

Exploring transnational connections from an intersectional perspective

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Exploring Transnationalism from an Intersectional perspective

1. Trans-*Nation*-alism – early and contemporary
2. Bringing in Gender and Intersectionality
3. Care-Migration and Transnational Placement Agencies
4. Conclusion: the Advantage of a Transnational Lens



Transnationalism is a strategy of identification and a provocative critique of the ideological degeneration of the term nation which functions as 'natural' unit.

Like gender, the nation is a constitutive element of social, political, and cultural relations based on the construction of differences in terms of settlement and belonging which are generated through exercise of power and hegemonic policies.

“Once we rethink the boundaries of social life, it becomes clear that the incorporation of individuals into nation states and the maintenance of transnational connections are not contradictory social processes. Simultaneity, or living lives that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally, is a possibility that needs to be theorized and explored. Migrant incorporation into a new land and transnational connections to a homeland or to dispersed networks of family, compatriots, or persons who share a religious or ethnic identity can occur at the same time and reinforce one another” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1003).

Trans-Nationalism

Micro level: Households of migrant families, mobility of family members between two or more households-countries, remittances, social networks.

Meso level: Interconnections between non-profit und Profit-organizations.

Macro level: institutional/ legal arrangements, cross border legislation and regulation (UN, Court of Human Rights etc.)

Ludger Pries 2008

Transnationalism, Gender and Intersectionality

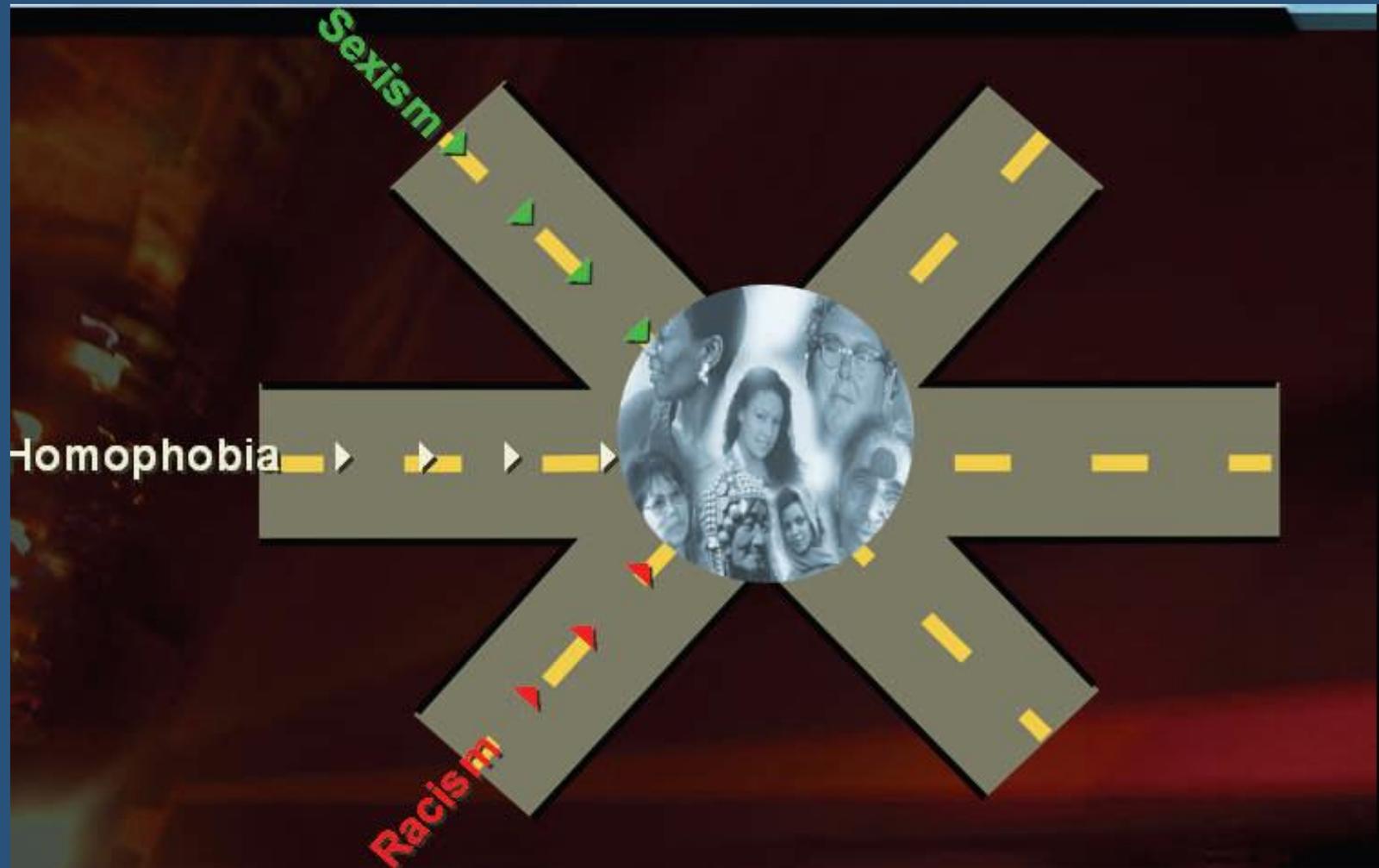
„ We want to suggest that ,transnationalism’ can do to the nation what gender did for sexed bodies: provide the conceptual acid that denaturalizes all their deployments, compelling us to acknowledge that the nation, like sex, is a thing contested, interrupted, and always shot through with contradictions” (Briggs, McCormick & Way 2008: 627)

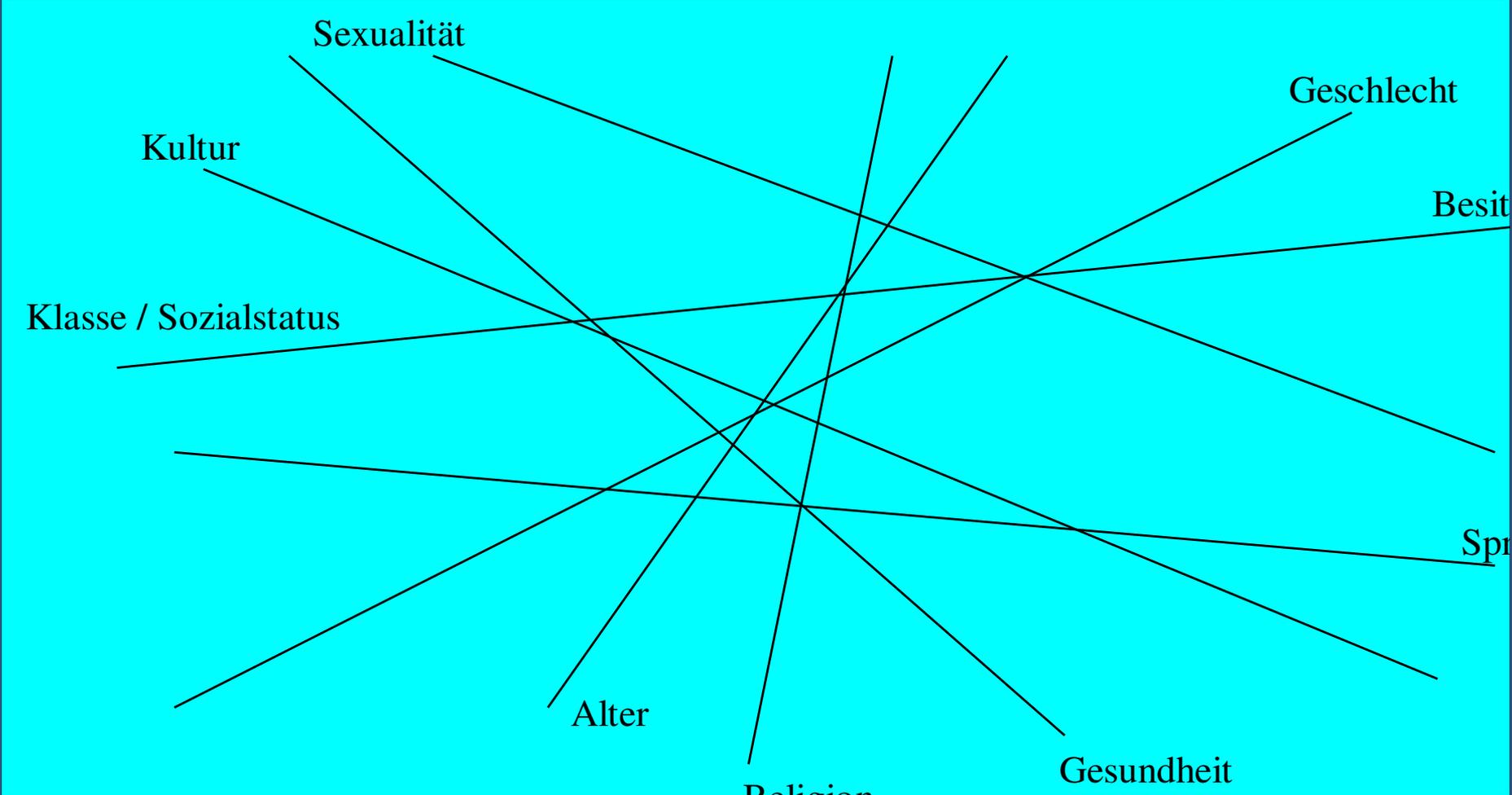
Bringing in Gender and Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the theory about the interlocking and the interplay/interaction of social structures and social positionings concerned with:

- a) Level of the social structure/social stratification: multidimensionality of social inequality and power-relations,
- b) The subject level: the positionality (identity, belonging) of subjects with regard to their place in a hierarchical social order: privileged or de-privileged /target of discrimination.

Intersectionality - Kimberlé Crenshaw





„Intersectionality takes up the political project of making the social and material consequences of the categories of gender/race/class visible, but does so by employing methodologies compatible with the poststructuralist project of deconstructing categories, unmasking universalism, and exploring the dynamic and contradictory working of power.“ (Davis 2008)



The Global Market for Care Workers

- 70 Million (ILO estimation)
- 2/3ds female
- income far below national average salary
- Increased precarization of care labor
- 45% not entitled to minimum rest periods (ILO 2018)



Marketization of Care

- Globally, some regions and states treat the recruitment of female migrant care workers as a core element of a national labor market policy → enable female citizens to engage in waged work.
- EU: the introduction of the adult-worker model requires a reorganization of work-life-balance: change of the traditional gender regime.
- Neoliberal interventions in welfare policies have readjusted the distribution of care provision between the state, the family, and the market → 'cash for care' policies into private households.

Migrant Care Givers in the New Care Economy

- In EU: Majority from Eastern Europe
- Educated members of (lower) middle classes in home countries;
- Social and cultural capital;
- Aged 18-70;
- Documented and Undocumented;
- Migrating mothers;
- Commuter migration, circular migration - rotation schemes;
- 24 hours around the clock – services
- Compulsion to make a home in the employer's home

Transnational Placement Agencies

- New Players in the market (stock market listed corporations)
- Majority pro-profit
- European legislation: de-regulation
- Lack of control – no control of business practices
- Lack of control of working conditions in care households
- ‘Self-employed’ care workers – “Garbage contracts” (asymmetric risk-distribution)
- 24 hours – decent work?

Placement agencies' homepages – The ideal of a home care society

"Society needs our care industry, without which the huge gap between the growing number of people to be cared for at home and the resources available domestically could not be bridged. The VHBP is committed to ensuring that home-based care is established as the regular third pillar of care for the elderly and the diseased in the Nursing Insurance Act."
(Verband für häusliche Betreuung und Pflege, VHP).

“Most older, frail people want to live in their usual environment for as long as possible.”
Most people wish to support their beloved, but given the dominance of the adult worker model, in the long run it is very stressful and exhausting for family members to do one's own job and the family"(Linara)

"We stand by your side, looking for a suitable solution for you and if necessary replace the caregiver." (Linara)

"It's nice to see, that, when all is well, everything is right and the old people feel uplifted with the house angel and the house angel feels safe, so that's it, yes, like a family member in the end. It's a give and a take, that's important." (House Angel GmbH).

Some agencies present the employers as **host families and the workers as guests**: "Guests from Poland as nursing home help in German guest households (Toll 24 Care).

Or the service is framed as a **development project**: "To support Poles in the envisaged close cooperation in the host family" (ibid.).



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Dignified ageing in one's own home



WÜRDEVOLLES ALTERN IM EIGENEN ZUHAUSE

Ältere und pflegebedürftige Menschen möchten so lange wie möglich in ihrer gewohnten Umgebung leben. Linara ermöglicht deutschlandweit die **Betreuung und Pflege älterer Menschen im eigenen Zuhause** und nimmt den Angehörigen damit die Aufgaben ab, welche die eigenen Kräfte übersteigen.

Das Versorgungskonzept von Linara - Betreuung zu Hause bietet die häusliche Altenpflege **deutschlandweit** in Form einer sogenannten **24 Stunden Betreuung** an. Wir vermitteln Betreuungspersonen, die während ihres Einsatzes in häuslicher Gemeinschaft mit der pflegebedürftigen Person leben.



Communication technology –
Social glue



Transnational life-world

- a) The relationship between the care arrangements back in the countries of origin, including the effects of these arrangements on the children in transnational families;
- b) The gender relationships that play a key role in these arrangements;
- c) The intra-familial and extra-familial distribution of the care work;
- d) The frequency and quality of communication between mothers and children, particularly by means of digital media.

Advantages of a transnational lens

1. Provocative Critique of Naturalization of 'the Nation'.
2. Focuses on multiple, multi-directional connections, new forms of sociability.
3. New symbolic language: from roots to routes (St. Hall).
4. Does not deny the durable matrix of the nation state.
5. Rejects the celebration of 'Universal nomadism' (Braidotti). Continuing hierarchies between citizenships: it matters which passport we have for the option how and where we can move.
6. Focuses on the concept of 'social space' in which social inequality is organized along intersectional discriminations
7. Reflects 'Geographies of power (material, discursive, cultural, social).

Helma Lutz

Die Hinterbühne der Care-Arbeit

Transnationale Perspektiven auf
Care-Migration im geteilten Europa

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