

Learning activity

Multitudes of Transnationalism: Stepping out of the nation state frame of mind

TIME: 60-90 mins

LEARNING AIMS:

- Explore different perceptions of transnationalism through diverse definitions and practical experiences.
- Understand the concept of the translocal
- Analyze your local embeddedness and transnational connections in your community.
- Connect with other participants on how we can strengthen transnationalism from below.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 10-20

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS: Print out of the grid below and cut and fold it so that each paper has on the one side the quote and on the other side the explanation. Pens and paper.

FRAMING:

This learning activity provides different pathways that encourage the learner to step out of the nation-state frame of mind and provides different approaches to further explore the concepts of translocalism and transnationalism. It explores the complexities of transnationalism, aiming to broaden understanding through diverse definitions and practical experiences. Participants are invited to engage with different approaches of transnationalism from the bottom up, connecting them to their own struggles and experiences.. The activity deepens knowledge on transnationalism's diverse approaches and its implications for organizing across borders.

FACILITATION - Option 1:

Step 1: Welcome and opening

Feel free to choose an energizer or a welcome round, depending on your group and how well they know each other.

Step 2. Setting up the space: Diving deeper into the different approaches to Stepping out of the nation state frame of mind

Allocate three areas in the room. One has a printed out version of the poem, one a printed version of the graphic and the third an audio version or a printed out format of the manifesto. If there are other materials that dive into translocalism or transnationalism that stem from the locality, group or

social movement context that you run this activity in, feel free to add them. They do not have to be of written format. Other formats or materials work well.

Step 3: Freely wonder and associate.

Invite groups to wander across the space in silence and explore the different stations with their contents. Give them sufficient time based on the number of items that are displayed. After 20-30 min (depending on group size and number of items) ask them to find a partner.

Step 4. Checking in with a partner

Brief check in with a partner to share first associations with the different pieces.

- How did the different items made you feel?
- What came to mind while you were exploring them?
- Was there something that you resonated more or less with?

Step 5: Discussing small groups, based on association or interest

Allow people to choose one item they would like to engage with more. Broadly speaking the areas are MEMORY, DECOLONISING LANGUAGE, POLITICAL INTERVENTION. If you added additional items, feel free to add additional sections. Invite small groups for a facilitated or self-facilitated group along the guiding questions per section.

Group Memory: Poem

At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border (William Edgar Stafford)¹

This is the field where the battle did not happen,
where the unknown soldier did not die.
This is the field where grass joined hands,
where no monument stands,
and the only heroic thing is the sky.

Birds fly here without any sound,
unfolding their wings across the open.
No people killed—or were killed—on this ground
hallowed by neglect and an air so tame
that people celebrate it by forgetting its name

Questions

- Where and which borders are crossed or upheld?
- Which symbols of (trans)-nationalism are employed?
- How is the relationship between human and beyond-human world?

¹ William Stafford, "At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border" from *The Way It Is: New & Selected Poems*. Copyright © 1998 by the Estate of William Stafford.

- Who has the agency?
- Does transnationalism appear in an oppressive or emancipatory shape and if so, how?
- Which other poetry, prose or fiction come to mind, when thinking about transnationalism?

Group Decolonising our Language: Epistemic Disobedience

Does decoloniality have a synonym?
How do you perform epistemic disobedience?
Will mainstreaming decolonization liberate us?

Sorry is not enough.

[underrepresentation, marginalisation, discrimination - amplify, include, integrate]

Sorry, words are not enough.

*coloniality, white supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism - intertwined
violences*

how can we talk about decolonisation when we don't want to talk about decolonisation?

how to talk about colonial violence without having to return to complex theoretical discourses? By dressing it up in academic narratives, do we not reproduce the same violence and exclusions?

Do we have to keep explaining these things? (Do we?!)

decolonising the body

decolonising the body
Where does coloniality live in your body?
It took away our dances.

It made us sit on chairs, convinced us that this is civilisation.

Questions:

- What are your associations with the words on the piece in front of you?
- How do you see language as a tool that enforces colonial oppression today?
- Do you have examples where language oppression took place?
- What are ways to reclaim language, even when we organise in a place that is not connected to our ancestral or mother tongue?
- Is epistemic disobedience a tool for decolonising language? How does it or could it work in your social movement context?
- Looking back at the past years, in which moments did language surface as a political question?
- Is there a way you could engage in an act of epistemic disobedience in this learning context, think about how and if you want to enact it right away?

Group Political Intervention: A manifesto

A manifesto

The apparent infallibility of globalization comes up hard against the stubborn disobedience of reality. While neoliberalism is pursuing its war, groups of protesters, kernels of rebels, are forming throughout the planet. The empire of financiers with full pockets confronts the rebellion of pockets of resistance. Yes, pockets. Of all sizes, of different colors, of varying shapes. Their sole common point is a desire to resist the “New World Order” and the crime against humanity that is represented by this Fourth World War. Neoliberalism attempts to subjugate millions of beings, and seeks to rid itself of all those who have no place in its new ordering of the world. But these “disposable” people are in revolt: women, children, old people, young people, indigenous peoples, ecological militants, homosexuals, lesbians, HIV activists, workers, and all those who upset the ordered progress of the new world system and who organize and are in struggle. Resistance is being woven by those who are excluded from “modernity.”²

Questions:

- Can the language of internationalism, the processes of transnationalization, be reclaimed from the powerful and rearmed to be used by the subaltern?
- How does this manifesto use the language of Western imperialism against itself?
- In what ways does it seek to build transversal and transnational coalitions and alliances between different groups across geographies?

Step 6: Returning to the plenary (

Invite groups to return to the large room and each group to share some snippets from their discussion. Allow for questions and interactions between the groups

Conclusion and takeaways

Gather participants' takeaways and insights. Conclude by saying that transnationalism can be understood through diverse definitions and practical experiences. Understanding transnationalism requires consideration of border-crossing, symbolism, agency, and its oppressive or emancipatory nature. Strengthening transnationalism from below involves engaging in discussions, sharing experiences, and fostering connections and alliances across different groups and geographies.

Further learning activities (optional)

FACILITATION - Option 2:

Opportunity to give event further into the conceptual and theoretical backgrounds of transnationalism

Step 1. Check in round about transnationalism

- What do you associate with transnationalism
- Have you had any transnational experience lately? What happened?
- How effective is transnational organizing in your perspective?

² From *The Fourth World War Has Begun* by Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos (2002, 282).

Step 2. Group discussion

Split into four groups and hand each group the quote and the explanation. The groups can read and discuss the quote and explanation and the goal is to present an example of the concept from practice with the wider group. Facilitators are available to discuss concepts in the four groups. You can previously

Step 3. Presentation

Each group presents an example of their concept in practise.

Evaluation and closing

- Were any of these quotes helpful to further understand what transnationalism is?
- Is there any thinker or any person in practice that you refer to when you think about the concept?

SOURCE: European Alternatives