as Sweden. The neoliberal reforms since the 1990s have also led to the retreat of the Swedish welfare state as one of the most developed welfare states in the world. Privatisation of the welfare state and market oriented reforms not only influence Swedish citizens, but also many immigrants who comes to Sweden in search of a better life. Many of those leaving their impoverished local communities in hope of better life chances in Sweden find themselves 'illegal'. In one of the studies included in this work, namely 'Local reactions to global problems: Undocumented immigrants and social work' (Jönsson, 2014a) I have studied the Swedish social work in relation to undocumented immigrants. The result shows that the Swedish social work is not adjusted to new global challenges affecting the organisation and practices of social work. Social workers claim that it is not only the organisation and practices of the municipal and governmental social work in particular, and the welfare state in general that are not adjusted to new global social problems and challenges, but also the knowledge in the profession of social work. The education of social workers in Sweden is very much structured in accordance with the Swedish traditional society and welfare state. Social problems have usually been considered to have national roots and the 'clients' to be Swedes. The laws and rules structuring social work in Sweden are very much based on the concept of citizenship and residence permit in Sweden. Therefore, the main body of the Swedish education and practice of social work is mainly national with minor international content and relevance.

In a time of neoliberal globalisation and reorganisation of societies, increasing social problems and disintegration of societies are related to the colonial discourse of 'cultural difference' among people. The third article, 'Social work beyond culturalisation' (Jönsson, 2013), examines social work practices in relation to globalisation and local social problems. It focuses on the way 'culture' is made responsible for the problems of people with immigrant backgrounds. Globalisation

has truly changed the field of social work and increasingly makes the traditional practice of social work irrelevant in many cases because of the emergence of new social problems with global roots. The contexts of social work practice are increasingly becoming glocal, to use Roland Robertson's (1995) theoretical approach to globalisation. The glocality of the context of social problems indicates the integrated and inseparable relations between the local/national and the global transformations. Any overemphasis on the local or the global as separated entities risks marginalising real contexts of social work. The increasing immigration from non-Western countries to the EU countries including Sweden is clearly rooted in global transformations. However, the established practices and their theoretical frames of social work with people with immigrant backgrounds are in many cases guided by a 'multicultural' understanding of marginalised people and their social problems. Culturalisation of the social problems of the 'others', who are considered to have unchangeable cultural properties and to be essentially different from 'our modern culture' hides a critical discussion of the West-centric understandings of the creation of global inequalities and structural and institutional mechanisms behind marginalisation and social problems. This study critically analyses the established perspective of 'multiculturalism' and its working method of 'cultural competency' in social work, almost irrespective of structural and institutional mechanisms of exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination facing many people with immigrant backgrounds. In the study of 'cultural competency' in daily social work practices in Sweden, I found that social work practices with people with immigrant backgrounds are mainly West-centric and culturalised and lack the global and critical perspective. Although increasing globalisation and migration necessitate new knowledge and practical methods in order to be able to work with the glocal problems of many people in Sweden today, the established traditional practices of social work in Sweden are still very much connected to traditional and national methods. It is argued that the Swedish social workers should locate their practices in the current global contexts of inequalities and with critical and reflexive perspectives address the relations between local and individual experiences and wider global transformations behind the reproduction of inequalities.

Why is this important? The answer could be found in the discrepancies between globalised social problems and existing national and West-centric solutions. Rapid global transformations influence every corner of the globe and make existing national solutions to globalised social problems not only ineffective, but also in many cases discriminatory and oppressive. Many national social work interventions against social problems with global roots, such as the social problems of undocumented immigrants, become oppressive and excluding and thereby reproduce discriminatory structures and institutional properties of Swedish

society. That is why the taken for granted theories, understandings and practices of social work should be examined for their relationship to wider structural and institutional arrangements of society.

The main objective of the dissertation was to examine the consequences of recent neoliberal globalisation based on the belief in *a* single and West-centric modernity and development agenda and their consequences for social work facing increasing global inequalities. Although many social problems are experienced locally, they have global roots and are reinforced by the triumph of neoliberalism and uncontrolled economic globalisation of the recent decades. Such problems do not only exist in non-Western countries, but are also increasingly influencing Western countries' societies. The shortcomings of the established nationalised social work in many Western countries, including Sweden, are reinforcing by the recent neoliberal policies and the retreat of the welfare states.

It is argued that many development projects and practices either are not fruitful for targeted groups and communities or result in destructive consequences for the people's living conditions and opportunities. This is mainly based on the biased West-centric understanding of a global linear modernity, which ignores any local structure and the socio-cultural properties of non-Western countries and communities. A couple of the studies in this work also show the lack of adequate knowledge among social workers in Western countries when confronted with the consequences of an unequal world order. For example, the national and West-centric organisation of social work in Sweden makes it incompatible and inadequate for working with new glocal social problems, such as working with the increasing social problems of individuals and families with immigrant backgrounds in general, and with undocumented immigrants, in particular. Consequently, in many cases the established practices of social work collide with the International Declarations of Human Rights and its related conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This has affected both the organisation and the structure of social work education and practice in such a way that it ignores the Global Statements of Ethical Principles of Social Work and fundamental principles of social justice, which include every human being irrespective of their place of birth, citizenship and other discriminatory categorisations.

By the use of theories of multiple modernities, postcolonialism and critical development studies and its empirical research, this work provides new perspectives on the late modern global challenges for social work. New challenges need alternative theoretical perspectives, new methods of practice and social workers' reflexive and critical position in relation to the established theories, methods and practices of social work. Such a position also necessitates local concerns about the global conditions of people's life chances. In other words, the

slogans of 'thinking globally and acting locally' should be an important guidance for social workers around the world. Social work will then be able to play an effective role in combating social problems and otherisation, marginalisation and increasing inequalities in a globalised world by acknowledging and practicing the following:

- *Multilevel social work practice*

Although social work has always been part of social movements for the improvement of people's living conditions in many countries, it has been marginalised in the socio-political debates on globalised social problems and their local consequences. The established nationalised organisation of social work practice in individual, group and structure-based levels is no longer sufficient in relation to new and globalised social problems where these levels have become increasingly interwoven. Social problems of individuals in a local context are closely intertwined with the global structures and institutional arrangements of any society. For example, when undocumented immigrants are denied welfare subsidies or health care based on their citizenship and legal status, social workers should both try to influence political decision-making to change such discriminatory laws, and simultaneously be involved in improving the living conditions of undocumented individuals and families.

- *Social work in global alliances*

Many local social development projects and initiatives are legitimised as actions for changing local structures and improving targeted people's lives. Although, such projects may achieve some local improvements, they do not affect the established structural conditions of inequalities. For example, providing micro-credits and education to women in local communities of impoverished rural areas without questioning the structural and global conditions of such efforts, generates marginal improvements within the existing structures of socioeconomic and gender inequalities. Rather, and quite paradoxically, some development projects can even destroy the traditional and established structures, which guarantee a minimum level of life for local people, such as the destruction of fishing opportunities in fishing communities in African countries. Such local problems have global consequences, such as forced migration and increasing global inequalities and poverty. This requires further development of 'The Global Agenda' for social work and social development in order to address the mechanisms behind the reproduction of inequalities in the name of development. Social workers need to make global alliances to change the West-centric development agenda, acting against the dilemmas of Western social work's

exclusionary practices and the improvement of individual's living conditions irrespective of their national belonging and other discriminatory categories.

- *Social work beyond West-centrism*

As mentioned in the studies underpinned this work; discriminatory and oppressive West-centric and colonial discourses are part of the normal functioning of social sciences in general including social work education and practice. Acknowledgement of the existence of such discriminatory discourses in education, research and practice of social work as a historical legacy, is the first step towards a progressive and adequate education and practice of social work, which will be able to meet the current and future global challenges. The acknowledgement also requires recognition of the organisation of social work in 'social work for 'us'' and 'social work for the others'', which is historically formed by the categorised divisions based on class, ethnicity and gender with real consequences for the many people's lives. As argued in the different parts of this work, we need to widen our perspectives to think in new ways and to develop new practices and visions. This work of critical research of social work and its late modern challenges advocated a non-West-centric position in social work education and practice. Changing the established West-centrism in the global curriculum of education, which influences almost all institutions involved in social work education, is one important action against the reproduction of West-centric social work practice with destructive consequences for many people around the world.

- *Social work mobilisation against neoliberalism and the retreat of the welfare state*

The recent decades' triumph of neoliberalism has influenced the education, organisation and practices of social work all over the world. One of the important consequences of the neoliberal changes is the retreat of the welfare state in many Western countries, which has reinforced the shortcomings of the municipal and governmental social workers in terms of helping marginalised and impoverished people. The retreat of the welfare state has resulted in the emergence of many NGOs, which are involved in helping people who are not entitled to help from municipal and governmental social work institutions. However, the uncritical celebration of the NGOs with scarce resources runs the risk of accepting the permanent retreat of the welfare state and the social responsibilities of the state towards people living within its area of influence. Social work has an important role to play in advocating the human rights and social justice of every individual and thereby combating the neoliberal influences and changes and reinforcing the welfare state.

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PART TWO

SOCIAL WORK AND ITS CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES