An Overview of the State of Academic Mobilities Research

Academic Mobility, Knowledge and the Critical Role of the University in the Varieties of Academic Capitalism

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The literature on academic mobility tends to valorise mobility and neglect its darker aspects (Teichler, 1996).

Mobility is a structural necessity (Bauder, 2015) – normative justification.
An eclectic overview of academic mobilities research

- Spatial Mobility: International; Transnational; Regional; Global
  cf. transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, “- scapes”;

- Scalar geographies, state spatiality, space, place - variegated regionalism

- Policy-oriented mobility research: EU (EHEA, ERA, ERASMUS); internationalisation of HE policy, immigration /migration policy (e.g. EMN project), science & innovation policy; Brexit

- Academic Labour Mobility; Labour Market: EMN (European Migration Network) project on the immigration of international students & labour market in EU; Labour Economics and Sociology

  - Early-career researchers mobility research (as both policy & academic mobility patterns and paths of EU researchers, focusing on comparability & compatibility – e.g. IDEA Consult report
  - Human resources, human capital approaches – “stocks of researchers”, brain drain/gain/circulation

- More practice-based, problem-solving approaches to mobility: international student experiences, foreign-born academics experiences, specific-nationality focused approaches: e.g. Chinese, Indian

- Intersectionality, inequity – gender, race/ethnicity, nationality, social class, widening participation in HE policy (social mobility), BME academic leadership (LFHE, ECU)
• Historical approaches (e.g. Grand Tour, academic mobilities in medieval universities, in the British empires, HE systems transfer, new institutionalism)

• Geographical approaches (Political economic geography, human geography)

• Comparative sociological approaches; anthropological/ethnographic, biographic narratives; embodiment

- Scholars at Risk/ CARA - Academic Refugees in the past and now

- Academic returnees – e.g. after the WWII

* What triggers cross-border academic mobilities; what constrains academic mobilities (both outbound and inbound, both voluntary and involuntary/enforced mobilities)?

  - The 1933 Laws for Reestablishment of the Civil Service barred Jews from holding civil service, university, and state positions in Germany
  - EU’s ‘Freedom of movement’ as one of the founding principles of the EU
  - Brexit

* Language, intercultural and “epistemic” issues; Otherness, Strangerhood, Comparative Gaze

* Sociology & Discourse analysis of academic researchers
World Prestigious Universities –
Times Higher Education Ranking 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of institutions in top 100</th>
<th>Top institution</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Harvard University</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich</td>
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<td>Tsinghua University</td>
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<td>Hong Kong</td>
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<td>University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Russian Federation</td>
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<td>Lomonosov Moscow State University</td>
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<td>Karolinska Institute</td>
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<td>ETH Zürich – Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>KU Leuven</td>
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<td>Mexico</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
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<td>National Taiwan University</td>
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Percentage of researchers who are immigrants

- CH
- UK

Percentage of researchers who emigrate

- AUSTRALIA
- US
- UK

- BELGIUM
- FR
- US
- UK

- BOLIVIA
- CO
- FR
- UK

- BRAZIL
- US
- CA/GE

- CANADA
- US

- DENMARK
- UK
- US

- FRANCE
- US
- CA/UK

- GERMANY
- US
- SW
- UK

- INDIA
- US

- ITALY
- US
- UK
- FR/GE

- JAPAN
- US

- THE NETHERLANDS
- US
- UK
- GE

- IT/FR/AR
- RU
- GE

- SPAIN
- US
- GE/UK/FR

- SWEDEN
- US
- SE

- SWITZERLAND
- US

- UNITED KINGDOM
- CA/UK/US

- UNITED STATES
- CA/UK/US

Only countries that account for 10 percent or more of immigrants or emigrants are broken out.

AR = Argentina
AU = Australia
CA = Canada
CH = China
CO = Colombia
FR = France
GE = Germany
IN = India
IT = Italy
KR = South Korea
NL = The Netherlands
PE = Peru
RU = Russia
SP = Spain
SW = Switzerland
UK = United Kingdom
US = United States

Overview

- Introduction; analytic framework
- Academic mobility, knowledge and power relations
- Variety of Academic Capitalism
- Critical role of the University; Conclusion
Analytic Framework


- to delineate the intricate connection between the patterns of individual lives and social structures and movements and the course of world history in an attempt to “understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life [as embodied subjectivity] and the external career of a variety of individuals” (Mills 1959, p. 5).

- Thus historical time becomes human time “to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode (Ricoeur, 1984, p. 52).
The Context of Transnational Academic Mobility

- *Homo academicus* modelled after *homo economicus* (Habermas, 1998; Lorenz, 2010).

- Mercantilization of knowledge (Lyotard, 1984)

- Neoliberalism as ‘global rationality’

- Global expansion of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004; Münch 2014; Cantwell and Kauppinen, 2014)
Strategic HE Policies for enhancing international knowledge and economic competitiveness

- Recruiting transnational mobile brains; injecting international human capital in HE and R&D institutions

Excellence Initiatives at both national and supranational level in Europe.

- European Excellence Initiative (EIE)
- Germany: Excellence Initiative (Exzellenzinitiative)
- France: Programme d’Investissement d’Avenir
- UK: Research Excellence Framework

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- Korea: Brain Korea 21, World Class University Project
- Japan: COE (Centre of Excellence), Super Global Universities Project
- China: Project 211 and 985; 1,000 Talent Plan
Japanese government’s rationale behind its ‘Super Global University Project’:

If the selected 37 universities meet their goals, half of their teaching staff would come from abroad and a fifth of their classes would be taught in English – as announced by the Education Minister Hakubun Shimomura.

The ambitious target was made after comparison to benchmark world-class universities – quoting 30% in the case of Harvard and 40% of teaching staff in Cambridge are international whereas in Japan, the figure averaged just 4% in 2012.

(Nikkei Asian Review, 2014)
The role of mobile academics in the international distribution of knowledge and power

• Different policy strategies competing between regions (North America, Europe, East Asia) and individual countries (new Centres of Excellence, HE Hubs)

• Different individual career strategies and the modes of knowledge production and stratification.
‘The consecrated heretics’

“even when they are not entirely estranged from the ‘normal’ career pattern – as is the case with those of them who were not born in France, without being totally alienated from the university order”, they [transnational academic intellectuals] are often those who have “accomplished a more or less decisive detour from the ‘normal’ trajectories which lead to simple reproduction and from the psychological and social security which these trajectories guarantee.”

(Bourdieu, Homo Academicus, 1988, p. 107)
**Types of Mobile Academics**

- Distinguished academics – as transnational public intellectuals, academic celebrities
- manager-academics,
- entrepreneurial research-academics, and
- trained academic researchers and/or teachers

* Their patterns and purposes of transnational mobility vary.

The British exiles being reborn in the USA (at Harvard)
As a financial historian, I was quite isolated in Oxford - British historians are supposed to write about kings - so the quality of intellectual life in my field is much higher at Harvard. The students work harder there... I am over-industrious, so I don't feel quite such a deviant in America as I did in England. The time I spent in England now begins to feel like a detour. I realised last year I was never going to come back here to live.

(Nial Ferguson interview excerpt from Jo Lo Dico, ‘Politics, prestige and power players in New England’ Evening Standard, 7 December 2015)
Political impact on academic mobility: Thatherism then and Brexit now)

Duncan Haldane (Princeton University, Nobel Laureate in Physics 2016):

His move to the US in the 1980s was prompted by the Thatcher government squeezing funding for curiosity-driven scientific research. “There was a depressing atmosphere in British science at the time because of stupid government ideas that one should do something ‘useful’. “They wanted to fund research into turbulence in North Sea gas pipes - an idea that I found pretty depressing.”

“I was seriously considering coming back a few years ago,” he said. “It was suggested it might be possible to get one of these €5m ERC grants. That’s much better support than I can get here. These grants are specifically aimed at bringing established people back. Without that it makes it more difficult for people to come back.”

(Guardian, 6 October 2016)
What is the main reason for you to have moved to overseas institutions?

Many, many years ago, when I was being offered an excuse as to why I should not be promoted to the rank of professor, I was told, “You have an international reputation, but not a national reputation”. This was obviously with reference to the ranking system used in the RAE/REF, and since it was a hierarchy with international reputation at the top, this statement was clearly nonsense. But it reflects a partial truth for me, that I have always felt better appreciated outside my own institution, and even outside my own country, than inside it.

Then there were a number of coincidences that came together to mean that I was offered the chance to go, first to Japan and subsequently to China for a number of months each year.

(Excerpt from the interview with a British academic working in Beijing, June 2015).
I had been on top of the field in Australia for more than a decade but I needed to move out of my comfort zone, become stimulated by more frequent encounters with a larger intellectual pool, develop and test my ideas in a more demanding intellectual environment. I was bored in Australia as the policy and intellectual climate in higher education were not moving. Most of my ideas and best work were overseas oriented already. Though I could have kept working globally from Australia. A large part of intellectual life in many countries is now carried by non nationals, and cross-border collaborations…

(Excerpt from the interview with an Australian male professor working in England, October 2015)
I always feel foreign here, and to some extent also ‘Australian’ in a way I did not feel in Australia, as Australia is firmly positioned here in terms of the colonial Britain/Australia relationship, in which Australia does not have a fully independent identity. This kind of ‘Australian-ness’ is forced on me, like discrimination on the basis of colour, it is not an identity that I choose. The colonial relationship is painful for me, to the point where I find myself stereotyping the ‘English’ in response. I will never feel comfortable in UK.

(Excerpt from the interview with an Australian male professor working in England, October 2015)
Mobile Academics and Mode of Knowledge Creation

• Academic mobility is built in academic capitalism (Münch 2014) + pariah capitalism (Weber, 1978)

• Academic mobility is an ontological condition and is expressed in processes of new types of knowledge creation.

• Transnational identity capital -> inbetweenness, bifocality, spatial convertibility in the process knowledge production

• Brain drain/gain → Brain Transformation (Kim, 2010)

• Mobile academics as knowledge broker/trader, knowledge translator (interpreter), and knowledge creator (legislator) - invoking Bauman (1989)
Transnational identity capital (TIC) possessed and carried by mobile academic intellectuals

- Critical reflexive hexis – an authentic individual asset, not reproducible

- More than cultural capital; social capital – embodied cultural capital

- Highly tacit embodied knowledge capital; generic competences to engage with otherness (Kim, 2010), which enables mobility in and out of different habitus between and above inter-national territorial boundaries:

- Enhanced by symbolic capital, objectified, institutionalized capital (Kim, 2009; Kim, forthcoming)
Transnational academic mobility configured by

- **Global academic industrial capitalism** – whose surface structure is based on rationality and objective standards, contempornaneously neoliberal market-principled NPM. It promotes mercantilist rent-seeking economy to channel efforts and talents to non-productive activities such as measuring impacts.

- **Pariah academic capitalism** – which relies on irrational attachments to certain ethnic, disciplinary, and institutional ties, to make network capital, transnational identity capital, biopolitical production: discursive.

- **Ethnonational academic capitalism** - When pariah academic capitalism is formed on the basis of ethnic identity and works for national interests and strategies, this can be elaborated with ethnonational academic capitalism.

- **(neo-)feudal hierarchies and stratification** have been visible in the society of (nation-)states and the perpetuation of guilds-like academic communities that erected artificial barriers to entry in order to reap exclusionary knowledge rents; global rankings of universities
In the context of South Korea:

- **Ethnonational academic capitalism** (the early model of nationalist developmentalism)

- and the simultaneous elaboration of **pariah academic capitalism** (in the contemporary knowledge trade, academic knowledge brokering as academic middleman minority);

- Contemporaneously adopting the neoliberal academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004; Münch 2014; Cantwell and Kauppinen, 2014)

- It is viewed that Korean higher education is now at a crossroads with two signposts: **ethnocentric internationalization** and **commercialization** in the process of economic globalization.
When international academic leadership is brought to the Korean context of ethno-national academic capitalism.

E.g. Prof. Robert Laughlin, Nobel Laureate/former President of KAIST (2004-2006)

The school's first non-Korean president, Dr. Laughlin knew little about Korea or Kaist. Yet he envisioned bold reforms. He wanted to expand the curriculum to include more liberal-arts offerings, as well as pre-law and pre-med programs. Dr. Laughlin also thought that more classes should be taught in English, and that the school should charge tuition as a way to wean itself from government dependence. In short, he set out to remake Kaist in the mold of a top American private university... Though he lacked administrative experience, Dr. Laughlin's Nobel Prize in physics gave him prestige. A Nobel in the sciences is a stamp of international recognition that many Koreans covet.”

A Canadian academic working in a Korean university English Department: “The Golden Handcuffs”

“You’re trapped in an extremely lucrative dead-end job. No room for advancement. when teaching in a Korean university, there quite literally is nowhere to go but sideways or down. It’s impossible to get into any sort of admin position and if you can get a “head teacher” position, it usually involves a lot more work for no extra pay. There quite literally is nothing new to learn, no expectations from anyone, no pressure to get something done right, no collaboration, nothing. I get kind a depressed even typing this.”

A Canadian professor of political science who has lived and worked in Korea for over 20 years explains:

“... Because most of foreign professors are passive and limited on their perspectives in Korea, little attention has been given to proper hiring practices by Koreans. Korean universities often end up with some very strange foreigners instructing their students. The big SKY universities don't have this problem, but the smaller provincial universities have some very odd people teaching...

... Higher education is a very protected market in Korea. The problem is professors in Korea have too much status and are rewarded too generously financially.

(Excerpt from an email interview, 31 March 2016)
On epistemic “predicaments of particularity and universality”

“To be recognised ‘internationally’, I not only write in English but also formulate my findings in terms of relevant theoretical debates in the English speaking academic centres. As a Japanese national writing about Japanese education in English, I am otherised by the English-language scholarship with my argument defined as localised and nationally specific. The ironic benefit of being otherised, however, is that I gain authority as the ‘native’ whose voice often enjoys more legitimacy than non-Japanese scholars of Japanese education because of my national and racial ‘authenticity’, though my authority is strictly confined within the specialised field of Japanese education.”

(Keita Takayama, Japanese academic in Australia; Excerpted from Takayama (2011) In Comparative Education, 47(4), 451)
Critical Role of the University

• The University as a trope of both establishment & pariah – innate contradiction; compossibility
• Free floating detached intellect for creative destruction, innovation
• The position of a stranger enables mobile academics to explore the possibilities of a professionalization of strangerhood in knowledge creation.
Thank you

For further discussion and future contact:

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