

GENDERED TEMPORALITIES
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PRESENTERS' ABSTRACTS

Gendered Security Experiences of Liberian Ex-Combatants 'Before, During, and After the War'

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Although security studies has increasingly realised that temporal aspects must be included to arrive at more nuanced understandings of people's security narratives; such efforts have largely ignored how these temporal aspects are influenced by gender and other identities. In this paper, I assess how gender and other identities affect the security experiences of Liberian ex-combatants over time. Drawing on feminist intersectional theory, I explore how their security experiences' temporalities vary across and within identities of gender, age, class, etc. Based on ethnographic fieldwork and individual and focus group interviews in peri-urban Liberia from February to April 2014 (prior to the Ebola outbreak), I illustrate these variations through vignettes. This exploration provides new insights into Liberian ex-combatants' temporal security experiences: their temporal securities (1) centre around the before-during-after the war-rupture rather than a past-present-future continuum and (2) are constructed through the intra-action of gender and other identities. This shows a need to pay closer attention to the temporal nuances of ex-combatants' gendered security experiences not only in research but also in humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts. Similarly, more research is needed to investigate the temporal nuances that arose through the Ebola outbreak.

Beyond Crisis: Intimacy and the Future in Uganda

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Literature on urban Africa is pervaded by "crisis" - more precisely, a masculine one (Groes-Green 2009, Ratele 2008, Silberschmidt 2004): urban men are taken as personifications of dramatic failures, of an irremediable breakage. What is the temporal substance of this breakage? Is it a disconnection of past and future? An unending present? A tension between anticipation and disenchantment? And why is "crisis" associated mainly to masculinity – is masculine time not capable of embarking challenges without being completely disrupted?

My paper draws on research in a Ugandan marketplace where masculinity was discussed as a problem, rather than as a given. Instead of talking of "crisis", however, I frame masculinity as a *project* of becoming, one that allowed market workers to embrace, endure and (hope to) overcome their present frustrations. In particular, I propose that intimacy (as closeness, love and sexuality) is a catalyser of potential futures in the face of despair. Through everyday actions as intimate partners, men painstakingly *projected* themselves ahead, acting upon the disconnection between the expectations of what a "real man" should be and the actual chances of becoming one. The daily work of intimacy, stretching between past expectations and future aspirations, structured both the gendered identity of my informants and their experience of time.

As a result, masculine temporality here is not defined by consecutiveness and linearity - easily exposed to crisis if interrupted by structural impediments. It rather appears as a slow project of becoming that undramatically opens up to possible fulfilling futures.

Stitching Womanhood in the Zongo: Seamstress Apprenticeship in Accra

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In this paper I follow a group of young seamstress apprentices in the *zongos* ('strangers' settlements') of Accra. Apprenticeship not only initiates the women into the world of sewing, but also crafts the girls' identity skills enabling them to grow into adult social and moral womanhood. I argue that the years at the sewing shop are a way to suspend adulthood and explore various possible futures whereby the shop serves as a window to the world and offers a controlled playground for girls on the threshold of womanhood. The apprenticeship acts as a claim to adolescence, a novel life stage in-between the otherwise straight line from childhood into adult and married life. Spending days and nights together with peers, with whom they share food, prayers, love and life stories, the seamstresses 'open their eyes' and get the taste of a world that will be more out of reach once they enter the withdrawn life of marriage. As I will show, working and living together for years in a small community that acts as a family, apprentices become socialised into the moralities of adulthood within often long-lasting networks, while learning how to gain a certain sense of financial and social independence within married life.

Living in and Making Time: Gender, Temporalities and Embodied Infrastructures of Care

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Feminist philosophers, following Simone de Beauvoir, contend that gender is both acquired in, and a particular lived experience of, time. Megan Burke, for example, has recently suggested that Beauvoir's feminist phenomenology discloses the way that women's 'subjectivity is generated through the *specific* and *concrete* way time is assumed' (Burke 2019: 119). In this paper we want to extend that work by arguing that gender and temporality are best thought about not just in terms of the way time is differentially assumed but also in terms of the specific and concrete ways that different times are made, transgressed and potentially reorganised.

We do so for two reasons. First, because, as feminist scholars have repeatedly demonstrated, time is a relational system of privilege that is foundational to gender regimes, intersectionally understood. Put simply, people who are relatively time rich, mainly men, are dependent on the people, mainly women, who make time, in multiple senses of the term, for them. Second, following feminist anthropologists (Weiner 1976, Andaya and Fleming 2018), thinking of people, women especially, as makers of time, and creators of different temporalities, rather than simply as marking, managing or learning to live within the confines of their allotted time, the 'passive present', invites us to consider the ways that women not only 'protest against the long wait that is their life' Beauvoir 2010, 649, cited in Burke 2019: 112) but transgress, make and live time otherwise.

We explore the entanglement of living in and making time by drawing on two distinct bodies of research, one by Clisby on processes of gendering women in the North East of England and the other by Johnson on Filipino migrant women's aspirations for and achievements in

creating alternative futures. Both these accounts demonstrate in different ways how for many women 'restricted temporality' and 'spatiality' remain 'an underlying structure of feminine existence' (Burke, 2019, 122). At the same time our respective research discloses the different ways that the 'embodied infrastructures of care' (Clisby and Holdsworth 2016: 7-12) women produce and exercise for themselves and for others create bridges between and to other space time possibilities (Anzaldúa and Moraga 1984).

Wilo, Reina de Macas: Temporalities of Gender and Capitalism in the Upper Amazon

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When is one a woman? In this paper, I follow Wilo, a Shuar *gay travesti* who sometimes appears as Nicole, through formative experiences that led him to become an indigenous LGBT activist in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Involuntary femininity as a child becomes a playful transformation at parties, a secret, a livelihood, a political position, and a pastime. I relate these experiences to profound economic and political transformations that affected Shuar people and settler society alike in Ecuador. With the generalization of wage labor, new forms of freedom became available to Shuar men and women, as well as new forms of constraints. In particular, it has become possible for both men and women to carry out activities traditionally restricted to the other gender and to experiment with new forms of personhood and sociality. At the same time, however, new forms of alienation have emerged within capitalism, relying on access to labor and wage-stratification rather than brute domination to restrict the range of possibility afforded to gender, sexual and racial minorities. Following Wilo from a Shuar community to ever larger cities and back, and from insouciance to activism and disappointment brings in clearer focus the economic nature and implications of indigenous LGBT activism, as well as its limits and failures.

Does 'men in the bottle' mean 'nieces in school'? Balancing the joy of instant accumulation among men and eternal recognition by female kin

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Mozambican women in Maputo's vibrant nightlife, often known as *curtidoras*, frequently face a dilemma: seducing well-off men who can shower them with gifts and money can be a gateway to instant personal enrichment and access to luxury, consumption and experiencing life in the city's higher circles, but it can also become a chance to fulfill hard felt obligations towards their kin, friends and ancestors by passing on most of their accumulated wealth to others and see how the fruit of their "labour" over time spurs wellbeing, survival or maybe even success among their next of kin. This dilemma carries a gendered element in several ways. Firstly, the practice of putting men in the bottle, which refers to *curtidoras'* seducing and receiving money from wealthier men, is a practice of the moment, associated with temporary youth, beauty and consumption of young women in urban nightlife, a practice which is often at odds with the demands from kin who expect a form of support from *curtidoras* that in the long run guarantees the latter a status and place in the wider web of social affairs. As stressed by their female elders in particular, 'the more a daughter can provide to their children and parents, the less likely it is that they will be forgotten, the more likely it is that ancestors forgive them their sins'. Secondly, the moral economy of 'putting men in a bottle' is built on a logic of extraction of material values from and among men in the city while the logic of redistribution of material values is seen as pertaining to a female domain

of life-giving, survival and reproduction in the poor suburbs as well as access to an ancestral afterlife, ensured by the female elders. In this economy, men often take on a peripheral even if significant role as targets of erotic tricks or as recipients of support from a daughter or niece. Inspired by scholars such as Signe Arnfred, Maurice Bloch, Jennifer Cole and Ifi Amadiume, I argue that the practice of *curtidoras* and their kin in Maputo calls for an inversion of the classic notion by Simone de Beauvoir that the life of a woman and the female condition is associated with “immanence” in the shape of childbearing/reproduction/beauty while the lives of men are associated with “transcendence” through such activities as work, knowledge and art. Drawing on years of fieldwork in Maputo, Mozambique I show how transcendence, in the existentialist sense, is perhaps more closely tied to social and concrete reproduction, and that, as the sexual economy expands in urban Africa generating money for consumption and/or social reproduction is increasingly a collective female art.

The Elephant’s Graveyard: Time Manipulation as Transgression among Elderly Men

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By arguing that “waiting” is at the core of what it means to be(come) a woman, Simone de Beauvoir drew attention to the interlacing of gender and temporality. If “waiting” is indeed a “feminine” quality, it seems interesting that within Danish health discourses waiting is often tied to elderly men. Especially the men who refuse to make an effort to improve their living conditions and passively withdraws, awaiting the end. In this paper, I start out by discussing the form of waiting associated with the well-known legend of the “elephant’s graveyard.” This story claims that elephants instinctively withdraw to remote areas to die when reaching a certain age. The figure of the elephant is of relevance as it repeatedly emerged in conversations with health care workers during my ethnographic research about elderly men in rural Denmark. The elephant seemed to offer a conceptual vehicle when discussing the “nature” of some elderly men who isolated themselves and refused to attend social activities at the local health centers. From the perspective of the elderly men their withdrawal was unambiguously grounded in ideals of being “producers” and the painful awareness that they had nothing to offer. Now, as Beauvoir wrote (though about women)—their “whole existence is waiting” (Beauvoir 2010:649). They did not consider the municipal health center a solution to their problems as this institution was seen as a feminized space (*en kvindeverden*) that revolved exclusively around activities concerning various forms of introspection (often exemplified by the congenial question from the staff “So how are you today?”) Thus, it did not emerge as a feminized space only due the fact that it was mainly staffed by women. Rather, I suggest, the health center gained its gendered character due to a particular temporal intensity that emerged when the “waiting” of the men was challenged as a legitimate response to changing circumstances in the man's life course.

Girls’ Education, Spirit Possession and the Deferral of Promised Futures in Niger

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In Niger the past decades have witnessed numerous cases of spirit possession among adolescent schoolgirls. When exorcisms are performed, a narrative emerges, enfolding humans and spirits in a history of violence and disaffection that wreaks havoc with the linearity of time. In the last century, urbanization and other transformations accompanying Muslim reformists’ projects of

purification have disrupted the spiritscape. When trees were cut to make space for schools, the spirits were effectively dislodged from their homes. They now haunt the very venues whose emergence contributed to their displacement and seek redress for past harms.

In the global effort to narrow the gender gap, international organizations have adopted a school-to-the-rescue vision of development that promotes girls' education as both the surest pathway to female empowerment and a critical step to national economic growth. This model of development is based on the notion that when girls forego schooling to marry early, they are robbed of their aspirations, agency, and economic capital. Niger, which leads the world in the practice of early marriage, has been the target of development initiatives aimed at keeping girls in schools so that the interval between the onset of puberty and the advent of marriage is lengthened. By forcing girls to postpone (often indefinitely) their studies, spirit possession makes plain the destructive effects of imposed dreams and aspirations of social mobility—what Lauren Berlant refers to as “cruel optimism”—while also complicating the model of schools as engines of development.

Drawing on the incipient anthropology of intangibles, I explore the narratives of ecological loss dramatized through the possession of schoolgirls, the wider claims about the past that these narratives authorize, and how these claims plague the present with the past's burdensome legacy while calling into question the future mapped out by schooling. I follow the divergent trajectory of two schoolgirls who suffered from spiritual attacks and discuss how possession, by unsettling the aspirational temporalities of schooling, obliquely points to the contradictory potential of education.

Chronotopias of Clutter and the Gender of Storage in U.S. Domestic Space

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In middle-class United States, the stuff of storage constitutes a kind of anti-kairos: stored things are not of this time. They belong to a past left behind, they await a future that whose arrival is uncertain, or they assert the possibility of continuity between bygone people and places and potential imminences. Beyond the North Atlantic symbolic imagination of blood transferred across generations, this material assertion of continuity is the labor of kinship, a practice of keeping while preserving the immaterial associations that give detritus significance. I examine the gendered quality of this labor of storage, closely related to the equally gendered battle against the encroachment of clutter. In the desperate struggle to keep domestic order, untold acreage is occupied by a just out of reach future when “there will be more time” to sort the accumulating debris into its proper channels and trajectories. The lines of gender are further enforced by discourses around sentimentality, rationality, utility, and animism that wall off promiscuous spatiotemporal logics, inhibiting both men and women from articulating their relationships with material possessions. Once out of the box, the concealed magicity of stored things often spins into medicalized ad hoc diagnoses of “hoarding disorder.”

Active Drifting and the Changing Land Relations in Northern Uganda

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After years of war, encampment and insecurity, people in northern Uganda have been moving back to “where the war found them”, which has resulted in pervasive land conflicts, and in power and gender relations being negotiated. As Lubkemann (2008) reminds us, we should not treat war as an event that suspends social processes – war is a transformative social condition. Throughout a conflict, gendered, generational, and other kinds of social struggles continue and new challenges and opportunities make social actors realize their lives in new ways. We suggest that not only war and encampment, but also the aftermath of war and its many land wrangles should be looked upon as a “social condition” in which gender relations are renegotiated and social actors realize their lives in new ways. This paper focuses on the changing relations of customary land governance in the Acholi sub-region, where, we argue, women who have often been portrayed as victims of war and land conflicts, are in reality actively negotiating their access to land, which under customary law, they do not own. The notion of *active drifting* helps us highlight how women justify their claims to land through narratives of gender pasts, and find pathways to futures that may also involve opportunities and alternatives that they are able to grasp more easily than men, by changing and negotiating their position within and between seasons in ways that help them access land.

The First Thousand Days: Temporality, Population and Futurity.

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Biehl and Locke propose that ‘Ethnography is not just protophilosophy, but a way of staying connected to open-ended, even mysterious, social processes (2017: 10). They note that ‘the work of becoming is inherently a creation’ (p. 9), and as such, is indeterminate. Yet as an enormous literature in the anthropology of biomedicine shows, there is little truck with indeterminacy in medical models. Biomedical recording of reproduction is highly temporalized. Foetal development is measured in terms of age; pregnancy in weeks and months; dangers are posed by gestational ages too old and too young: disparities of time in relation to different embodiments. The focus is on the maternal figure and its propriety. New scientific findings press temporality still further, suggesting that development in ‘the first thousand days’, from conception to two years of age, holds significant import for the future well-being not only of individuals but of populations yet to come. Gender is at stake in how the state imagines its interventions in reproductive health. How do biomedical temporalities intersect with how people navigate everyday life? How does the extension of foetal and infant health into a durative of ‘the first thousand days’ affect how we understand well-being? I address these questions by drawing on research in Cape Town, South Africa, that explores how biomedical knowledges of the pregnant body settle in people’s everyday practices of making families and futures.

Myths of the Near Future: Gendered Geographies in Post-conflict Gulu, Northern Uganda

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In 2009/2010 I followed a group of young men working with popular music in the provincial town Gulu in Northern Uganda. In the wake of war, they were trying to find their way in life as artists, recording music and music videos. Refugee camps were closing down, and both policy debates, conflicts and everyday conversations revolved around how the future prosperity of the people in Northern Uganda was related to where they settled and how. These myths of the near future,

spatial imaginaries of a subjunctive kind, also entwined with the stories that the young men told in and about their music. The songs and videos became a sort of moral laboratory in which to try out, play out and negotiate what was yet to come. Central in these experiments were questions of how men and women relate, how kin relate, and the role of these relations in the places of the future. Ten years later I revisit the artists in Northern Uganda to find Gulu with a newfound status as a Ugandan city and my friends with their near futures behind them, as failing fathers, as struggling partners, as political entrepreneurs and as men still navigating between “village” and “town.” I argue that in post-conflict Gulu imaginaries of the future are co-constituted by gender relations and urban-rural relations. These myths of the near future are put at stake in individual lives within a complex field of international relations, commercialisation of land, governance and aid.

Time pe aya karo (Please Come on Time!): Female Migrant Workers, Informal Labour and the Oppression of Industrial Time in Mumbai

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This paper will analyse the multiple temporal experiences of female rural-urban workers within the remits of informal labour in the commercial city. My ethnographic landscape is Mumbai, where over 30,000 rural women arrive daily to escape sexual violence, political conflict, poverty, widowhood, caste discrimination, and large-scale unemployment in the region’s diminishing farming sector. A significant number of these rural women re-skill as cooks, cleaners, nannies and nurses within casual labour economies, which usually service upper-class urban households. Even though these non-contractual, low-income jobs are considered to be extensions of women’s ‘naturally’ nurturing, domestic responsibilities (including childcare, tending to the elderly, cooking and serving fresh food, and keeping households hygienic), the time-bound nature of these chores, in response to the tight work and leisure schedules maintained within affluent households, are experienced by migrant women as disciplinary and ‘unnatural’ (as against the more fluid forms of maternal care among peasant families). Many of the women did not know how to read a watch, and this lack of time-education was a source of oppressive surveillance over female staff. Other workers who did eventually adapt to the temporal pace generated by the mechanical clock, continued to feign ignorance about reading time, in order to remain liberated of the punitive violence embedded in structural time-keeping. Stepping away from the wider anthropological discussions on neoliberal, capitalistic and bureaucratic time (see Bear 2014), which is the backdrop for my analysis, this paper analyses the scapes and scopes of micro-level gendered resistances against the oppressive, masculinist, and infantilising effects of industrial time in modern cities.

‘In a Day I Can Die Twice’: Young South Sudanese Men Suspended between Displacement, Masculinity and Madness

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Uganda currently hosts more than a million South Sudanese refugees fleeing a brutal ongoing conflict. While the humanitarian system’s attention has been directed primarily at women and children, the needs and experiences of young men have been overlooked.

Uganda’s “settlement policy” has been praised for the alleged freedom (e.g. of movement, cultivation, work) that it grants refugees. However, in reality refugees often confront insufficient

food aid and meagre opportunities to earn money. Young refugee men's lives are impacted in particular ways by such conditions. Despite their efforts they are often unable to move towards what they feel they should achieve at the early stages of adulthood (earning money, cultivating land, marrying, sustaining a family). We argue that they are not simply stuck in a state of 'waithood', but suspended in two ways: they are in a stressful temporal suspense regarding the future and they find themselves temporarily 'suspended as men' in the settlements. Many of them develop different forms of mental illness; their suffering is heavily medicalized, and mainly addressed through psychotropic medication.

Drawing on Torre's ongoing ethnographic fieldwork in the refugee settlement of Palabek and on Meinert's work on youth, trauma and temporality, we argue that part of the development of mental illness is connected to experiences of displacement and temporal suspension of masculinity. Through two case-studies of young South Sudanese men who developed psychosis, we explore how psychiatric responses to the young men's conditions sometimes worsen, rather than alleviate their suffering, because it makes them increasingly passive, and does not recognize their social needs for opportunities to move on as men.

A Room of One's Own: Re-writing Gendered Scripts about Daughters, Wives, In-betweens and the 'Otherwise'

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The arguably most guarded and crucial period of the life of many women is the transition from daughter to wife and/or mother. I hone in on gendered expectations and scripts in place through discussing how this period is felt and shaped by three young Danish women of Middle Eastern background, alongside stories from two young women in a township in South Africa. I suggest that the politics of kinship, sexuality, and gender can be approached through a focus on household: where do young women live, with whom, and for how long? The terms matrilineal, patrilineal and uxorilineal are inadequate to capture the dynamic arrangement of this period of life, yet still hold explanatory power in pointing to whom can negotiate this period and their living arrangements in which ways. Who can claim a room of their own, and how is such a room created in the digital sphere if not in material form? Who and what is marriage for? Who wants (not) to have children and why? What are the in-betweens and the women living 'otherwise' than the scripts in place, after? And is time working for them?