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"Negotiating Development: trans-local gendered spaces in Muslim societies"

Report on Workshop 13 – 15 Ocotober 2005

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Introduction

As a basic activity of the research project "Negotiating Development: Translocal Gendered Spaces in Muslim Societies"[1] an international workshop was organised at the University of Bielefeld from 13th -15th of October 2005[2]. The workshop was planned to present and discuss the results of the field research conducted under the umbrella of the project in Senegal, Malaysia and Sudan. The participants of the workshop were mainly the local partners, who represent researchers and women's NGOs from the three different countries. In addition there were researchers based in Germany, France, USA and the Netherlands whose research interests are relevant to the project.

This paper intends to present the outcome of this international workshop and to highlight its methodological dimension which represents a significant part for finalising the findings of the research. The international workshop was organised as a methodological tool to debate both our research perspective and findings. Methodologically speaking, the research project focused on different spaces, interactions between various social agents in the field of development and relations between categories like Islam/ the West, private/public and local/global. By adopting this methodological perspective the research meant to overcome dichotomies and highlight the interconnectedness and complexity of the processes of globalisation and social restructuration (see Nageeb 2005). This perspective shaped the processes of field research and data analysis; as well it was the main intention behind organising the international workshop. In other words, the workshop was organised to create a space for dialogue and networking between different actors - be them researchers or activists - in the field of gender and development in Muslim societies.

Discussing the research findings with researchers and activists from different contexts was meant to embed our research findings in global epistemic debates. These debates vary and represent different positions, discourses and knowledge. Accordingly, the workshop constituted a space for networking of ideas, for reflection on our research findings and methodology, and for linking with others who might have a different research or activism interest and scope. This space was constituted by the fact that various types of discourses, knowledge and actors in the fields of gender, Islam and Muslim societies, development,

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[1]This research project "Negotiating Development: Translocal gendered Spaces in Muslim Societies" is funded by Volkswagen foundation, and directed by Gudrun Lachenmann and Petra Dannecker (Lachenmann, Dannecker 2002).

[2] Papers presented at the workshop: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/sdrc/homesdrc

women and human rights, i.e. the main themes of the project, were placing their perspectives within the frame of the workshop. Hence our research and research findings were discussed using activism and action oriented discourses and knowledge, as well as sociological/ anthropological research perspectives. Both of these discourses were framing the discussion during the workshop. Additionally, perspectives on Islam as social reality and as a socio-cultural and political frame that shape the way women work with development agendas in Muslim countries, and Islam as a subject of sociological/ anthropological research constituted spaces for debating our research findings. In this way the workshop represented a space in yet another sense, namely a space where research and practice meet.

One important methodological dimension of the workshop was to present and discuss the research findings with some of the local partners or the research participants. This was a very intense and interesting research experience as it represented a continuation of the relations established during the field research. Furthermore it enhanced the process of analysing the field results by allowing the research participants to discuss how we (the researchers) interpret their activities, development agenda, social and cultural practices and social relations, world view and agency. The space of the workshop allowed the discussion to constantly shift between scientific stand and interest of the participants and their personal and political engagement and commitment. That is to say, the research findings were discussed using different discursive practices and logics. For our research project this was a very enriching aspect of the workshop. It provided us with different scopes of how our research findings could be 'read', interpreted and discussed. It also enhanced our analytical perspective by allowing us to relate our findings to different debates which were of interest and importance to the participants. And finally it allowed us to embed our research findings within a global epistemic frame which is relevant for both activists and researchers in the field of gender and development in Muslim societies.

Before presenting the major issues of discussion during the workshop it is worth highlighting some of the main points raised during the opening session. In addition to the introductory presentations of Gudrun Lachenmann and Petra Dannecker who are in charge of the research project, Norani Othman from Malaysia presented a paper. She focused on the interrelation of two types of Islamic movements which both constitute a global public sphere by drawing on very distinct notions of Islam and Islamic discourse. Whereas the group of Muslim activists which pushes for a modern, progressive, and liberal Islam, uses Islam as a tool to disseminate

human rights and women's rights, the movement of a globalised Islamism, which comprises political Islam, Dakwah movements, as well as Jihadic Islamic groups, is characterised by a specific use of Islamic traditions and teaching, which concentrates on the authoritative features of Islamic scriptures and jurisprudence. This led to the perception of Islam mainly as a religion of law rather than of spirituality, a perception which the movement of political Islam is trying to maintain and expand. One of Norani Othman's concerns was that this notion of Islam as a set of legal prescriptions and moral injunctions and hence a blueprint of a social order, as it can be found in Sudan, Malaysia and Pakistan, is very captivating for "ordinary believers", as it operates on a dualistic basis which leaves little space for alternative views. This is the challenge that movements like Muslim feminists, who are engaged in local and global negotiations of women's rights and development, have to meet.

In the following sections of the paper we will discuss the major issues raised during the workshop. These issues will be elaborated by referring to the field research done in Sudan, Malaysia and Senegal. Our intention here is to further link the discussion during the workshop to both the research methodology and the findings of the project. Hence the major issues raised by the participants will be contextualised by referring to the empirical research and the global discourses related to it.

Malaysia

In her papers on Malaysia Anna Spiegel focused on the translocal spaces constituted by the Malaysian women's movement. This led her to elaborate on the processes of identity construction that take place within such translocal spaces and networks and on the role that they play for civil society actors in the process of democratisation in Malaysia. On the one hand, civil society actors in Malaysia have to face various restrictions set by a developmentalist and increasingly authoritarian political system. On the other hand, they have to act within a context of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society (50% of Malaysian citizens are said to be of Malay, 34% of Chinese and 10% of Indian origin) and have to deal with an increasingly narrow identity politics that is based on ethnic and religious distinctions. This development is due to the ethno-nationalist state project and the process of a, partly state driven, Islamisation which both accelerated since the 1970s.

Anna Spiegel argued that in Malaysia the discourse on gender equality and women's rights contributes to a large extent to the constituting of a public sphere and the formulation of political dissent. The transformational potential of this public sphere, which women's organisations build up through strategies of popularisation of feminist ideas, is grounded in the possibility to link gender issues to broader societal issues like democratisation, sustainable development and religious pluralism, all of them urgent issues in Malaysia. Within this space alternative visions of gender relations, development, and political system are formulated and hegemonic forms of knowledge are challenged.

She further elaborated that within such a limited democratic space, translocal networking between civil society actors at a global level is a crucial practice to enhance the room for manoeuvre of local actors vis-à-vis an authoritarian state and hegemonic identity constructions. For the Malaysian women's movement, networks with women's movements in other countries based on a regionally defined Asian or a religiously defined Muslim identity play an essential role for the localisation of subversive knowledge and local empowerment. These intercultural interactions give room for the elaboration of translocal visions of Islam and Women's Rights and the construction of new identities that oppose the ethno-nationalist identity politics in Malaysia.

In her paper, Rashidah Shuib dealt with the on-going debates on development, women's rights, and Islam in Malaysia based on the premise that for women's movements, carving, maintaining and expanding spaces for negotiation and dialogue is critical to advance women's agenda. She also took the position that in Malaysia, it is its multi-ethnic society which makes it "easier" for those spaces to be created and maintained, and offers opportunities for women's groups to safeguard themselves from the onslaught of conservative religious agenda coming not only from the Islamic-based groups but also from the increasing conservative winds of other religions fanned by globalisation and the hegemony of the US international political agenda. Taking health as a critical component of development, she argued that concepts such as sexual and reproductive health and rights which are intimately linked to women's bodily integrity are contentious yet politically important, because what seems to be personal is indeed political for the issues of sexual and reproductive health. Hence they constitute the core to women's rights. Past and current debates in the women's movement in Malaysia are a result both of local and global discontent among women which feeds and strengthens each other through national and international fora, networks and linkages. To conclude she

highlighted the need of spaces for debate and transformation 'from within'. The organisation Sisters in Islam would be such a space from within where the issues and the language from the global level are "brought home" and appropriated as "our own issues" and "our own language" by the Malaysian women's movements.

The discussion that arose directly out of the papers given by Anna Spiegel and Rashidah Shuib focused around the concept of space, the political implication of processes of othering that are initiated by the use of categories such as 'progressive', 'moderate' Islam versus 'fundamentalist', 'conservative' Islam, and the relation between state and civil society. The issue of the importance of ethnicity was further discussed within the context of the Sudanese case study and the issue of the body reappeared during the final discussion of the workshop.

Space and the state
In the discussion about the concept of space Farish Noor commented very sceptically on the power and reach of the spaces constituted by women's NGOs in Malaysia, as it had been portrayed in Anna Spiegel's paper, and hence for the future of democracy in Southeast Asia. On the one hand, he highlighted the contested and fragile character of these spaces as they are under constant attack from other non state actors, such as Islamist and even terrorist networks, who use the same globalised practices and methods of networking and knowledge transfer. This comment alluded to the existence of competing discourses, ruptures and cleavages within the so-called civil society but also showed the ubiquity of globalised communicative political practices and resources.

On the other hand he underlined the importance of the successful and powerful Malaysian state in regulating 'space'. He questioned the idea of the state who opens up spaces for negotiation. A democratic space where negotiations about political issues was possible, in Noor's perspective, is always based on a certain kind of "undecidibility", ambiguity and autonomy. But exactly this kind of plurality of choices is alien to a post-colonial state such as Malaysia that reproduces the colonial mindset of control and which, hence, only creates domesticated and policed territorialities. The Malaysian state, he argued, is a very successful state and capable in delivering resources and controlling society. This also included the definition of the conditions under which a dialogue and negotiations are possible. In Noor's perspective, the Malaysian state possesses the ultimate power to define and create the framework in which civil society organisations have to act. Also Rashidah Shuib underlined

the attitude of manipulation and control of the Malaysian state vis-à-vis civil society organisations.

Dorothea Schulz linked her comment to Farish Noor's point about the contestedness of the new spaces that women's movements constitute through translocal networking. She highlighted her ambivalent position towards the concept of space and how it has been used in the research. She found it very attractive to see how new spaces were opened up, as it was described in the papers. But still, she criticised, it would also be necessary in a second step of analysis to show the boundaries of these spaces and through which other factors these new spaces were circumscribed.

Referring to Farish Noor's scepticism about the role of civil society organisations Petra Dannecker highlighted the theoretical difference between creating and constituting social space. Her remark alluded to the question whether the concept of space is used with a normative connotation, as it appears in the expression of 'creating democratic space' or whether the concept of social space should be used as a neutral, analytical category to describe social configurations. In the approach of our research project social space is used as a analytical category within the framework of theory of action and negotiation of meaning, which means to talk about the 'constitution of social spaces', rather than about the creation. The concept of space was again taken up in the discussion on Sudan, where the division between private and public spaces was debated.

The question of the control of the spaces constituted by civil society organisations was further discussed in the context of the Senegalese case study, where it was related to the funding strategies of the organisations. Also in the case of Sudan the role of the state as defining the public space was intensively debated. In the final discussion the issue of state control was raised again in the context of the space that cosmopolitan and translocal actors might make use of.

Political implications of categorisations and processes of othering
One intention of the project had been to analyse on the one hand the kind of identity constructions that women's groups and activists employ at a local and translocal level with the background of increasingly narrow identity politics at the global level. On the other hand a special focus was laid on the type of othering processes through which such identities are

constructed and shaped. Categories through which the actors under research identified or distanced themselves from other groups, such as 'feminist', 'progressive', 'conservative' or 'fundamentalist' were intensively discussed during the workshop, especially in the sessions on Malaysia and Senegal.

In the Malaysian context especially the embeddedness in political discourses and the political implications of such categories were highlighted by the participants. Rashidah Shuib pleaded for an exploration of the concept of 'feminism' and how it could be differentiated from other approaches that women's organisations employ. She gave two examples from Malaysia. When the Malaysian women's minister came to Kelantan she was asked by women's activists whether she would be taking up gender issues in her ministry. The minister replied, that of course gender issues would be taken up by her, but that there was nothing new about these gender issues, because she had been working for women's issues all the time. In contrast to that, Rashidah Shuib highlighted the importance of the concept of gender issues for her circle of 'women feminists'. For them gender issues had become the platform that differentiated them from groups that they perceived to be more 'mainstream', like organisations in Kelantan which also work on the issues of violence, but more from a charitable perspective. Still, she reminded the audience that for those 'mainstream groups' already the fact that they take up an issue like single mothers, a group that has not been taken into account by the government, is already radical in a sense. These groups would probably label themselves as feminists by their criteria.

From the project perspective we argued for an actor oriented research perspective which could shed light on the local meaning of 'feminism' and the use of this term in local discourse. Applying this perspective it became evident that the boundaries between the categories of 'feminist' and 'non-feminist' were not that clearly demarcated but a matter of permanent negotiation. Anna Spiegel illustrated this point with two examples from her empirical research in Malaysia. In one of the interviews, a young Muslim woman who worked as a social worker at the Women's Aid Organisation, explained that she was doing 'feminist' work and that WAO was a 'feminist' organisation. For her this meant "to believe women" when they came to the shelter and told their stories, to take them seriously and to put women's interests and needs first. This notion of 'feminism' did not at all collide with her religious engagement, which she expressed by her dress and also in her argumentation as she clearly referred to the Qur'an as a source for women's rights throughout the whole interview. Another example of

how boundaries between 'feminist' and 'non-feminist' approaches get blurred within the biographies of female activists is the trajectory of a young Muslim woman, who in her activist and working career constantly combined social engagement in the Islamic Students Movement (ABIM) and work as a social worker in the multi-ethnic, 'feminist' Women's Aid Organisation. At the moment she is one of the heads of ABIM's women's wing and actively involved in establishing a shelter for Muslim women. This project includes intense exchange with her former colleagues at the Women's Aid Organisation. From her perspective it was not a question of choosing between opposed approaches, or of rejecting an approach that contradicted her religious beliefs, but rather a question within which framework she wanted to place her work for women. Both examples show how women activists negotiate the meaning of 'feminism' in their everyday life. This, however, would not preclude us from analysing 'feminist' as challenging gender constructs and order on all levels of society.

In his comment Farish Noor expressed his worries about the use of terms such as 'fundamentalist', 'conservative', 'progressive' or 'moderate' Islam and the differentiation between women's groups by such categories. Again he referred to the Malaysian state as the decisive force that sets the framework of public discourses. Using categories such as 'conservative' and 'progressive' and even opposing them meant to be part of a discourse driven by the Malaysian state which distinguishes between "nasty fundamentalist Muslims" on the one side and "nice progressive Muslims" on the other side in order to fortify its power on a local but also on a global level as part of a global 'war on terror'. Farish Noor rejected such terms as state ideology and demanded from researchers and women's organisations to be more creative and to sabotage this dichotomy created by the Malaysian state. He criticised researchers and women's NGOs who took up such categories and argued that this would only lead to an inner division of oppositional forces, a division that the Malaysian state would benefit from. Instead women's groups and also other secular leftist groups in Malaysia should collaborate with these so called fundamentalist groups on a local level as they do important grassroots work. Farish Noor stressed the importance of such networks because the ultimate goal of a democratic project in Southeast Asia was to radically question the hegemony of the state from all civil positions. He expressed his worries that gender issues might be easily co-opted by the state and that urban activists in Malaysia had become too much adapted to the material benefits that a developed state like Malaysia offers. This adjustment to consumerism could weaken the radical character of their approaches.

In this context Susanne Kröhnert-Othman stressed the point made by Rashidah Shuib about the re-occupation or re-appropriation of ideas labelled as western by women's organisations in Malaysia. This practice she considered to be a highly innovative and remarkable practice which went beyond the processes of othering and distancing that Farish Noor had diagnosed. She argued that different women' groups were "bringing concepts home" to local systems of meaning and developing a sense of "ownership" on these ideas. Still, such processes she speculated, might be articulated only on the local level, but had no chance of being politically uttered at a global level because of global power politics. From the point of view of the project approach, this is exactly what we mean by localising global concepts which however do feed back to global spaces such as regional workshops and international plans of action.

Also Anna Spiegel added to the discussion on the exclusive character of these categories and highlighted the fact how a group like Sisters in Islam already was engaged in the kind of networks and dialogues that Farish Noor had asked for. The study sessions arranged by SIS are a good example for these networks. At these sessions representatives from groups with different standpoints towards religion and politics, such as representatives from the Muslim youth organisation ABIM, from the Islamic University, and from Islamic undergraduate associations came together with human rights and women's rights activists who argue from a more secular perspective to debate on political change in Malaysia and on gender issues. This is clearly a space where these different groups with different approaches and discourses can engage in a dialogue which goes beyond othering and distancing.

Fatou Sow referred to Farish Noor's appeal for unity among opposition groups. She would subscribe to the idea of unity, but not to all price. She stated that there were political differences that could not be easily bridged exclusively by the fact that both groups belonged to the opposition. "Of course we have to get united, but the conservative groups are so conservative that you have to fight against them. You cannot be allies".

In this context the concept of 'spaces from within' as it had been introduced by Rashidah Shuib was discussed by the participants of the workshop. As a member of the international network Women Living Under Muslim Laws, Fatou Sow agreed on the necessity of such spaces, but she added that an essential part of her work within that organisation was exactly to break the discourse of the Islamic fundamentalist groups, e.g. on motherhood. However, Fatou Sow challenged the idea of such 'spaces from within' saying that it was not clear how

much such spaces could push for secularisation of discourses used by women's organisations. For her, it was an important goal of women's organisations to break explicit or implicit religious ties and discourses used by state and other actors. Ulrike Schultz raised the question how such 'spaces from within', in this case from within the 'Muslim community', could relate to the other ethnic communities in Malaysia. She articulated her fear that such a concept could exclude women from other ethnic groups. The importance of ethnic and religious diversity was raised and extensively dealt with in the context of the peace process in Sudan.

Modes of resistance and the relation of the state vs. civil society

Throughout the debates on 'spaces' and on the importance and relevance of categories and processes of othering it became clear that one central question was how to conceptualise the relationship between state and civil society and possible modes of resistance in Malaysia, but also on a general theoretical level. Farish Noor's comments were based on the idea of an antagonistic relationship between an omnipotent state on the one side and disciplined civil society groups and citizens on the other side. From this perspective he criticised women's groups who engage with the state in order to promote legal reforms thereby confirming the state's legal and moral authority and legitimacy and pleaded for more radical forms of resistance.

José van Santen asked to bear in mind that such demands for radical social change might devaluate existing struggles, such as the women's movement's struggle, by portraying them too negatively. Such a radical discourse could then be counter-productive. Also Rashidah Shuib stressed the importance of legal reforms which could induce a process of 'revolution in the mind'. The change in laws has been a great success for the Malaysian women's groups, and these reforms opened up the way to carve out more democratic space, she added. In this context she also reflected critically on the practices of Malaysian 'feminist' women's organisations who had distanced themselves too much from the umbrella organisation in order to stay independent. But this distance not only implied independence but also a lack of influence. She compared this to Latin American women's movements which through active co-operation with mainstream organisations had managed to 'embed feminism' in political discourse.

Norani Othman agreed with the fears about the future of democracy in Southeast Asia. She especially highlighted the danger of a shrinking democratic space, due to the introduction of

new legislation by the state which is based on the notion of 'sin'. Here she referred to the process of upgrading the status and scope of sharià court system under Prime Minister Dr. Mahatir Mohammad. For instance, new sharià criminal laws concerning gender relations in the public and private space were passed and new offences were created such as *khalwat*, which criminalises the 'close proximity' of persons of opposite sexes in one room. This is especially serious as it declares Muslims to be second class citizens, with special laws for Muslims that contradict the constitution. Again, she challenged the binary notion of the state vs. the oppositional other, putting all other civil society actors together without taking into account their political orientation. She emphasised that women groups were somehow situated outside this dichotomy of state vs. opposition, as from a feminist point of view there was no difference between the authoritarian state and the Islamist opposition concerning gender issues. To illustrate this particular position of women's groups and the inherent dilemma she quoted Farida Shaheed, a 'Women Living under Muslim Laws' activist and sociologist from Pakistan, who said: "Every step forward you take, you will be pushed two steps back. One step from the state and one step from the non state actors". Still, she added, the women's movement in Malaysia had punctually co-operated with the Islamist opposition party PAS and the engagement with the state apparatus in Malaysia can be more frustrating than the engagement with PAS.

Gudrun Lachenmann highlighted the need to broaden the concept of politics and think about politics beyond the state. In our research project everyday politics and processes of negotiation have been conceptualised as forms of social agency and as essential for the constitution of social spaces. Her comment alluded to the limits of understanding power relations merely within state – citizen relations. In the approach adopted by our research project we tried to understand power from a sociological point of view, which meant to see it as constructed, reproduced, and executed by a multitude of different social actors in different settings of social relations in their everyday practices, including of course the state at its different expressions.

Senegal

In the presentation of empirical findings from Senegal, Nadine Sieveking described different women's organisations in the context of national development discourses and Muslim society in Senegal, focusing on the agenda of poverty reduction, dominated by the secular state, international development agencies and Western donors. She pointed out that the domains of

development discourses and religion were clearly separated in the Senegalese context. Describing the religious landscape, with an estimated 95% of Muslim population, a special focus was laid on the varieties of different currents among contemporary female Islamic movements. While these movements do not openly challenge male (religious and secular) power structures and the established gender order, they do not fit into the framework of the state's modernisation project and its concept of "women's promotion".

The paper then turned to secular women's organisations which are related to national development discourses and politics. Three women's NGOs were given as examples for different types of networking and relating themselves to the state, to global development discourses and to the level of local society. According to the differences between the three types, the space for women to develop agency is determined differently: Among organisations of the first type the space is shaped by a hierarchical and centralised structure, among the second type it is strongly related to a globalised 'rights' oriented discourse, and in the third case it is the social embeddedness and the grounding of the organisation in local social structures that creates room for manoeuvre and opens space for negotiations (with secular as well as religious authorities).

Regarding the processes of negotiating development in Senegal, a case study was presented which showed how the global development concepts of gender equality and women's rights were negotiated on the local level. It was argued that the cooperation of secular women's organisations with the state constituted an important strategy to avoid conflict between secular and religious authorities and thereby politicisation of Islam. It was stated, however, that in spite of this strategy of cooperation the space determined by the state's development project in Senegal seems largely disconnected from "the basis" and popular social movements. This constitutes a danger, in the sense of leading to a kind of formal secularisation and establishment of human and women's rights on the level of state administration and development agencies, which might be contradicted by an Islamisation process on the level of public discourse and popular culture.

Another perspective on the case of Senegal was given by Salimata Thiam, presenting the civil society organisation "mouvement citoyen", where she is responsible of the research unit "gender and development". This organisation supports religious women organisations with the aim to strengthen women's agency and help them to become economically independent.

In the paper the strategies to achieve this independence were described. It was highlighted that in the context of the above mentioned contemporary female religious movements the established gender order and male dominated power structures are not openly challenged. In public these women hold up the social norms of motherhood and marriage, exercising the power they have gained through economic development at the backstage. As a specific characteristic of the new religious women's organisations their strong translocal and transnational networks were mentioned, mainly on the basis of trading relations. The aspect of enlarging their room for manoeuvre, achieving economic independence and considerable influence on the male (secular and religious) establishment was given as a reason why the "movement citoyen" considered these organisations as part of a "feminist religious movement".

Another perspective from West Africa was given by Dorothea Schultz. In her presentation she focused on the public presence of Islam in Mali with particular focus on its gendered and feminised symbols. She argued that the relatively new public presence of Islam in Mali reflects also a relatively new configuration of the relationship between state and society. Dorothea Schultz related her presentation to the cases of Sudan, Malaysia and Senegal by raising the following points: First, that in Mali and at the level of women's organisations, like in the three countries of the research, there is selective borrowing and exchange from global discursive frameworks like gender equality or democracy. Second, that the Islamisation process is not a homogeneous process, rather it is structured and characterised by particular relations and forms of negotiation between different actors including state and women's NGOs. Third, that Islamisation in Mali, like in Senegal, is not a state orchestrated process, like in the case of Sudan and Malaysia; rather Islamisation is shaped by different groups of the society.

The "activist" approach

The discussion of the session on Senegal was opened by Roman Loimeier, who stressed the political dimension lying "at the heart" of the issues of gender, development, (human) rights and Islam, which he had so far detected as the main spheres of interest of the workshop. He claimed to make explicit the aspect of politics relating the domains of the social, the economic, the legislation and religion. In this sense he preferred the term of "activism" instead of referring to the labels of "feminism" or "liberalism" to characterise women's efforts to achieve empowerment and their commitment to change the political conditions.

Reflecting on the different cases representing specific Muslim societies in Senegal, Malaysia and Sudan, Roman Loimeier pointed to the fact "that the implementation of programmes of reform (whatever reform) is possible only, if the political frame conditions allow for such space". He added that "Muslim women activists are perfectly aware of this, even if hesitant to address the political dimension of their work, as 'politics' often are a sensitive issue". For the analytical approach this means that "Muslim women who join, for instance, a seemingly radical Muslim reformist organization, are not necessarily committed 'Islamist' ideologues, but 'use' these organizations to achieve specific goals under the cover/protection of an 'Islamic' legitimization for their (otherwise problematic) agency in the public sphere". Therefore, from Roman Loimeier's point of view, the question arises "whether these activist Muslim women are becoming 'captive' to radical ideological constructions or whether they will be able to eventually overcome religiously defined ideological frameworks".

Feminism

As mentioned in the discussions about the Malaysian case and taken up in Roman Loimeier's comment, there was a permanent concern in the discussions around the notion of "feminism". Throughout the discussions on Senegal it became clear that some of the participants of the workshop were particularly engaged in the discussion of this topic: Conceiving themselves as feminists, the question about the use of the term could not be treated just as an analytical category, but was understood as a questioning of their own identity as activist or researcher, as an African or an Asian woman, a Senegalese, Sudanese, or Malay.

In the context of the Senegal case, the 'othering' strategy found in the field on different discursive levels which associates a "feminist" standpoint with cultural alienation, was discussed very critically. Fatou Sow pointed to the fact that by labelling oneself a "feminist" one could in fact easily be "cut off", in the sense of being marginalised and discriminated as not behaving like an "African woman". But she underlined that "sometimes we need to break these lines to get to a more realistic discourse". Therefore she considered the discussion of this issue as very important in order not to "blur the discourses" and not to "bring in more stereotypes". She also expressed her worries and her uneasiness with the blurring of discourses concerning the issue of feminism later in the discussion, when the questions concerning the relations between different civil society organisations and social movements were raised.

Referring to the experiences of field research, Salma Nageeb pointed to the fact that women draw on many different resources (that had been illustrated in the papers and in the Malaysian examples given in the discussion). According to the different ways of giving meaning to concepts and shaping discourses, different kinds of agency are produced. Concerning the methodology it was underlined that in terms of an analysis of different discourses and notions used by different actors in specific situations of interaction, the meaning of "feminism" had not been pre-determined for the research but rather something to be found out empirically and differentiated according to concrete social spaces and interfaces.

Networking between civil society organisations and the state
Gudrun Lachenmann turned the discussion from analysing categories to analysing the social relations between the different social actors. She stressed the importance of relating the women's organisations mentioned in the papers to other important social movements in Senegal, such as the former (secular) "feminist" movement or the peasant movement, which were engaged in negotiating new gender relations. Another question raised from the floor concerned the family background of women who assume a leadership position in these new religious women's movements.

Gudrun Lachenmann then asked about the trend among women's organisations to keep away from formalisation and not to link up with the state's 'modernisation' project (represented for example in the government's newly established office for "female entrepreneurship" in Senegal). This question was answered in the sense that the contemporary female religious organisations are more and more institutionalised (being registered at the chamber of commerce). The power they are able to bring into play is mainly based on money, and not on their religious knowledge, which is often modest, as well as their level of formal school education. Academic research carried out on these women's organisations was considered by Salimata Thiam as a possibility for them to gain more recognition and possibilities for their own development. She confirmed that capturing of the women's movements by the state does take place but so far the women "play the game" to arrive at their goal of economic development.

Giving some historical context to the debate, Fatou Sow highlighted that these women, who were now economically successful, had started with their activities before the state tried to capture them by developing programmes for the promotion of female entrepreneurship. It was

during the economic crisis, which obliged men to let women go out and earn money. At the same time women appropriated the discourses on women's social and economic empowerment on the international level, spread by the agencies of the UN-system and the multilateral cooperation, which were ready to finance female economic activities. This background is important, as Fatou Sow underlined, in the sense that even if women in the new religious movements proclaim to be against "feminism" and are promoting other values, they are using the feminist discourse and taking the opportunities it offers concerning women's economic empowerment.

José van Santen argued that the notion of empowerment should also be questioned with relation to the power positions women often held "in former times". With regard to the different social spheres that were brought together in the discussion, Fatou Sow again emphasised that the religious women's organisations now use the different discourses very strategically, but that from the standpoint of a feminist, who has been fighting for women's rights and empowerment, the resulting blurring of categories is very problematic.

To elaborate on her point, Fatou Sow referred to the historical context: Since the broad female associative movement in Senegal started in the 60ies, women always used traditional patterns of local women's groups to organise themselves and "do things together". But at that time their perspectives were focussed on how to integrate the main development discourse and how to fit in the dominant "women in development" approach, without challenging political, social or religious hierarchies. The feminist movement, which started in the early 80ies, embarked upon feminist issues like gender violence, sexuality and fertility, which were promoted by the UN women's decade, and which had not at all been addressed by the formerly existing women's organisations.

The newly spreading religious women's organisations have thus to be considered as a "result of the UN women's decade", although they are more comfortable to align with organisations that do not want to disrupt the social, political and legal order, than with feminist organisations that try to "shake" these structures. In the 90ies, when religion started to occupy more space at the political level and the state as well as other political actors started to "manipulate religion", women's associations followed this trend. However, Fatou Sow expressed her concern that these women support the system too much and do not engage in the "real struggle" about changing the laws and basic social and political conditions.

The relevance of this turn towards religion and accordingly the shifting from religious discourses from the private to the public sphere since the 90ies was also underlined by other participants of the workshop. Salma Nageeb pointed to the methodological aspect of analysing this turn as a negotiation process, which brings to the fore the mechanisms of "doing engendered politics", on the level of planned political strategies as well as on the level of "unconscious [implicit] politics". Taking an actor's perspective in the research on the different ways of drawing boundaries, of representing the self and the 'other', of negotiating with the state and other political actors shows not only how they are related to local politics as well as to translocal and global political discourses and networks, but it also reveals the ambiguities of these strategies. In this sense it is important to analyse their "unintended consequences", which are reflected partly in official political agendas but also in the processes of social restructuration at the level of everyday working practices.

Funding strategies

Several questions and comments coming from the floor pointed to the fact that funding strategies were an important factor for analysis that should be taken more into consideration. In terms of the methodology of the project the question of funding was relevant on two levels: the level of enabling activism, capacity building and developing agency, and the level of the negotiation processes going along with funding. For the case of Senegal this issue was related to another point raised in the discussion, namely the idea of a space for NGOs opened up by the state.

Contrary to the Malaysian experience, where the space created by the state was considered to be just a means of controlling women's organisations, in the Senegalese context the supporting attitude of the state towards NGOs was interpreted as quite a plain strategy with the main objective to let money come into the country. Getting more possibilities for funding secular development projects would stabilise the position of the secular state vis-à-vis non-state actors such as Muslim authorities and their critique of the state's failure in achieving social and economic development. Nadine Sieveking argued that the latter might be seen by the Senegalese state as a more serious threat than the activities of the however critical secular civil society organisations and actors in the public sphere.

Gender, global development politics and the "turn towards religion"

As a general comment to the discussion so far, Parto Teherani-Kroenner pointed to the political dimension inherent in the notion of gender. The political significance of the analytical concept of gender, however, cannot give a reason for the question, which keeps on lingering behind the explanations of the different labelling strategies of being Islamic or 'religious', namely the question: Why do we need now religion? This question was seen by Parto Teherani-Kroenner as the articulation of a kind of "spirit of the time" ("Zeitgeist") and a general concern about "something more" than the arguing with rationality, something that could stand against the dominance of neo-liberal economy: "There must be a need for something else, and this something might be religion".

Referring to recurrent patterns of representation (particularly in the media), which push the issue of religion into the public sphere (especially when it comes to Islam in the context of western societies), José van Santen was calling for a cautious use of the religious labelling of women's organisations. She pointed to the fact that religious belonging is not always questioned and often a "private affair", which is kept separate from "real life" in public. In this sense academic research should not only respect the privacy of religious belief and practices, but also be cautious in order not to mix up private and public concerns.

Rashidah Shuib added that the experience that women's economic empowerment and their corresponding position in the public sphere is not automatically leading to an empowerment in the private sphere and to a better position in negotiations of family affairs, especially concerning the control over women's bodies. And in this sense she considered the turn towards religion as a very ambiguous strategy, which might have quite detrimental and harmful effects for women. In the final discussion the issue of women's empowerment in the private sphere and the control over women's bodies was taken up again.

Referring to the level of global and translocal development policies in Africa (like the "New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development": NEPAD), Roseline Achieng asked in how far the "economisation of the religious movement" has also brought about its "politicisation" and in how far women conceptualise their visions of social change in bringing together the domains of religion and economy.

With reference to the various questions and comments concerning the different rationalities underlying the activities of social and religious movements, Nadine Sieveking pointed to education as another important aspect of social change. The case of Senegal shows that education is a factor that brings about a divide among the various contemporary religious movements (as well as a divide between the generations): the more economically oriented women's associations on the one side and the Islamic reform groups on the other. The latter (where the more educated daughters of women members of the formerly mentioned groups might gather) are not only much more focussed on the acquisition of religious knowledge but also articulate an explicit concern with social and cultural transformations, particularly concerning gender relations and the religious legitimacy of the moral order.

The aspect of education was also tackled within the context of discussing the research findings from Sudan and in particular when taking up the issue of urban bias of NGOs.

Sudan

The different presentations on Sudan were covering various issues related to the current local development discourse, i.e. peace building. The presentations tackled the subject of how Sudanese women's NGOs are negotiating development by focusing on different topics. When presenting the findings of the research from Sudan, Salma Nageeb focused on the landscape of women's NGOs and their development agenda. The paper of Manal Ali Bashir focused on Violence Against Women (VAW) as an agenda of women's NGOs and the challenges they face when working with this agenda in the context of an Islamist state. Lamya Badri presented a paper which focused on a UNDP project in Sudan that aims at enhancing women's political participation within the frame of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). From the perspective of everyday life a paper was presented by Ulrike Schultz on women's negotiations of economic rights and their strategies to overcome economic marginalisation. There were some main points of references to which all the presentations referred. These points were: the intensive Islamisation process during the 1990s and the gendered restructuration processes associated with it, the CPA, the international pressure on Sudan to open up for democracy and the enlargement of the space for civil society organisations to participate in the peace building process. Both the topics discussed and the frame within which these topics were elaborated represent major issues on which the empirical research in Sudan focused. In the following

sub-sections we will present the main points of intervention and discussion which were raised by the participants of the workshop in relation to the presentations on Sudan.

Private/public sphere

As a discussant for the paper presented on Sudan Cordula Weißköppel shed light on the intensive networking and strategising of Sudanese women's NGOs which enabled them to maintain - in one way or the other - their activities in a highly policed public space during the last decade. The Islamisation project of the state led to a severe segregation between men/women and private/public spaces. Despite this control women's NGOs manage to operate and maintain their activities, partially by using women's private spaces. Yet one important question remains: how do women's demands enter the (male) public sphere?

Referring to the approach adopted by the project Salma Nageeb pointed to the methodological argument that the dualism or dichotomy between private and public spheres is challenged by adopting an interface approach that focuses on the relation rather than the dichotomies between private and public spaces. Similarly the concept of negotiation also helps studying how the meaning attributed to a particular space is shifting according to the type of agency involved, and how boundaries are (re)defined. In addition it is important to contextualise our definition of private/public and to keep in mind that these distinctions are situationally shaped. What is also important is to follow how and when the shift in the definition of private/public occurs. And what is the nature of agency involved in defining a situation/ space as private or public.

Relevant to this point was the discussion on the role of the state in defining the public space. In both countries, Malaysia and Sudan, the state is controlling and policing public spaces. Women's NGOs, their activities and agendas have to fit within a space which is pre-defined and its borders and limitations are drawn by the state's discourses and practices. In this sense women activists are "subjects" to the nature of political control, they have to constantly reshape their agendas and activities to fit in the space as defined by the state.

The domestication and policing of public spaces by the state was acknowledged during the discussion, nevertheless there were different perspectives to the relation between women's NGOs and the state policed public spaces. Methodologically, it was argued that the project adopted a frame to study the constitution of space as a process that entails conceiving it as the

place of actions and interactions and the *possibilities* of engaging in these actions. Thus, the empirical research did consider the agendas of women's NGOs as being placed in pre-circumscribed spaces. However the agency of women and women's NGOs in negotiating, reshaping, enlarging theses spaces through their everyday interactions, strategising and networking to carry on with a specific task or plan, is a significant dimension in studying the constitution of gendered spaces. The processes of networking and encounters at the interface between women's NGOs and the state, donor organisations, the public, media, traditional and social authorities are therefore very important to understand the nature of agency of women's NGOs in reshaping the pre-circumscribed public spaces. That is to say, the constitution of gendered spaces is not only determined by the relation between women's NGOs and the state, which is indeed a very central one. Rather it is also framed by the relation and interaction between women's NGOs and other significant actors/agents who occupy public space.

Urban biased/centred women's NGOs

Cordula Weißköppel highlighted also in her intervention the point that the women's NGOs in Sudan are urban biased/centred. In fact Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, represents the main centre where the majority of women's NGOs exists. Lamya Badri argued that Khartoum represents 1% of the land and is occupied by 20% of the total population of Sudan. The population of Khartoum resembles a sample of the ethnic diversity of the country. In addition the city is getting constantly enlarged by the in-migration from other regions of the country. Accordingly, it could be argued that the capital bias of women's NGOs is justified by the fact that political activities are centred in the capital, and its population profile and density are worth of focusing on.

However, it was emphasised by the participants that there is a need to look at how the opening up of the space for civil organisations in general and women's NGOs in particular is manifested in rural areas, and whether there are special types of women's organisations that are operating in these areas. Salma Nageeb argued that indeed the policing of the public spaces by the authoritarian, military Islamist regime during the last decade severely affected the activities of women's NGOs. The state's conspiracy discourse concerning NGOs in general and its regulations concerning the registration and activities of NGOs in particular were strongly reinforcing the urban bias of the NGOs. At the same time the state supported the activities of Islamist NGOs, and their discourses on social security, development and change were officially approved. Accordingly, it has to be noted that with the activation of the

Islamisation project Islamist NGOs found a suitable environment to operate. Rural areas represent an important target for these organisations who are engaged in various activities basically shaped by a charity approach accompanied by missionary activities. No doubt that these are not the only type of women's NGOs existing in rural areas, however they are important and they need to be focused on.

Linked to the issue of urban centred NGOs the discussion highlighted the topic of education/ illiteracy. Using the example of Pakistan, which was comparable to Sudan (both countries are governed by military regimes, Islamist discourses are strongly present, female spaces are limited by practices like veiling/Purdah and the international community is pushing for change and transformation of the social and political structures) the following point was made by Claudia Derichs: due to both internal and external pressure on the Pakistani state women were "given space to participate in politics" (for example 33 reserved seats for women in the local assembly level). What use do women make of this space? Illiteracy is a major hindrance for women to effectively use the political spaces opened up for them. Thus many NGOs might prefer to focus their activities in urban areas where the illiteracy problem is comparably less than in rural areas. Lamya Badri commented on this point arguing that currently in Sudan the international community and the peace agreement support the enlargement of the space for political participation of different factions of the society. Nevertheless there are many challenges that women's NGOs face in such contexts particularly in relation to rural communities. Thus the issue of urban bias is also related to other challenges (other than relation with the state) that women's NGOs are confronted with when trying to implement their projects.

Ethnic and religious diversity

Both Fatou Sow and Awatif Elageed raised the issue of ethnic and religious diversity; in particular the point made was about the non-Muslim and Christian women and their role in the peace process. The CPA is representing a call for recognition of non-Muslim Sudanese, who belong to non-Arab ethnic groups, and their rights to equal share of power and resources. In this sense the peace building motto of development is leading to a wider process of economic, social and political transformation. In this context the role of non-Muslim women and their NGOs and activism has to be explicitly discussed (of course this point applies to all three countries).

To argue this point - on the basis of the research findings from Sudan - the state project of Islamisation was highlighted as a project that was shaped and implemented by an authoritarian military regime and means. This meant: first, that the space - for both Muslims and non-Muslims who have a critical stand concerning the Islamisation project of the state – to engage in civil activism was severely limited. Second, that the Islamist discourses in Sudan penetrated the different spheres of life at both the everyday and the institutional levels. It became a major front or border that has to be negotiated by any type of activists (Muslim or non-Muslims) before they can engage in activities at the level of civil society. Thus, the state's discourse on Islam is an important agenda to be addressed by non-Muslim Sudanese activists who are engaged in the peace building process. The political transformation embodied in the peace building process is, therefore, directly linked to the process of negotiating the Islamisation process of the state, particularly by non-Muslim Sudanese. The democratisation process and the proposed multi-party system for governing Sudan during the transitional period that follows the signing of the CPA are meant to ensure that the Islamist discourse and practices are not dominating the field of politics and leading to marginalisation of non-Muslims and non-Arabs. Therefore currently the agendas of development of both Muslims and non-Muslim activists look very similar. Basically theses agendas are focusing on democratisation and the negation of the complete control of the Islamist state.

The crisis of Darfur and the "marketing of information"

Ulrike Schultz raised the point that the crisis of Darfur is pressing the peace building agenda in Sudan, and that the (optimistic) presentations on Sudan were not focusing on how the Darfur issue might threaten the peace process. This point was further linked by Roman Loimeier to the theme of marketing of information. The crisis of Darfur is a good example to study how information is marketed, what type of agency is involved in spreading which kind of information, and which local and global agendas are to be detected from a specific type of information. The marketing of information is significant when focusing on the interaction and exchange between different agents, be it the state, donors, women's NGOs or any other. The Darfur crisis is often used differently by different actors and for different reasons.

The discussion of this point highlighted the need to focus more on how the crisis of Darfur is placed within the processes of negotiating global development concepts by Sudanese women's NGOs. In other words, no doubt the conflict in Darfur is receiving lots of attention from the state, civil society organisation the UN and other international organisations like the

African Union, Arab League, etc. who all represent important dimensions of the processes of negotiating global development concepts. It is important that the research on Sudan focuses on how the Darfur conflict is perceived, utilised, addressed and or (re) defined by women's NGOs while they are: engaged in negotiating their agenda with the state and traditional social authorities, raising funds (from international donors), addressing beneficiaries of their activities, and networking locally and globally with other civil society organisations.

Women's subordination/oppression and the "marketing of terms"

In relation to the presentation on VAW, the image of Sudanese women as being generally subordinated and oppressed, as emphasised by the presenter was contested by Parto Teherani-Kroenner. She emphasised the need to create a more differentiated picture of Sudanese women while NGOs are working with the theme of VAW. Reference to structural violence and the conflict in Darfur are made to further elaborate on this point. It was further argued that women in Darfur (or any other region facing conflict and war) are undoubtedly facing more violence than women in the capital. The discussion of this point was stressing that NGOs working in the area of VAW need to be aware of how their fund raising strategies might lead to homogenisation of the image of Sudanese women. "The marketing of terms like Sudanese women are subordinated and oppressed", could be a useful strategy to address donors. However, its strategic dimension should not override the need to keep a differentiated view about gender relations.

For us in the project, this discussion was a very useful encounter at the interface to further contextualise the relation between two types of knowledge and agency: activists and researchers. This is not to emphasise a dichotomy between the two types of knowledge. Rather, it is to highlight how and when discontinuities, which we sometimes observed in the field, might take place.

Associated with this discussion Rashidah Shuib pointed to the issue of instrumentalisation of women by both the state and men dominated institutions like political parties. While the notion of "Sudanese women are oppressed or subordinated" can not be used in an undifferentiated fashion, the concept of "instrumentalisation of women" is useful in giving a general view about women and their relation to the state. The instrumentalisation of women both discursively and non-discursively is practiced by many types of states including the Islamist Sudanese state. The opening up of the political space in Sudan, and the enlargement

of the room for civil organisations to participate in the peace building process should not lead to the assumption that women are not instrumentalised any more. Instead, there is a need to follow how the very specific relation of instrumentalising women by the state is getting (re) shaped by the current political situation.

Visibility and invisibility of women's economic contribution

In relation to the presentation on women's work and negotiations of economic rights it was argued that women negotiate their rights and create a space for themselves and their social and economic needs by making their work visible or invisible according to the situation at hand. They strategically make their work invisible to emphasise the role of men as bread winner and as responsible for the family living. By obliging men to provide for the family women create a space for themselves to decide on how to use their income. On the other hand women make their economic contribution to the family visible when they need to gain legitimacy for their work outside their homes. This strategic use of visibility and invisibility of work is a negotiation strategy that has to be understood in relation to the class and age factors

The strategic sense of visibility /invisibility of women's work were questioned by Fatou Sow - and many other participants who also contributed to this discussion - who referred to the Islamist ideologies and practices. Islamist projects reinforced the role of men as breadwinner and guardian. Hence, emphasising the role of men as the economic provider of the family is also leading to further control of women and to conformity with the Islamic identity of the society advocated by Islamists. In this sense, making women's work invisible is a tap for women who contribute to the family income and nevertheless their contribution is not leading to the questioning of gender relations. The discussion of this point went further to acknowledge that invisibility of work can be a trap, however, in their everyday negotiation women try to make use of the discourse on male guardianship to create room for manoeuvre.

Final Discussion

The preliminary results of the project were presented in the last session of the workshop. To discuss the findings of the project the presentation focused on answering one major question which was*: How are translocal gendered spaces (re)constituted by women's NGOs and activists?* Different theses, which were empirically detected from the three country cases, were proposed to answer this question. These theses were: While women are negotiating

global development concepts translocal gendered spaces are (re)constituted 1) by differentiating /reconstructing the local discourses on Islam, 2) by popularising globalised modes of interaction and communication, while at the same time othering, reshaping or de-legitimising traditional social spaces, 3) by moving from the notion of "vulnerability" to "rights" and 4) by negotiating global concept of "rights". Hence, the final discussion was focusing on the above points and other relevant issues. In addition, the session was also planned to give a chance for a general final discussion that would encompass all the issues and themes raised during the workshop. In the following section, the main points raised during the discussion will be presented under different sub-titles.

Islamisation movements and processes

Roman Loimeier had made the point, which was raised several times later during the discussions, about the categorisation, terminologies, definition and use of terms. Specifically terminologies related to what is understood by 'Islamisation processes', such as Islamist, modern Islamist, reformist, fundamentalism, Islamisation need to be carefully defined.

From the side of the project, Islamisation is approached as a global force of restructuration that calls for the "purification" of Islam from "local traditions" which are perceived to be either un-Islamic or not Islamic enough. The link of Islamisation projects to institutional Islam is very significant for understanding how local and popular Islam is targeted for change. Islamisation involves a process of cultural homogenisation guided by the notion of (the) Islamic society and way of life. The homogenisation process is often related to the concept of *Ummah* (Islamic community). Islamisation is the claiming of an 'authentic' Islam, or the juxtaposing of "the correct Islam" and different forms of local Islam in Muslim societies. Hence, it is a process of acculturation and social restructuration. This process is creating distance from "traditions", which are viewed as not coming up to the criteria of "the correct Islam". At the same time, it is promising a secure way of mastering modernity. However, it should also be pointed out that the global force and discourse of Islamisation are negotiated at local levels. These negotiation processes are often addressing the homogenisation character of Islamisation. At the same time, the global discourse of Islamisation can be considered as one significant dimension of the process of negotiating global development concepts in Muslim societies.

From a Malaysian perspective Rashidah Shuib argued that before independence politics, nationalism and Islam had already been very closely intertwined and that this link did not automatically lead to a monopolisation of the public sphere by Islamic discourse as we can witness it in contemporary Malaysian society. Rather something in the quality of the debates and discourses had changed significantly in the last decades. Taking into account these historical developments, she suggested a conceptual distinction between two notions of 'Islamisation'. Firstly, 'Islamisation' in the sense of a "revival of Islam" or an extension of Islam into areas which were not defined by religion before, likes the banking, business, and education sector in Malaysia. And secondly, 'Islamisation' in a sense of a "rise of conservatism" when it comes to "men's and women's public and private spheres".

For the project, we consider the process of contextualisation of terms and categories related to Islamisation as a continuous process that has to take place throughout the different stages of doing the research. As emic concepts one needs to show what these categories mean and how this meaning relates to the social, political, economic and/or ethnic structures, to the interaction or encounter at hand, and to the process of social and political transformations.

Fatou Sow, the discussant for the final session, highlighted the "Arabised global nature" of the Islamisation process. It was argued that in contrast to the Arabised global Islamist movement "Africanised" Islam is less restrictive to women. The point was elaborated by giving the example of Senegal where the Arabised Islam is shaping new forms of social and cultural practices that differ significantly from the "traditional" Africanised Islam. The discussion of this issue was mainly guided by the question of how we handle the notion of "tradition" in relation to the Islamisation processes.

Emphasising that there is an "Africanised" or "Malay" Islam, as Farish Noor argued, could lead to authentication of specific "traditions". The danger of such an approach is that it gives historical depth and permanence to things, in this case a specific set of "traditions" of being Muslims, which are new. "Africanised" Islam, for example, is emphasised in the context of growing global Islamism. Thus, it is a re-invention of a "tradition", which is selectively appropriating elements from a particular "tradition" for a specific purpose in a specific time. The political nature of this process of re-inventing tradition should not be ignored. It is evident that some women groups, and also some other political actors, might adopt the strategy of advocating "traditional" Islam to create room for manoeuvre within a rigid

Islamised context. However, this is to be viewed and analysed at the level of strategy adopted by actors to redefine public spaces. It should not lead to falling in the trap of authenticating a particular sense of "traditions".

The relation between Islamism and tradition was also brought up by José van Santen. In her paper, José van Santen focused on a gender training workshop for local Imams in northern Cameroon. She analysed the gender training as a text which intersects with many other different texts. She argued that the "western concept of gender" is used by the male participants of the training to express a critical view to local culture and tradition, who avoid challenging real gender relations. In other words the global language of gender does not get culturally translated. The concept of gender is not used to reflexively think about gender relations, but rather to "blame" culture and traditions for the unequal gender structure. In this context, Farish Noor drew the attention to the point that western sponsored trainings which are carried out in societies experiencing different types of Islamisation processes have "a dis-locating effect". These kinds of training workshops, like gender training, "allow people to engage in some kind of critique, but not auto-critique, rather a critique directed to culture and tradition. Ironically, this sort of discourses and trainings on gender help pave the way for other usually competing discourses and texts, like Islamism". There is an obvious occidental bias, argues Farish Noor, in this gender discourse and training, which only helps in disrupting and dislocating settled assumptions and norms. By doing so, this kind of trainings and discourses serve as bridges for a subsequent Islamist homogenisation of society.

Language, dress and codes
The approach followed by the project to study the everyday interactions, the representation of the self and the using of particular linguistic and fashion codes was highlighted further during the discussion. Roman Loimeier argued that "the negotiated (and inter-related) character of orientations, positions, codes and different "habiti" has to be considered: Muslim women activists (as well as male activists) are perfectly aware of the different connections of different ways, strategies and "cultures" to approach the public sphere and the different fields and spaces in which they move and communicate. As a consequence, they may be said to be "playing with affiliations and orientations": They use, according to the context, Arabic, English/French or an African vernacular language in order to express their rootedness in a specific "culture" or to link with a specific source of inspiration and legitimization: At the same time, they dress accordingly […] They may draw thus from a different large spectrum,

pool, canon or "fund". Thus processes of negotiation in Muslim societies acquire a very dynamic and variegated character."

Roman Loimeier's discussion also stressed the need to focus on the multiplicity of messages which can be detected by looking at the combination of codes which an actor might adopt in a particular situation as well as throughout different social settings. Codes, which might include a range of social practices, reflect the ability of the actor to *select* from various spectrums of symbols and signs used to signify "African traditions", "Arabised Islam", "Western modernity" or any other significant discourses. In this sense, codes are mirroring not only the cultural positioning of the actors, but also the selective appropriation of specific notions and discourses and their political significance at a particular time in a specific context.

Cosmopolitan / translocal actors

Farish Noor raised the concern that the cosmopolitan /translocal nature of female activists and NGOs has a strong political connotation that should be considered. Cosmopolitan actors can function very well in a political atmosphere where the state and the economy are stable. In this case, cosmopolitan actors are appreciated as a bridge between various cultures, their agency would be well placed in linking the local to the global. But in the cases where the state is suffering from lack of democratic legitimacy and the economy is not performing in a way that would stabilise the political power of the state the cosmopolitan agency can be subjugated to political suppression. The political suppression of cosmopolitan agency by undemocratic states is often justified by a discourse on the role of the cosmopolitan agent in channelling forging interest and control to the country. Using the example of *Madrassa* from Southeast Asia the point emphasised was that the state could cut down such type of agency without much political hazard by basically referring to the discourse on the "suspicious" translocal links of this kind of agency. Women's NGOs and activists are in comparable positions to the one discussed above. The question raised from the floor was how these actors would survive in a context of a suppressive state, and how the project approached this issue methodologically.

Representatives of the project argued that the methodological concept of negotiation in the sense of meaning and definition is particularly useful to study how women's NGOs manage to exist under authoritarian regimes. By looking at the different processes of negotiations, encounters at the interface, and networking we aimed at highlighting the nature of agency

women develop within the frame of unequal power structures. Indeed the state has the power and the means to eliminate NGOs for political purposes. The concept of negotiation addresses various issues such as the strategies, the shifting of the cultural and social dispositions, the strategic alliances with the state and other social agencies, the local and translocal networking relations and the (sometimes selective) borrowing and appropriations of discourses applied by the actors to (re)introduce and (re)shape their agendas according to the political and social setups.

The body, Islamism and space

Salimata Thiam argued that Islamist and fundamentalist groups are often associated with intensive control and instrumentalisation of women's bodies to reflect a specific notion of Islamic society and Muslim's identity. Norani Othman emphasised that this assumption could be one dimension of how to categorise and typify the different Islamist movements. However, the question of power and its relation to the instrumentalisation of women's bodies should not be ignored. The discursive and non-discursive practices of Islamist groups differ significantly according to whether they are controlling the state power, or not. Islamist groups which are in the opposition tend to act according to democratic rules, which make them less focusing on the issue of control. However, the nature of Islamist practices and discourses differs considerably when they are in power.

Rashidah Shuib called then for more focus on this issue of Islamism and the women's bodies. She argued that different presentations in the workshop fostered the assumption that the relation of different Islam(s) to the body is significant in differentiating the type or category of movements involved. This in turn means that groups and movements which are not intensively appropriating the women's bodies are considered to be progressive Islamists.

Fatou Sow argued that the distinction between progressive and non-progressive Islamists is not very important in the context of West African Muslim countries. In this context, the states are secular and Islam represents a social reality and Islamist or Muslim groups are not organised in political parties. Nevertheless, Muslim leaders significantly shape politics, by - for example - direct their followers as to which party they should vote. At this level of political involvement Muslim leaders are not focusing much on controlling women. But recently it is clear that some new movements, which are not part of the Sufi establishment, use women's bodies and the control of women as an entry point to politics.

From the project side we argued that the body becomes an important element of the research when it is linked to the notion of space. Body / place / time are significant elements when studying social interactions and relations and the way they lead to the constitution of space. The body is one field to study the social meaning attributed to a specific space. Thus social codes (like fashion and dress) were often focused on during the empirical research to detect the demarcation of the border between different spaces. Also well the relation between the women's body and the definition of public and private spaces was to be considered. It was observed that the control over the body and its modes of expressions are 'negotiated' differently by different actors in the contexts of Islamisation. While the Islamist state, for example in Sudan, tried to push the women's body to the private space, by issuing the veil act, or by emphasising male guardianship over women's body, women's NGOs are trying to stage the body back in the public space. The direct link of women's body, by women's NGOs, to discourses on FC/FGM, poverty, health and education are cases speaking to this effect.

Women's vulnerability

Rashidah Shuib addressed also the issue of vulnerability. She argued that in the case of Malaysia both development discourses of NGOs and the state are moving away from conceptualising women as vulnerable and victims. She also stressed the need to discuss this concept further. The discussion about the notion of vulnerability emphasised that different issues have to be considered. From the perspective of the project we argued that although the global development concepts are moving away from the notion of vulnerability to rights as well as to agency, there are still many women's NGOs, who are active in the three countries of the research, working with the Women in Development (WID) approach. WID approach focuses on women as a vulnerable group who need the support of development agencies. The approaches that women's NGOs adopt in their work vary, while some are focusing on changing the global WID approach, some are still working with it. Women's NGOs are very different in their agendas, discourses, practices and networks. Some belong to Islamist groups, others work with charity approaches and still others are affiliated to the state and are not challenging its approach to development. Therefore it is important to consider that not all women's NGOs are focusing on Gender and Development (GAD) or on the rights approach. In addition, many states, like Senegal for example, are open to the adoption of the rights approach; nevertheless there are gaps between their discursive and non-discursive practices. In practice, women's (as well as other actors like youth) agency is minimised by treating them as vulnerable/ victims and passive in the face of social, economic and political problems.

Norani Othman contribution supported this line of argumentation by reflecting that in the Malaysian and Southeast Asian context the financial crisis associated with economic globalisation and liberalisation had a negative effect especially on women. Female electronic workers were severely affected by the closing down of factories in Malaysia which were then opened in the Philippines and China. NGOs who are engaged in protesting economic globalisation - such as Third World Network – revived the language and the concept of vulnerability. In this way they forced the Malaysian government to incite the programme of social safety nets to cater for those who are affected by its liberalisation policies. One could argue that in the context of economic globalisation many anti-globalisation movements and NGOs are using the concept of vulnerability.

Dualism in the global discourses

For a general discussion Gudrun Lachenmann raised the following issue: There is a dualism between global discourses that focuses on social development (such as human rights) on the one hand and the one that focuses on economic development on the other. Even at the level of global feminist debates the link between human rights, for instance, and the critique of neo liberalism is not well systematised. At the level of research there are various concepts which can be used to bridge this gap. The concept of female economy which emphasises the links rather than the separation between the productive and reproductive spheres, or the interface between formal and informal economy are meant to bridge this kind of dualism. It is not enough to criticise neo-liberalism, there is a need to show how the different types of economy within the context of globalisation are linked, and how this link is affecting not only the economic, but also the social and political position of women, and how they are economic actors themselves.

To further discuss this issue the example of Malaysia was used. Norani Othman argued that it is important to study how the state captures globalisation and controls or restrains it and how women as economic actors are able to work as groups whose working conditions are often putting them in a vulnerable position. Within the context of economic globalisation women are pushed to specific sectors at the lower positions thus they are the ones mostly affected by the "run away (economic) globalisation" of the state. This point was counter argued by Ulrike Schultz who stressed a more differentiated vision about women and economic globalisation. In economic terms women's relation to globalisation is very diverse depending on their class and regional positioning. Women are not all affected by economic globalisation in the same

way. There are some women, depending on their social and political position, who benefit from this type of globalisation. However, to link the debates of economic globalisation to, for example, family laws and women's status in the family law would create a common ground and agenda for women's groups. The issue of male guardianship over women is related to the economic discourse and practice of state. Men gain control over women because they are perceived as the breadwinner. At the same time partially because of the very same perception they get better chances of employment. Hence relating discourses of economic globalisation to discourses on social rights is very significant for women's NGOs and for finding a common ground to address neo-liberalism.

As a conclusive comment of the chair of the final session Norani Othman emphasised that there is a need to study and contextualise the different forms of globalisation - such as cultural, economic globalisation and the raise of Islamism and other forms of conservatism - and the relations between these different forms of globalisation.

The presentations, discussions and exchanges that took place during the workshop were very fruitful experiences. The workshop space allowed us to form a research network linking researchers and activists working in the field of gender, development and networks in Muslim societies. This working paper in addition to some other planned publications is envisaged to support the research network that was formed during the workshop and to enhance the exchange of ideas and communication between the participants.

Bibliography

Lachenmann, Gudrun, Petra Dannecker, 2002, Negotiating Development, Trans-local Gendered Spaces in Muslim Societies. Proposal to the Volkswagen Stiftung, Sociology of Development Research Centre, Faculty of Sociology,University of Bielefeld

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List of papers presented at Workshop

Badri	Lamya	Development through Networking: Global Discourses and Local Agenda, Women Negotiating Political Space in Sudan
Bashir	Manal Ali	Politics and Violence against Women in Sudan
Dannecker	Petra	Introduction: The Research Process
Lachenmann	Gudrun	Introduction: Methodology and Comparison
Loimeier	Roman	Report on the Workshop "Negotiating Development: Trans-local Gendered Spaces in Muslim Societies" 13 – 15 October 2005, Faculty of Sociology, University of Bielefeld
Nageeb	Salma	Empirical Findings from Sudan: Development Issues and Actors
Nageeb	Salma	Negotiating Development in Trans-local Gendered Spaces: Preliminary Results
Othman	Norani	Islamisms, Human Rights, Gender and the Global Public Sphere
Schultz	Ulrike	Visible and invisible Work: Development, Economy and Gender in Sudan
Schulz	Dorothea	Engagement, Publicity, and Extraversion: Muslim Women's Associations in urban Mali

Shuib	Rashidah	Debating Development, Women's Rights and Islam in a Multi-ethnic Society
Sieveking	Nadine	Negotiating Development in Senegal: Women Organisations, Issues and Strategies
Spiegel	Anna	Women's Organisations and their Agendas: Empirical Findings from Malaysia
Spiegel	Anna	Women's Movement and Trans-local Networking in Malaysia
Thiam	Salimata	Looking for Identity and Honour towards Religious Movements in Senegal
van Santen	José	Development, Gender and Islamic Societies: an Example from North Cameroon

Papers given at the workshop
(see http:.//www.uni-bielefeld.de/sdrc/homesdrc)

List of Participants

Workshop: "Negotiating Development: Trans-local gendered spaces in Muslim societies", Bielefeld, 13th - 15th of Oct. 2005

	Noorman	Abdullah	(Malaysia) Bielefeld
Dr.	Roeseline	Achieng	Univesity Eldoret, Kenia
Dr.	Farish	Ahmad-Noor	Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin
Ms.	Lamya	Badri	Ahfad University for Women, Centre for Women, Gender and Development Studies, Sudan
Ms.	Manal Ali	Bashir	Panos Britain, Khartoum/Sudan (NGO)
Dr.	Petra	Dannecker	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
Dr.	Claudia	Derichs	University Duisburg, Institute of East Asien Studies
Ms.	Awatif	Elageed	Humboldt University of Berlin
MA Ethn.	Sandrine	Gukelberger	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
Ms.	Ruth	Klein-Hessling	Bonn
Dr.	Susanne	Kroehnert-Othman	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
Prof. Dr.	Gudrun	Lachenmann	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
	Kelvin	Low	(Malaysia) Bielefeld
PD Dr.	Roman	Loimeier	University Göttingen, Islamwissenschaft
Dr.	Salma	Nageeb	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
	Friede-Magloire	Ngo Youmba	(Cameroon) Bielefeld
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Prof. Dr.	Joanna	Pfaff-Czarnecka	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre
Dr.	Ulrike	Schultz	Institute of Sociology, Free University of Berlin
Prof.	Dorothea	Schulz PhD	Cornell/Indiana University, USA

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Prof. Dr.	Fatou	Sow	Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar/ Senegal; CNRS Paris/France
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Dr.	José	van Santen	Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Leiden University, NL
Dr.	Cordula	Weißköppel	University of Bremen, Faculty of Cultural Studies
Dipl. Soz.	Zeycan	Yesilkaya	University Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Sociology of Development Research Centre

Workshop Programme
Negotiating Development: trans-local gendered spaces in Muslim societies
Bielefeld, 13.10.2005-15.10.2005

2 – 4.45 p.m.
Welcome by Prof. Dr. Gerhard Sagerer, Vice Rector of the University, Bielefeld University

Welcome by the organisers (Prof. Dr. Gudrun Lachenmann and Dr. Petra Dannecker, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University) and introduction of the participants

Methodology and Comparison: Moderation Josè van Santen

Prof. Dr. Gudrun Lachenmann; Dr. Petra Dannecker:
Introduction: Petra Dannecker: The Research Process
Gudrun Lachenmann: Methodology and Comparison

Prof. Dr. Norani Othman, Institute of Malaysian & International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Sisters in Islam, Selangor:
Islamisms, Human Rights, Gender and the Global Public Sphere

Discussant: Dr. Parto Teherani-Kroenner, Institute for Agricultural Economics and Social Sciences, Humboldt University of Berlin

Coffee Break

5.15 – 7 p.m.
Women organisations and their agenda: an overview: Moderation Petra Dannecker

Dr. Salma Nageeb, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Empirical Findings from Sudan: Development Issues and Actors

Anna Spiegel, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Women's Organisations and their Agendas: Empirical Findings from Malaysia

Dr. Nadine Sieveking, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Negotiating Development in Senegal: Women Organisations, Issues and Strategies

Dinner

9.30 – 11 a.m.
Negotiating development in Senegal: Issues and Strategies: Moderation Dorothea Schulz

Dr. Nadine Sieveking, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Negotiating Development in Senegal: Women Organisations, Issues and Strategies

Salimata Thiam, Research Unit "Gender and Development", Mouvement Civil, Dakar:
Looking for Identity and Honour towards Religious Movements in Senegal

Discussant: PD. Dr. Roman Loimeier, Islamwissenschaft, Göttingen University

Coffee Break

11.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
How to Theorize Public Sphere in Islamic Countries in the Era of Globalisation? Moderation: Gudrun Lachenmann

Prof. Dorothea Schulz, PhD, Cornell/Indiana University, USA:
Engagement, Publicity, and Extraversion: Muslim Women's Associations in urban Mali

Dr. José van Santen, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Leiden University:
Development, Gender and Islamic Societies: an Example from North Cameroon

Lunch Break

2 – 4 p.m.
Negotiating Development in Malaysia: Issues and Strategies: Moderation Fatou Sow

Anna Spiegel, Dipl. Soz., Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Women's Movement and Trans-local Networking in Malaysia

Prof. Dr. Rashidah Shuib, Women's Development Research Centre, Universiti Sains Penang/Malaysia, Sisters in Islam, Selangor:
Debating Development, Women's Rights and Islam in a Multi-ethnic Society

Discussant: Dr. Farish Ahmad-Noor, Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin

Coffee Break

4.30 – 7 p.m.
Negotiating development in Sudan: Issues and Strategies: Moderation Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka

Manal Ali Bashir, Panos Britain/Sudan (NGO), Karthoum:
Politics and Violence against Women

Lamya Badri, Ahfad University for Women, Centre for Women Gender and Development Studies, Sudan:
Development through Networking: Global Discourses and Local Agenda Women Negotiating Political Space in Sudan

Discussant: Dr. Cordula Weißköppel, University of Bremen

Dinner

| Saturday 15.10.2005 | Venue: Senatssaal, Bielefeld University |

9 – 11 a.m.
Development through Networking: Global Discourses and Local Agenda: Moderation Prof. Dr. Norani Othman

Dr. Ulrike Schultz, Institute of Sociology, Free University of Berlin:
Visible and invisible Work: Development, Economy and Gender in Sudan

Dr. Salma Nageeb, Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University:
Negotiating Development in Trans-Local Gendered Spaces: Preliminary Results

Discussant: Prof. Dr. Fatou Sow, Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire, Cheik Anta Diop University, Dakar

Coffee Break

11.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Globalisation, Development and the Constitution of New Gendered Spaces

Final Discussion