

Global Academic Capitalism, Transnational Knowledge Capital, and Academic Stratification (0352)

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Academic mobility crossing borders has existed since the foundation of the first European universities. In the age of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004; Münch 2014), however, transnational academic mobility has become ever more active, which can be at least partly explained by different forms of increased competition worldwide: competition between research projects and institutions, international academic staffing, policies of innovation, and also individual academics' career development strategies. Compared to other knowledge workers, mobile academics even seem to enjoy privileged positions. The feature of 'difference' itself becomes a potential competitive advantage in intellectual engagement in knowledge production. However, it is far from clear how international mobile academics make their way within global hierarchies of academic power. In this context, the paper offers an in-depth analysis of the patterns of transnational academic mobility and knowledge production within contemporary neoliberal market-framed universities worldwide.

The initial proposition is that an important way to see the processes of academic mobility as entwined with knowledge creation is through different types of knowledge (Collins, 2010) as 'capital', which will be conceptualised and discussed in conjunction with Max Weber's analysis of various forms of capitalism (1992), Walter Zenner's Middleman Minority Theories (1991), and Pierre Bourdieu's work (1984; 1986). In addition to Bourdieu's notions of principal forms of 'capital': economic, symbolic, cultural and social capital, the paper provides a new theoretical account of 'transnational identity capital', which was sketched initially in my earlier work (Kim 2010), as embodied and travelled knowledge utilised by mobile academic individuals as a new border-transcending asset. The term, 'identity capital' was coined by Cote & Levine as a concept not context-specific or class-specific, but specific to membership in any type of social culture. Identity capital operates to gain a group membership validation or preserve a self-definition (Cote & Levine, 2008). The feature of cultural & epistemic difference itself becomes a potential competitive advantage to form a transnational habitus. It raises some fundamental issues around positional knowledge and creative knowledge generated by individual mobile academics; and their relations in the contemporary (neoliberal) university contexts of mobility, interculturality and coloniality. The term *coloniality*, instead of colonialism, is employed in this paper in the phenomenological framework of thinking, to stress the *experience of our engaging* directly with the world we inhabit, and to avoid any overemphasis on the unilinearity and imprinting nature of colonial relations.

Drawing on empirical research data, namely on mobile academics working in the US, the UK, South Korea and Hong Kong, the paper offers a critical analysis of unequal power relations which are at work in the process of forming and shaping knowledge 'capital' among globally mobile academics. There are still old 'feudal' hierarchies in the world society of nation-states, which are often determined by ethno-national identities and most acutely pronounced in the processes and consequences of transnational mobility and migration in general. In the world of academic capitalism, however, such old hierarchies intersect new academic stratifications, where institutional rent-seeking, reputational struggles and the dynamics of status attainment re-position mobile academic individuals beyond the

conventional boundaries and hierarchies determined by their national citizenships.

The question is which type of hierarchy results from this interplay.

The paper will also discuss a number of practical implications: one is for the governance and politics of institutions under the general rubrics of internationalization. The second practical implication is that taught courses on higher education probably need a major rewriting given the transnational flows and conceptions of internationalization and a much broader concept of what it is to 'educate' managers - as distinct from 'train' managerial technicians in universities. The third implication is for the intellectual quality of the journals in terms of the visibility of these themes.

It is metaphorically a time for the HE community to examine whether it has over-domesticated its lines of analysis and its intellectual assumptions of academic capitalism, knowledge capital, and academic stratifications.

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