

# Academic Mobility, Transnational Identity Capital, and Stratification under Conditions of Academic Capitalism

**CHEER Seminar:**

Disrupting Internationalisation Discourses: Discussing Equity and  
Inclusion

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**Dr. Terri Kim**

Reader in Comparative Higher Education

Leader of Higher Education Research Group (HERG)

*University of East London (UEL)*



“Comparative sociology is not a special branch of sociology; it is sociology itself.”

**David Émile Durkheim.** 1894; 1983. *Les Règles de la Méthode Sociologique; The Rules of Sociological Method*, p. 157.

“Comparisons are required in order to understand what may be the essential conditions of whatever we are trying to understand.”

**C. Wright Mills**, 1970. *Sociological Imagination*, p. 163.

“All sociology worthy of the name is “historical sociology”.

**C. Wright Mills**, 1959, p. 146.

# Multiple epistemological positionings in Comparative (Higher) Education

- The new global contexts where trans-national and territorial cultures are entangled with one another
- Systemic measures for the international comparisons of educational outputs have become routinized and assuming a new normative force.
- Comparison *in itself* has become a mode of governance.



# Starting point:

- Specific relationships between Wissenschaften (scientific knowledge) and Weltanschauungen (world view); and
- Relationship between Heimwelt (homeworld) und Fremdwelt (alienworld) in the framework of phenomenological thinking - Comparative Gaze (Kim, 2014)



# My long-term and ongoing research:

- Trans-national dimensions of academic mobility/migration, and knowledge and identity as capital in comparative historical sociology.
- Specific relationship between academic mobility and new knowledge creation
- Theories of Spectatorship – ‘Comparative Gaze’ (Kim 2014) - the medical gaze as the “speaking eye” equated with knowledge and power (Foucault, 1973); not just a seen-gaze but a gaze-imagined in the field of ‘the Other’ (Lacan, 1978); The gaze becomes the medium for self-differentiation and the Other is always relative – as determined by the gaze; inside/outside.
- ‘Homeworld’ and ‘Alienworld’ (Steinbock 1995)
- ‘Homo Viator’ (Kim 2014) - *Clerici Vagantes; vagabundi*



- 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.



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



# “If we don’t cut all ties with the EU, 1.2M more migrants will head to Britain”

Headlines in *Daily Express*, 17 July 2017





# World Prestigious Universities – Times Higher Education Ranking 2015

Country	Number of institutions in top 100	Top institution	Rank
United States	43	Harvard University	1
United Kingdom	12	University of Cambridge	2
Germany	6	Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich	=35
Australia	5	University of Melbourne	=41
France	5	Panthéon-Sorbonne University – Paris 1	51-60
		Paris-Sorbonne University – Paris 4	51-60
Netherlands	5	University of Amsterdam	51-60
		Delft University of Technology	51-60
Canada	3	University of Toronto	16
China	2	Tsinghua University	26
Hong Kong	2	University of Hong Kong	51-60
Japan	2	University of Tokyo	12
Russian Federation	2	Lomonosov Moscow State University	25
Singapore	2	National University of Singapore	24
Sweden	2	Karolinska Institute	45
Switzerland	2	ETH Zürich – Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich	15
Belgium	1	KU Leuven	51-60
Brazil	1	University of São Paulo	51-60
Denmark	1	University of Copenhagen	81-90
Finland	1	University of Helsinki	81-90
Mexico	1	National Autonomous University of Mexico	71-80
South Korea	1	Seoul National University	51-60
Taiwan	1	National Taiwan University	61-70

Country	Percentage
CH	15%
UK	85%



# A contemporary context of Transnational Academic Mobility

- *Homo academicus* / *homo viator* modelled after *homo economicus*
- Mercantilization of knowledge (Lyotard, 1984)
- Neoliberalism as ‘global rationality’
- Global expansion of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004; Münch 2014; Cantwell and Kauppinen, 2014)



- There are still old hierarchies in the world society of (nation) states, often determined by ethnic identities and national citizenship.
- The old hierarchies based on ethnic/national identities intersect with new academic stratifications, to re-position mobile academic individuals beyond the conventional boundaries and hierarchies determined by their national citizenships.
- The question is then which type of hierarchy results from this interference?



# Overview

- Introduction
- Academic Mobility and Academic Capitalism
- Academic Mobility Patterns: constraints and new stratifications
- Intricate Relations of Academic Mobility and different types of knowledge as capital
- Mobile Academics in different places of academic capitalism - reflecting on their experiences
- Conclusion



# 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; **Rutherford Fund**

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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)*

# Post-Brexit: £100 million Rutherford Fund to attract best researchers to the UK

- The UK Government investing £100 million in a Global Talent Research Fund that will be used to attract highly skilled researchers to the UK - from the developed world and from emerging research powerhouses such as India, China, Brazil and Mexico,
- It will be named after Ernest Rutherford. He is one of our most distinguished scientists, the father of nuclear physics, a Nobel Laureate, holder of chairs at the Universities of Manchester and Cambridge, and, crucially, an immigrant – who came to the UK at the age of 24 from New Zealand.

“Rutherford and his immense contributions to science exemplify our vision of a **Britain that is open to the best minds and ideas in the world**, and stands at the forefront of global collective endeavours to understand, and to improve, the world in which we live” (Jo Johnson, 4 July 2017).



<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/100-million-rutherford-fund-to-attract-best-researchers-to-the-uk>



# 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)

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)

# ***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.

**Kim, T.** (2008) 'Transnational Academic Mobility in a Global Knowledge Economy: Comparative and Historical Motifs' In Epstein, D., *et. al.*, *World Yearbook of Education 2008: Geography of Knowledge, Geometries of Power: Framing the Future of Higher Education*, London: Routledge, pp. 319-337.



# 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: Thatcherism 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)

A French (early-career) academic interviewed on 13 June 2016:

These comments sound consistent with my past experience:

*"I am constantly asked to do more with less with translates in longer and longer working hours.... Academics are concerned by growing managerialism and associated market-driven and rankings-driven policies, constant performance monitoring and target setting; escalating bureaucracy and standardisation that erodes professional discretion and excessive preoccupation with image and hype"..*

The comment "Performance management is really a euphemism for: 'If we don't like you, we will get rid of you or bully you until you quit.'" is absolutely terrifying but so true ... and I know what I am talking about...

## Importance of Academic Patrinage in the right place at the right time??

“I am already looking for another job. I had some job interviews in academia in France but they were all negative. In fact, I still suffer from the fact that I come from a foreign country (PhD in Australia, work in Singapore, China, UK, Germany) and French academia does not like that much. At a conference, I met a French academic who even told me that I was starting to get too old for a position in France. This is quite shameful to hear this kind of comments.

It seems that the future is completely blocked in French academia as I now believe that what does matter is more to have support in the right places to get a job there rather than your own skills and past achievements.”

A transnational French mathematician/computer scientist who had been a Lecturer/Senior Lecturer in an English university (2012-16) before moving to Germany and then back to France. Interviewed on 13 June 2016

# Mobile Academics and Mode of Knowledge Creation

- Academic mobility is built in academic capitalism + pariah capitalism (Weber, 1978)
- Academic mobility is an ontological condition and is expressed in processes of new types of knowledge creation.
- 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 (some) mobile academic intellectuals

- Critical reflexive hexis – an authentic individual asset, not reproducible
- More than cultural capital; social 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, 2017)

# Transnational academic mobility configured by

**(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

- **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.
- **Pariah academic capitalism** – which relies on heuristic attachments to, and detachments from, ethnic, disciplinary, and institutional ties, to make discursive network capital
- **Ethnonational academic capitalism** - When pariah academic capitalism is formed on the basis of ethnic identity and works for national interests and strategies - e.g. Japan and Korea



# 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.”

(WSJ, 1 May 2007:<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB117798527844787708> )

## 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.”

Blog: “Korean University Jobs: The Golden Handcuffs” (August 30, 2015:  
<http://teachinginkoreanuniversity.com/korean-university-jobs-the-golden-handcuffs/> )

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 [Seoul National, Korea, Yonsei] 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) academic intellectuals to explore the possibilities of a professionalization of strangerhood in knowledge creation.

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# Thank you

**For further discussion and  
future contact:**

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

