

1. Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt (2007) identify five intellectual foundations of contemporary transnational scholarship. Please identify them and discuss briefly selected text(s) from the syllabus as examples of each of these intellectual foundations. (8 points)

According to Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt (2007: 3-4), there are five intellectual foundations of Transnational Studies:

1. *Empirical Transnationalism*, focus of which is “on describing, mapping, classifying and quantifying novel and/or potentially important transnational phenomena and dynamics”. Its main tasks are identification and description of a wide range of groups, such as ethnic or religious communities, professional associations, and terrorist groups. There are many social scientific works on these topics with these aims. Here we will give example of the research of Dutch authors Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes (2006) who conducted a quantitative study on immigrants from the United States, Japan, Iraq, former-Yugoslavia, Morocco and the Dutch Antilles who are living in the Netherlands. What they were mainly doing was classifying listed immigrants according to their levels of integration into Dutch society and transnational activities they are involved in. However, they connected empirical data with theory and contextualized results according to dynamic of Dutch society.
2. *Methodological Transnationalism*, task of which is “reclassifying existing data, evidence, and historical and ethnographic accounts that are based on bounded or bordered units so that transnational forms and processes are revealed”. Shortly, it tries to more accurately capture transnational realities. Although they are writing about assimilation and integration, Joppke and Morawska (2003: 3-4), following Bourdieu’s and Luhmann’s theories argue that today’s society should be seen as “a multiplicity of autonomous and interdependent ‘fields’ or ‘systems’, which engage actors only in specific respects, and never in totality”. In the context of integration, they write that from a systemic, decentered view of society, the concept of integration disappears. Applying this to the context of Transnational Studies, we can say that processes such as assimilation and integration are happening on many different levels of society, e.g. education, incomes, employments, or political participations.
3. *Theoretical Transnationalism*, which “formulates explanations and crafts interpretations that either parallel, supplement or are integrated into existing

theoretical frameworks and accounts” (Khagram and Levitt, 2007: 3). This foundation is also frequent in works of contemporary theories of society. We will give examples of few of them. Firstly, there is work of Joppke and Morawska (2003: 26) where they write about roots and the context of establishment of transnationalism. According to them, it was “conceptualized as a strategy of resistance ‘from below’ by members of marginalized and underprivileged racial or ethnic groups from (semi-)peripheral parts of the world against the hegemonic powers of the ‘core’ structures of white receiver societies”. The second example is work of Portes et al. (1999: 217-218) where they are defining transnational migrants, transnational field, and transnational activities. Everything what they write about is based on duality – migrants are speaking two languages, they have homes in two countries, and they live through contacts across national borders. Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes (2006) would argue that transnational migrants live on even more than only two sides.

4. *Philosophical Transnationalism*, which claims inherent transnationality of social worlds and lives. Therefore, transnational processes “are the rule rather than exception, the underlying reality rather than a derivative by-product” (Khagram and Levitt, 2007: 3). It also rejects the arguments about organization of social life within or between nation, states, or other kinds of bordered or bounded social systems containers. However, it does not deny their importance. Besides examples of Bourdieu’s and Manchester School’s theories that Khagram and Levitt (2007: 17) list, we can mention Steven Vertovec (2001: 576), who argues that transnationalism is certainly not a new theoretical approach, and who also refers to the influences of Manchester School, as well as of Chicago School.
5. *Public Transnationalism*, which allows space to imagine, create, and legitimate options for social changes that are usually obscured because of the assumptions that world is nationally bounded and bordered. For the purpose of this foundation, we will list examples given by Khagram and Levitt (2007: 18-19) – Ann Marie Slaughter’s work on transgovernmental networks where she concluded that one of the main points in producing stability in world affairs are the connections that bureaucratic agencies establish across disaggregated and decentralized states. There is also Luis Guarnizo’s work on the macro-economic impacts of migrants’ micro-level transnational economic activities.

2. “Migration is an inherently cultural act.” Please, take a position on this statement and elaborate on it using at least 2 readings from the syllabus. (8 points)

Although in contemporary scientific discourse we can usually read about migrations enhanced by economic reasons, they are not such linear, clear, and one-dimensional acts. Besides obvious physical moving from one place to another, migrations include wide spectra of economic, political, social, and cultural activities. If we divide spheres of people’s actions on private and public ones, we can say that *public sphere* is constituted of public opinion, that it possesses its own cultural codes, is patterned by a set of different institutions such as legal and journalistic ones, and is visible in historically distinctive sets of interactional practices such as civility, equality, criticism, and respect (Alexander, 1988: 7). Described sphere is present in each society, and migrants, in the process of becoming members of one, are also participating in the functioning of public, social, or civil sphere. This statement is supported by studies on immigration and ethnicity which have indicated that migrants are assimilating, which means that they are active participants of fronts of society like intermarriages, educational attainments, and political activities (Joppke and Morawska, 2003: 2). If we are going to broaden this brief discussion to transnational migrations and involvements, we will become even more aware of the cultural character of acts of migrations. Namely, as it is already mentioned, transnationalism can be seen as a type of resistance “from below” by members of marginalized ethnic groups, in Alexander’s discourse *outgroups*, against the hegemonic powers of the “core” structures, or *coregroups* (Joppke and Morawska, 2003: 26). In this context, resistance can be classified as cultural act, although it has consequences in spheres such as economics, education, or politics. Finally, while immigrants are assimilating and integrating into new society, they are not abandoning their culture and language, but they are preserving them, while adapting to new, second culture, and its language, norms, and values (Portes et al., 1999: 229). In conclusion we can say that migrations definitely have more cultural characteristics than perhaps economic or politic one. However, economic consequences are more perceivable and more visible in a way, or less abstract, and of course economy is the leading force of all societies and relations between them, which is why they are so emphasized, and interesting for research in all kinds of sciences.

3. “Methodological nationalism is a tendency to accept the nation-state and its boundaries as a given.” What are the consequences of this tendency in migration research? Provide examples. (8 points)

There are three kinds of *methodological nationalism* (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003, according to Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004: 6-7):

- *Ignoring* the importance of nationalism for modern societies - this usually comes together with the following type.
- *Naturalization* or perceiving as given that the boundaries of the nation-state delimit the unit of analysis.
- *Territorial limitation* that bounds the researches of social processes to the political and geographic borders.

Methodological nationalism, together with its listed types makes development of transnational theory and conduction of transnational analysis very difficult (Khagram and Levitt, 2007: 11). As it is already written, it bounds flows of scientific thinking and decreases quality of research results. It also encourages and contributes to the maintenance of *status quo* – of continuous perception of the states as containers of society or culture, in Ulrich Beck’s words. To continue with Beck’s theory, he argues that, because of methodological nationalism we are not able to completely understand and analyze processes of globalization. Therefore, he proposes new approach called *methodological cosmopolitanism* which is supposed to scientifically capture transnational reality (Mesić, 2007). In his theory of cosmopolitanism technologies become the most important in society, global media and consumerism lead to the new levels of consciousness, which results with intersection of the individual and the global (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004: 7-8). However, his ideas are still only used in theoretical discussions, and his concepts are hardly applicable on empirical levels (Kuti and Božić, 2011).

Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt (2007: 7-8) are giving us the examples of researches on twentieth century business development which often use comparative approaches while taking nation-states for granted instead of conceptualizing companies and markets as parts of cross border networks of investments, productions, distributions, and exchanges. Similar situation is with studies of religion and politics, despite the obvious transnational character of religions such as Protestantism, or Roman Catholicism, or political communities and identities like freemasonry, trade unionism, and political progressivism. As consequences that methodological nationalism has on social

sciences' researches we can list focus of researches either on one state only, or on comparison between few states; that is followed by differentiating and classifying phenomena, social movements, groups, or identities according to geographical borders.

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