

Mobile Academic Intellectuals and Politics: Space & Time, Affect & Effect

CGHE Seminar 69

18 January 2018, 12.30-14.00

Dr. Terri Kim

Reader in Comparative Higher Education

University of East London (UEL)

Honorary Senior Research Associate

UCL Institute of Education



What triggers cross-border academic mobilities?

e.g.

- 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
 - Very different politics



Argument

- The University is a 'political' space for both establishment & pariah – innate contradiction
 - Epistemic positioning as a 'pariah' (conscious rebel; the free floating detached intellect)
- 'Pariah academic capitalism' is a way of professionalising 'strangerhood' in knowledge creation.

Methodological Approach: Space / Time / Affect

- Transnational Academic Mobility as ***spatial relationship between knowledge and identity.***
- Phenomenological approach – focusing on the ***affective intentionality***, conscious experience; heuristic, temporal meaning-making in a particular place
- C. Wright Mills' *Sociological Imagination*



Mobile Academic Intellectuals

- Mobile academics are PARIASHS carrying possibilities for creative destruction, innovation.
- They are permanent STRANGERS often creating new knowledge.
- Barriers of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, religion and culture and the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion may alter as they move.

(Zygmunt Bauman, 1925-2017)



“Britain was the country of my choice and by which I was chosen through an offer of a teaching job once I could no longer stay in Poland, the country of my birth, because my right to teach was taken away.

But there, in Britain, I was an immigrant, a newcomer – not so long ago a refugee from a foreign country, an alien.

I have since become a naturalized British citizen, **but once a newcomer can you ever stop being a newcomer?”**

(Bauman 2004: 9)

“The family was ethnically very mixed – African, East Indian, Portugese, Jewish...

I was the blackest member of my family... So I always had the identity in my family of being the one from the outside... And I performed that role throughout.”



(Hall 1996: 486-7)

Stuart Hall (1932-2014)

“Having been prepared by the colonial education, I knew England from the inside. But I’m not and never will be ‘English’. I know both places intimately, but I am not wholly of either place. **And that’s exactly the diasporic experience, far away enough to experience the sense of exile and loss, close enough to understand the enigma of an always-postponed ‘arrival’.**”

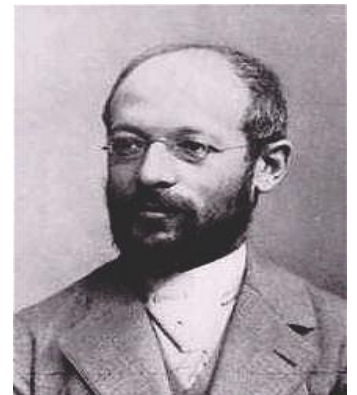
(Hall 1996: 492)



Becoming a transnational academic is like assuming the position of a ‘stranger’ – invoking Georg Simmel (1908):

“the man who comes today and stays tomorrow, the potential wanderer has not quite gotten over the freedom of coming and going. He is fixed within a certain spatial circle – or within a group whose boundaries are analogous to spatial boundaries – but **his position within it is fundamentally affected by the fact that he does not belong in it initially and that he brings qualities into it that are not, and cannot be, indigenous to it.**”

(Simmel (1908: Levine, D. trans. Ed. 1971: 143)





Georg Simmel (1858-1918) in his essay 'The Stranger' in *Soziologie* (1908) argued:

“To be a stranger is naturally a very positive relation; it is a specific form of interaction... He [the stranger] is not radically committed to the unique ingredients and peculiar tendencies of the group, and therefore approaches them with the specific attitude of “objectivity.” But objectivity does not simply involve passivity and detachment; it is a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement.”

(Wolff, trans. Ed. 1950, 402-408).

'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)

The Pariah; Pariah Academic Capitalism

- Max Weber (1920): 'Pariah capitalism'
- Walter Zenner (1991) 's 'Middlemen Minorities' – relationship of ethnicity in occupational specialisation
- Hannah Arendt (1958; 1968): the 'Conscious Pariah' (à la Bernard Lazare) as rebel, sharply distinguished from the parvenu – as a social climber.
- **Pariah Academic Capitalism** (Kim, forthcoming) – conscious epistemic positioning by being an outsider; stranger. It relies on heuristic attachments to, or detachments from, ethnic, disciplinary, or institutional ties to make discursive network capital to professionalise strangerhood in knowledge creation.



“I definitely think that not just in science, but in any creative field of endeavour, it is an advantage to have been a ‘minority’..., be it through religion, ethnicity, or even left-handedness.”.....

“How far the experience of maintaining and defending - sometimes in public and in the face of some ridicule - beliefs and attitudes not shared by the vast majority of my compatriots may have influenced my subsequent attitude to physics and indeed to life in general.”

(Anthony Leggett (b1938), US-based British physicist & Nobel Prize winner in 2003, *Times Higher Education* 8 May 2008)

And so?

- And so, there are five things to say



First: individual experiences vary (e.g. by field of study, or by intersectionality of various minority identities) but

there is a tendency towards

- a sharp sense of ‘otherness’
- the gift of nomadic imagination and
- at the very least intuitive, sometimes formal interdisciplinary and comparative thinking.
- An obvious ‘originality’ – Levi-Strauss, Bauman, Arendt

Second: new international context for . Transnational Academic Mobility

- *Homo academicus* becoming re-shaped as *homo economicus*
- Mercantilization of knowledge (Lyotard, 1984)
- Global expansion of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004; Münch 2014; Cantwell and Kauppinen, 2014)



Third: new tensions

- **Global academic industrial capitalism** – whose surface structure is based on rationality and objective standards, contemporaneously neoliberal market-principled NPM. It promotes mercantilist rent-seeking economy to channel efforts and talents to non-productive activities such as measuring impacts.
- It now means global rankings of universities; research grant acquisition; and international mobility of talent. Not existential, but political.
- **Thus the mobile academic** – becomes a major potential market player: networks, languages, overseas money.
- Hence contemporary hints of panic among UK universities with potential exodus of European academics.
- **Narrowing mobilities** = a narrowing of market possibility and market share; perhaps a drop in ranking charts and international reputation. **Cf. Expanding mobilities and importations:** China, Japan and South Korea, Germany, Canada

Fourth: but this is a

- Problem of the *managed* university; the academic capitalist university; the 'ranked' university.
- The *academic* problem is different: the academic problem is how to sustain the 'pariah' imagination; the fruitfulness of a Levi-Strauss, a Bauman, Sassen.

Claude Lévi-Strauss

French anthropologist and ethnologist whose work was key in the development of the theory of structuralism and structural anthropology.



- Claude Lévi-Strauss was born to French Jewish parents who were living in Brussels in 1908 and grew up in Paris. At the Sorbonne in Paris, Lévi-Strauss studied law and philosophy.
- In 1935, after a few years of secondary-school teaching, he took up a last-minute offer to be part of a French cultural mission to Brazil in which he would serve as a visiting professor of sociology at the University of São Paulo. He and his wife, Dina, did their ethnographic fieldwork in Brazil from 1935 to 1939. This experience cemented Lévi-Strauss's professional identity as an anthropologist.
- Lévi-Strauss returned to France in 1939. After the French capitulation in 1940, he was employed at a lycée in Montpellier, but then was dismissed under the Vichy racial laws. In 1941, he was offered a position at the New School for Social Research in New York City and granted admission to the United States. Lévi-Strauss spent most of the war in New York City. He formed a strong network with exiled French academics in NYC then - along with Jacques Maritain, Henri Focillon, and Roman Jakobson.

Claude Lévi-Strauss

- The war years in New York were formative for Lévi-Strauss in several ways. His relationship with Jakobson helped shape his theoretical outlook (Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss are considered to be two of the central figures on which structuralist thought is based).
- In addition, Lévi-Strauss was also exposed to the American anthropology espoused by Franz Boas, who taught at Columbia University.
- Lévi-Strauss returned to Paris in 1948. At this time, he received his state doctorate from the Sorbonne by submitting, in the French tradition, both a "major" and a "minor" doctoral thesis: *The Family and Social Life of the Nambikwara Indians (La vie familiale et sociale des indiens Nambikwara)* and *The Elementary Structures of Kinship (Les structures élémentaires de la parenté)*.
- Major books: *Tristes Tropiques* (1955), *Anthropologie structurale* (1958), *Le Totémisme aujourd'hui* (1962), *La Pensée sauvage* (1962), *Mythologiques I–IV* (1964–71), etc.

Saskia Sassen

- Born in the Netherlands, she grew up in Argentina and Italy, studied in France, was raised in five languages, and began her professional life in the United States.
- Studied at the Université de Poitiers, France, the Università degli Studi di Roma, and the University of Buenos Aires, for studies in philosophy and political science.
- Studied sociology and economics for MA (1971) and PhD (1974); another MA in Philosophy (1974).
- *Professor of Sociology, Columbia University & LSE*
- *The Mobility of Labour and Global Capital* (Cambridge University Press, 1988)
- *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton University Press, 1991);
- *Guests and aliens* (New Press, 1999);
- *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press, 2006)
- *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy* (Harvard University Press, 2014)



The crux is dialogue

- Intellectual dialogue, the possibility of contradiction, the creation of different interpretations by the disciplined and imaginative refusal of academic orthodoxy.
- The transnational mobile academic as grit in the oyster. (Sometimes you merely have grit; occasionally, a pearl.)
- The managed university wishes to routinize research production and to routinize economic impact. Academics need contradiction and dialogue to become and remain academics - and to sustain a crucial part of the social and political role of the university: the disturbance of banalities of belief.

Thank you

t.c.kim@uel.ac.uk
terri.kim@ucl.ac.uk
terri.c.kim@gmail.com

Twitter: @kimterri



- Kim, T. (2017) Academic mobility, transnational identity capital, and stratification under conditions of academic capitalism, *Higher Education* (Springer journal) , 73(6), pp. 981 – 997; DOI: 10.1007/s10734-017-0118-0 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-017-0118-0> .
- Kim, T. (2014) The intellect, mobility and epistemic positioning in doing comparisons and comparative education, *Comparative Education 50th Anniversary Special Issue Vol. 50 No.1*, pp. 58-72 (Taylor & Francis journal: ISSN 0305-0068, DOI: 10.1080/03050068.2013.874237; <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03050068.2013.874237?journalCode=cced20#.U-9RBea8RoM>
- Kim, T. (2010) Transnational Academic Mobility, Knowledge and Identity Capital In Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education. Special Issue on International Academic Mobility. Edited by Johannah Fahey and Jane Kenway. Vol. 31, No. 5, pp. 577-592, October 2010 (Routledge journal: ISSN 0159-6306, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2010.516939>
- Kim, T. (2009) Transnational Academic Mobility, Internationalisation and Interculturality in Higher Education In Intercultural Education Special Issue on Interculturality and Higher Education. Edited by Terri Kim & Matthias Otten. Vol. 20, No. 5, pp. 395-405 (Routledge Journal: ISSN 1467-5986). 5986, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14675980903371241>
- Kim, T. (2009) ‘Shifting patterns of transnational academic mobility: A comparative and historical approach’, *Comparative Education Special Issue on Mobilities and educational metamorphoses: patterns, puzzles, and possibilities*. Edited by Robert Cowen and Eleftherios. Klerides, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 387-403 (Routledge Journal: ISSN 0305-0068, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03050060903184957>
- Kim, T. (2007) Transnational Academic Mobility in a Global Knowledge Economy: comparative and historical motifs (Chapter 18) In Epstein, D., Boden, R., Deem, R., Rizvi, F., and Wright, S. (eds) *The World Yearbook of Education 2008, Geographies of Knowledge and Geometries of Power: Framing the Future of Higher Education*, London: Routledge, pp. 319-337 (ISBN: 978-0-4159-6378-7).

Mobile Academics and Mode of Knowledge Creation

- Academic mobility is built in academic capitalism + pariah capitalism (Weber, 1978) (Kim, 2017)
- Academic mobility as an ontological condition and entwined with the process of new types of knowledge creation
- Transnational identity capital (Kim, 2010; 2017)
- Brain drain/gain → Brain Transformation (Kim, 2010)
- Mobile academics as **knowledge broker/trader**, **knowledge translator** (*interpreter*), and **knowledge creator** (*legislator*) - invoking Bauman (1989) (Kim, 2010)

**Karl Mannheim (b. 1893,
Budapest; d. 1947,
London)**



**Moritz Bonn (b. 1873,
Frankfurt; d. 1965)**



A Comparative Gaze of the Minority Elites:

Attention and Influence in different space and time

- **Minority elites; Pariah elites**

E.g. Gustav Mahler:

“I am rootless three times over: as a Bohemian over Austrians, as an Austrian among Germans, and as a Jew everywhere in the world. Everywhere I am regarded as an interloper, nowhere am I what people called “desirable”. Even the greatest social success could not disguise the fact that the hopes of the emancipation and assimilation had been dashed - that Jews remained, as they always had, outsiders in the society in which they lived. (Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews, 1867-1938: A Cultural History*, Cambridge, 1989, p. 207)

My previous research (Kim, 2009; 2010; 2014) has highlighted the significant position and role of mobile academics as an intellectual 'stranger' (invoking Simmel). The stranger is the synthesis of the totally uprooted wanderer and the totally rooted individual. The stranger helps to make 'objectivity' possible:

In his isolation he creates. And to these exilic creations humanity owes almost all its great developments. It is no accident that so many of the greatest minds in the history of humanity have been exiles, whether within or without the societies of their birth. No prophet ... is accepted in his own country.

(Patterson, 1977, p. 19)