

# Researching Global Imaginaries

citizenship, inequality and social change in  
Nordic & other educational contexts

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# Wider Research agenda



Historicity of the present, political economy and dynamics of knowledge production, (Other) possibilities of signification

# Wider Research agenda

- Remembering forgotten questions (Scott 1999; 2004)
- Relationships between educational analyses of global justice and injustice, and their outcomes in terms of past, present and future 'global imaginaries' (Brydon 2010): representational systems that mediate local/global realities and activate multiple identities and possibilities for trans-cultural relationships and accountabilities.
- Comparative Education: "clearing house for the flows, counter-flows and interleaved imaginaries of globalisation" (Kaur 2012, 3)

# Wider Research agenda

- How are analyses of intersectional oppression and inequalities, and aspirations for global change, constructed, performed and mobilized in specific formal, informal and post-secondary educational initiatives? What discursive meta-scripts enable these significations?
- What forms of local/global identities, possibilities for trans-cultural relationships, and notions of global citizenship, interdependence and responsibility are anticipated and realized as a result of such initiatives?

Epistemic frames (Stoler 2008); Social Cartographies (Paulston 1994; 1999; 2004)

# Theoretical platform

- Postcolonial theory – focus on problematic patterns of representations & engagement with the excluded Other of Western humanism: **H**egemony, **E**thnocentrism, **A**historicism, **D**enial of complicity in harm, **S**alvationism, **U**ncomplicated interventions, **P**aternalism (HEADS UP)
- Poststructuralism – focus on socially, culturally and historically situated processes and possibilities of signification: veridiction, governmentality, ethics and aesthetics of self, hospitality, ‘institutional and existential scripts’

# Nordic Global Imaginaries

- Complex histories, ethno social-democracy, 'exceptionalist nationalism' (Vuorela 2009; Palmberg 2009; Rastas 2011).
- (need for a) Globally minded Finland (CIMO 2010): development of critical cosmopolitan sensibilities – enlargement of possibilities for thinking and relating to the world in its complexity, uncertainty, plurality, contingency and increasing inequality

# Nordic Global Imaginaries

- Historicity of the present: Appadurai (2006) 'geographies of anger': two interlocking tenets of nationalism (completeness of the ethnos and sovereignty of the state) threatened by globalization.
- When social uncertainty is exacerbated by fears of increasing inequality, lack of security, or loss of autonomy, and when the project of national purity/completeness is perceived to be jeopardized, narratives of majoritarianism and racialized nationalism can emerge even in (seemingly) inclusive, democratic and secular national states.

# Nordic Global Imaginaries

- Dynamics and possibilities of signification: Arendt's (1968; also Biesta 2012) dispositions of **tourism**, **empathy** and **visiting** - differences in terms of what we (claim to) know, about how we (are predisposed to) feel and about what we (are enabled or unable to) do.

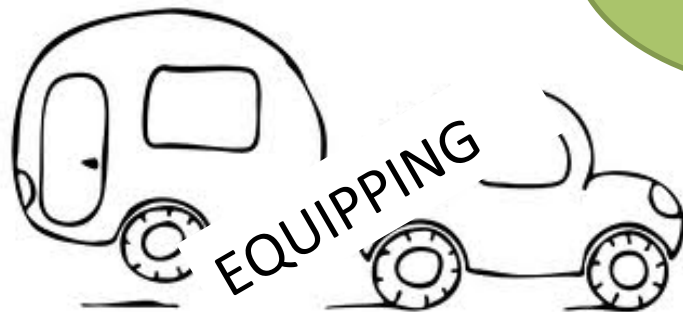


# GMD project



*understanding the other within your own framework*

Attempt to have all worlds into  
one's world:  
fusion of perspectives /  
projected sameness



*bringing your home with you when you travel*

Projection of own world as everyone else's world:  
singular truth /hierarchical differences

international  
mobility  
experience



*open to being taught by and  
being exposed to the world*

Being at home in a plural  
and undefined world:  
enlargement of worldview

# Ethics and Internationalisation of HE

- Marketization of HE threatening role of the university as critic and conscience of society, space of exposure to the world, of independent, critically informed and socially accountable debate about possible alternative futures
- 20 universities, common mixed methods dataset (Meyer et al. 2010) , analyses of policy, student surveys, staff and Faculty interviews (inspired by Ahmed 2012)
- Relationships between social-political rationales for the university, ideals of internationalization and possibilities of dissent (epistemic difference)

# EIHE: HE social-political rationales

- Social-political frames:
  - Maximization of profit
  - Pursuit of truth
  - Social and personal development
  - Challenge to status quo
- Data analysis: epistemic frames and internal/contextual (in)coherence
- Underlying concern: how do we capture empirical evidence of exclusions, marginalisation, silences, threats; how do we identify and address contradictions in counter-hegemonic strategies

# Thank you.

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