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BORDERS OF TIME: The temporalities of academic mobility

This article challenges the claim that highly skilled international academics who have obtained advanced degrees and transnational identities are offered almost seamless mobility. The state border or territory is not the only line that highly skilled academics must cross as international subjects of mobility. Their high academic status is reduced to a precariat and confronted with epistemic injustices due to their immigration status. These include, but are not limited to, the waiting and processing times associated with immigration rules and visa requirements, which could also temporarily suspend mobility rights. The notion of a temporal border is enacted to explore the ‘time-bound’ realities that highly skilled academics face. Border crossing for highly skilled migrants is not just a matter of entry passing through territorial lines of nation-states. The border has a ‘thickness’ that stretches through time. Simply put, it takes time to cross borders.

Keywords: academic mobility, highly skilled migrants, temporality, time, border, epistemic justice, differential inclusion

Introduction

Restrictive borders are normally accompanied and are a result of government response about public reactions to what is perceived to be an increasing immigrant population. Unfortunately, there is no differentiation between EEA/EU (European Economic Area/European Union) or non-EEA/UK migrants in what is usually perceived as a ‘problem to be solved’ for a nation-state. This is made more poignant with the recent BREXIT outcome in the UK. Brexit refers to the 2016 EU referendum which indicates Britain’s exit from the European Union following a 51.9% electoral result. EEA/EU member states movement is not restricted due to Treaty obligations. However, for non-EEA/EU migrants, labour immigration policies legislate and regulate state borders and an ‘entry clearance’ must be obtained. In 2008, there has been a change in immigration policy where high skilled migrants coming to the UK are regulated by a point-based system (PBS). How PBS and immigration policies are implemented within specific

administrative processes and procedures define the border that needs to be crossed beyond territorial access. How the border is sustained and the role of the state in its control beyond spatial considerations have been relatively neglected in both labour migration studies (Mavroudi and Warren 2013) and critical border studies (Axelsson 2016). This article addresses this in an autoethnographic account of academic mobility, which is really a reading of myself within and in relation to the scholarly work around and about time, migration and otherness. It will do so by emphasising a temporal relationship with the border that appears to reveal a lot of the political mechanisms at work in the timespaces of borders and border-crossers. The reworking of borders, not only in space but also in time and how these changes the rhythms of the movements of people in a variety of ways is most interesting. In geography, migration and border studies, there is a tendency to privilege space and spatialities in the analysis.

Furthermore, the temporal frictions of borders are rarely brought to bear in discussions and deliberations in terms of transnational identities and knowledge transfer through academic mobilities. The premise of the temporal border is, first of all, that borders are always in motion (Brambilla 2015). Hence, they are inherently multi-stable and multi-dimensional.

The border-blurring effects of internationalisation of education and the decline in the importance of borders as part of the very definition of globalisation have exposed the temporal border. For example, Landolt and Thieme (2018) acknowledged that the variant transitional work arrangements of Spaniards who migrated to Switzerland to work, open questions about temporality as this relates to experiences of 'gaining more capital' or 'becoming stuck' in particular labour market positions. The transnational phenomenon of academic mobility has redrawn the border-line in spatio-temporal terms and more specifically as I argue in this article in Lefebvrian sense of rhythms. As a border-crosser, I would like to understand the 'lines' I have and will have to cross and that ultimately defines my

timely self and determines my positioning in spatio-temporal terms. One aspect that this article intends to analyse is the relationship between bordering processes and the ‘when’ of the border, that is the temporal dimension of the ‘where’ of the border.

In an auto-ethnographic account, the notion of a temporal border, drawing mainly from the works of Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) and Griffiths (2014), is enacted. For a more theoretical backing that gives me ways to talk about my time and otherness and how the mesh and mess these have placed and timed me, I refer and draw inspiration, though admittedly in a rather sketchy manner, from the works of Henri Lefebvre, in particular his notion of rhythm as a tool for analysis and not just its object. I introduce Lefebvre’s notion of rhythm and opens this autoethnographic account to a trialectic analysis through rhythmanalysis. This then frames the lens through which I proceed to ‘interview myself’. I interrogate my own lived mobilities as a non-EU/EAA migrant academic through the temporalities of academic mobility without the seemingly seamless moves and fluid transitions between places and national borders are explored and exposed more specifically through three (3) concepts introduced by Lefebvre to interpret the relations between rhythmic change – rips, disruptions or continuities through arrhythmia, polyrhythmia and eurhythmia. If these rhythms are out of synchronisation, an ‘arrhythmia’ is produced; if these rhythms are multiple and interrelated, this produces ‘polyrhythmia’; finally, if these rhythms are in harmonious relation, this produces ‘eurhythmia’. Rhythmic changes through mobility and migration are movements through material, natural, social and symbolic environments that unfolds, twists and undulates in their own terms and timings. Hence, it is important to ‘unpack’ rhythm as an analytical tool in terms of time, space and energy. Lefebvre (2004) argues that ‘where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is a rhythm’ (15).

Irrespective of theoretical orientation, birth of origin, facial features and mode of travel, the border has been established as a practical basis of temporal and spatial accounts of migration and mobilities. There is physical time that is not subject to cultural variation, therefore it is perceived as objective and neutral. This is the time used for temporal governance. There is also what Fabian (1983) calls intersubjective time, which focuses on the communicative action in how a body of knowledge is validated or invalidated by the use of temporal categorisations. This is the time used for temporal distancing – the making of an Other, who needs to ‘serve time’. It may seem that the use of physical time is politically innocuous and yet it is the very fact that it is deemed value-free that it creates temporal distance and border. Time is experienced and lived through one’s status, resource and circumstance. It is subjective, which ultimately leads to differential inclusion (Espiritu, 2003) and epistemic injustice (McKinnon, 2016).

This temporal account does not by any means diminish or ignore the space that is created by time and the time that is stretched in the placing of the other inside national borders. Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) argue that there is a ‘temporal thickness’ (133) through which pathways to permanent residence and conditions of indefinite leave to holders remain are changed (eg. the increase in salary for spouses of migrants, and the increase in salary of visa holders). Simply put, it takes time to cross borders.

Mavroudi and Warren’s (2013) article has provided an extensive literature review on academic mobility and its relationship and the impact brought by the UK immigration policy, though slightly outdated as there are changes recently enforced in relation to settlement or ‘indefinite leave to remain’ published in November 2016 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changes-to-the-immigration-rules>). For instance, Tier 2 (General) visa category has an increased salary threshold to £25,000 to be able to apply for settlement. This threshold is further increased to £35,000 in January 2018.

Nonetheless, their work remains relevant in highlighting the impact of changes in UK immigration rules and the influence of other entities, such as states and other factors aside from economic and academic considerations, including in the discussion of highly skilled migrants the personal and emotional effects of immigration rules on academic mobility. In particular, Mavroudi and Warren's (2013) empirical study focused on the role of the state and the impact it has on the mobility of non-EEA postgraduate students and academics at English universities and their further opportunities of mobility.

Undeniably, further scholarly work is required into how exactly highly skilled migrants deal with immigration policy in practical ways and how their lives, identities and mobilities or other opportunities of movement are affected (Favell and Smith, 2006; Mavroudi and Warren, 2013). The temporal border proposed by Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) informs how I frame my own experiences in this auto-ethnography.

RHYTHMANALYSING ACADEMIC MOBILITY

Lefebvre (2004) launched the 'rhythmanalysis project' as a method for the study of spatio-temporal rhythms. Rhythm is used as a tool for analysis to reveal and explore my own mobility experiences as a migrant academic. Academic mobility is conceived in this article as a rhythmic change or movement. Lefebvre's analytical manoeuvre involves the rejection of the *a priori* and dualistic construction of time and space and a strong emphasis of their relation to their material energy, more specifically with the living human body. Therefore, rhythm is a trialectic construct of interaction between place, time and an expenditure of energy (Lefebvre, 2004). Here, 'being in time' takes on a whole new meaning. In order to gain insights into the affective and embodied rhythms of being an academic border-crosser and a visa holder, I engage with Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis. Lefebvre's notion of rhythm requires us to think of time and space differently. We must think of them together. Time is in space and space

is in time. 'We can't move through space without time and vice versa which means that we can't pass, spend, or allocate time without occupying space. Nothing exists and happens without time and space' (Adam 1995, 2). This means that the spatial dimension that is produced or marked in movement has a temporal or historical dimension too that has to be acknowledged and investigated. A Lefebvrian rhythmic analysis has yet to be placed at the forefront of transnational or mobility studies. In general, the spatial has been utilised in far greater depth than the temporal as a framing concept for migration (May and Thrift 2001; Robertson 2014). Migration studies tend to focus on spatial accounts and temporality accounts are being overlooked. There is, however, emerging literature that acknowledges that migration is much concerned with time as with space, that all migration processes clearly have a complex temporal dimension. Most notably, Cwerner (2001) develops a detailed sociological framework of the 'times of migration' and Griffith, Rogers and Anderson (2013) offer a comprehensive theoretical view of migration, time and temporality. Scholars like Andersson (2014), Cwerner (2001), Griffiths et al. (2013), King et al. (2006), May and Thrift (2001) and Robertson (2014) have considered the temporal dimensions of migration. The key focus of this article is to understand academic mobility where the border persists through time. It will paint an autobiographic picture of the temporal dimension of bordering processes for highly skilled academic migrants like me. Its first task is to theorise and insist upon the importance of time in investigating academic mobility beyond the rise of global academic capitalism and transnational identity transfer. Mobility and migration create uneven rhythms that must be placed at the centre of social mobility and transnational identity discourses. The emphasis and focus, aside from being EU-centric, have been on social and cultural capital (eg. Fernando and Cohen 2016; Landolt and Thieme 2018; Kim 2017) and life course (eg. Netz and Jakstat 2017) theoretical perspectives. If

academic mobility is a rhythmic change, then its movement spatialises time and temporalises spaces. Furthermore, as rhythm, it is ‘of’ something, ‘in’ something and more importantly, ‘for’ something. In short, mobilities of any kind are investments (ie. expenditures of energy) in social and everyday life, as intersecting concerted actions of different durations, paces and intensities.

To proceed with rhythm-analysing academic mobility, at least with my own rhythms: there are two concepts that are crucial for the analysis of rhythmic change: “first, the contrast of two very different modalities of repetitive, linear and non-linear, and second, the implied but different notions of polyrhythmia, eurhythmia and arrhythmia (Lefebvre 2004)” (Marcu 2017, 407). In doing so, there are four (4) analytical points that I dare insist upon on how academic mobility is theorised, circulated and understood. First, migration policies and border regulations have rhythmical constitution. Second, as such, they are not mere clockwork productions but enforce variant degrees of non-linear repetitions that are not only done over time but are lived, felt and impressed upon lives in significant ways. Third, temporal governance is a regulatory mechanism that produces borders ‘within’ and disciplines bodies. And lastly, a given rhythmic configuration provides temporal modality (ie. arrhythmia, polyrhythmia, eurhythmia) that could be experienced all at once repetitively and yet always with a difference. Different durations of rhythms intersect, and may clash and harmonise, producing repetitive moments of continuities and discontinuities, disruptions and consistencies through arrhythmia, polyrhythmia and eurhythmia. Here, I use ‘time’ in at least two senses: first, as *kairos*, which refers to the non-linear and lived time of human activity and intentions, of seasons, of movement and transformation; and second, as *chronos*, which refers to historical (clock) time that can be measured, the time of linear succession, of past, present and future.

As I focus on the rhythmic change in academic mobility that acknowledges the tempo in cyclical repetition, differences (of exclusion) and discontinuities, I arrive (always temporarily and briefly) at a threshold of embodied and territorialised sense and sensation of the border. On the one hand, I highlight the linear socio-economic (knowledge-based) perspective in terms of permanent UK employment under Tier 2 General Visa status. From this perspective, time has an objective structure, which means that rhythm is governed and managed by relevant institutions mainly based on chronos. On the other hand, I emphasise the non-linear perspective, the corporeal and sensorial experience of my body in motion, its emotions and affect, disposition and drive, desperation and hope, when I am not able to control time, and therefore my embodied rhythms. Given my temporary status, time refers to the duration of how long I have ‘leave to remain’ in the UK based on my Tier 2 (General) visa, including the number of hours I am allowed to work per week in other similar jobs as I currently hold with my English university employer. I also use ‘temporality’ which simply refers to ‘lived time’ not necessarily limited to the present time. It is time that is felt, remembered and experienced across time. ‘Temporal dimensions’, then, refer to the structures and practices that are coordinated not only in synchronous and asynchronous ways but also in harmony and dissonance. Temporality cuts through linear and physical time. And yet, the timings of immigration rules cut through my lived time. In particular, differential inclusion, ‘a process whereby a group of people is deemed integral to the nation, but integral only or precisely because of their designated subordinate standing’ (Espiritu 2003, 47), is assigned to me even though my academic qualifications are ‘white’. I have explored my ‘whiteness’ in another article, I will not revisit my reflections here (for details see Enriquez-Gibson 2018b). Differential inclusion is enacted then as a convenient resolution to the contradictions or the failure of

integration. On the one hand, there is the promise of inclusion and equal rights and yet on the other, differential inclusion is an actual practice of exclusion (ie. failure to integrate into a culture that is impenetrable or bordered with whiteness, leading to epistemic injustice. Epistemic justice is “a matter of the subject being wrong specifically in their capacity as an epistemic subject” (Fricker 2013, 1320). In particular, discriminatory epistemic injustice articulates and finally puts into words the invisible border of differential inclusion. What I mean to say is that embedded in differential inclusion is the denial or marginalisation of epistemic authority I do bring in the production of knowledge Hence, differential inclusion is not a process about closing the physical national borders – not a spatial matter, but about creating borders within the nation – a temporal matter – through time and with time.

TIME AS BORDER

Time, by its very nature, is ‘everywhere’ and ‘everything’. It is pervasive and for this reason, it is very hard to ‘pin down’. However, it must be acknowledged that although it is immaterial, it could define the thickness and rhythms of borders that impacts on the everyday lives and material realities of global and regional power geographies.

Mezzadra and Neilson’s (2013) attention to the temporality of borders is a useful provocation to a field or object to inquiry that predominantly tends to privilege space and spatialities in its analysis. In fact, spatial movements of highly skilled migrants are mostly depicted as seamless experiences of border crossing and bordering processes and yet my experience (Enriquez-Gibson 2018a, 2018b) and other studies suggest otherwise (e.g. Marcu 2017; Saltmarsh and Swirski 2010). Thinking through the temporalities associated with border and migration processes would open up the discipline of migration studies and mobilities through temporal stretches that produce a different kind of border ‘thickness’ (Axelsson 2016), which collapses different times and timings into

one another. Crossing borders have rhythms of starts and stops, fast and slow, and now and later. I draw upon this way of Lefebvrian thinking about borders and rhythms to locate and 'prolong' my own academic mobility as a highly-skilled migrant in the UK. The temporal realities of border control and crossing are usually silenced in transnational identity transfer discourses and migration studies. For highly skilled migrants like me, the labour migration produces a temporally 'thick' border that creates insecurities and immobilities. Importantly, this temporal thickness is not only produced by immigration and permanent residence policies. Administrative and bureaucratic practices associated with the application process and the required information, evidence and other documents play an equally crucial role in determining how long I have to wait before I can enter the country, stay outside the country or have the right to 'indefinite leave to remain' (ILR). The immigration rules, which impose visa duration, allowed number of working hours associated with a student visa, numbers of days spent outside the UK, reveal the temporal implications of migration. Academic mobility is not just a spatial matter. It is a matter of time and the bordering processes involved for high skilled academic migrants have complex and usually protracted temporal dimensions (Cwerner 2001; 2004; Griffiths et al. 2013; Robertson 2014). The tempo of time depends on the administrative practices and immigration management of specific nation-states for various types of visas and based on different nationalities and counterpart agencies or consulates in corresponding countries. In fact, as Robertson (2014) points out, it is the temporal dimension that differentiates migration from other forms of border-crossing mobilities (eg. tourism). It should also be further noted that the migrant/immigrant status from temporary to permanent is decided over time. Here, time is not just the duration of one's status to stay or to leave. It becomes the border of migration and academic mobility.

In this article, academic mobility is defined as the mobility of high skilled migrants, who are generally perceived as individuals who have advanced tertiary educational qualifications or accredited professions in high demand in the UK (eg. scientists, nurses, doctors) (Devitt 2012). In transnational capital and knowledge transfer discourses, these individuals are perceived to experience ‘fast’ mobility, and yet there are missing discussions about time and its bordering capacity (Hoffman 2008), Academic mobility is quintessentially a spatial event, not necessarily based on the temporal experiences of those involved. There is limited research that examines how the border stretches and classifies migrant academics at the border in motion (Brambilla 2015) and how in the process the border constructs its ‘Other’ (Khosravi 2010) from the perspectives of those ‘Others’ involved. This gap and need to examine the impact of bordering processes is what I would like to confront and perhaps diminish the temporal distance I have found myself bound with. I find the occasion and the space to speak of my own academic mobility as a non-EEA/EU employee in an English university and my experiences of the UK border agency. I employ and expand the notion of border and locate its rationales and realities within academic mobility through temporal lines and ‘timely’ considerations. Inside the state border, immigration policy and practice continue to have an impact upon the lives of labour migrant regardless of status or visa type. We remain subject to a number of conditions and constraints, which are manifested in, for example, lengths of stay; times for renewing permits; lengths of time permitted to be away from the country to remain eligible to apply, in the UK case, after 5 years for indefinite leave to remain.

Robertson (2014) has argued that a binary understanding of migrant status through linear time tracks from the past ‘home’ country to the present and hopefully future ‘permanent residence’ is a very limited construction of migration primarily

through a normative framework of permanent settlement. There are now new forms of temporariness that are processed through different temporal borders. According to Griffiths et al. (2013), time and temporality have particular kinds of temporariness for migrants who cross the border of another state or nation with temporary legal status. Time is a 'border within' that gives me an othered and temporary status. This is a fact that does not merely require a change to permanent status.

BORDER WITHIN

I was exposed to US lifestyle, cultural practices, and consumption patterns even before I set foot in a foreign land. I was thoroughly prepared by Americanised/Westernised culture in my 'place of origin'. US colonizers introduced universal public education and revamped Philippine educational institutions and curricula using the American system as its model and English as the medium of instruction. The English language remains to this day the language of status, used among family members while Tagalog or the local dialect has been generally reserved for communicating with housemaids. In short, the border was already created even before I had the opportunity to become a mobile academic in a foreign land. This means that I am not racialised or othered at the moment of immigration, but in my "homeland". Espiritu (2003) insists that the study of Filipino migration must begin with the "migration" of the Americans to the Philippines – the first border crossers. I want to highlight/emphasise that border crossing is not unidirectional from impoverished to affluent countries. I want to call attention to the multi-directionality and forms of border crossings forged by colonisation, decentralisation and globalisation of late capitalism. Consequently and persistently, border crossings create transitional lives before one leaves one's country of birth. Transnationalism, as Espiritu (2003) argues or maintains is not just a matter of migration but of conquest and global capitalism. The border of time is not at the point of

entry into another country or national territory. It has a historical time dimension that determines the timings and priorities of border crossings.

The temporal reference of a migrant past is always tied to a particular cross-border history and mobility and assumed to have commenced 'elsewhere' (outside the nation-state), whilst 'non-migrants' both past and present times belong 'here'. 'The consequence of anchoring migrants' frames and references of action elsewhere and to *other time* different from the 'natives' /non-migrants frames of action is what Fabian (2000) calls a denial of coevalness, that is, contemporaneity of migrants with the non-migrants' (Caglar 2016, 959). This underlying divide proves the road to a very culturalist approach (eg. integration model). This is an essentialist approach, which is really a spatio-temporal distancing strategy that functions as a device of 'othering' in maintaining fixed identities. The most widely used integration framework involves the *Life in the UK* and English language proficiency tests. The Life in the UK test, as a British Citizenship test, was formally introduced in 2005 by the UK government (under the New Labour) as a strategy aimed at addressing the perceived problems of integration and social cohesion in migrant communities. In April 2013, this test was extended to those (to someone like me) seeking indefinite leave to remain. Both tests prioritise the nation-state and place of origin of an ethnic lens, which then locates' migrants and 'non-migrants' or 'natives' into different spatio-temporal frames in which the former is assumed to be subject to categorical and inscribed time, while the latter to historical time. This migrant-non-migrant divide creates an asymmetry (not just a difference) between these frames of reference and action (Caglar 2016). There is deficiency model of the integrative perspective and an excess model derived from the post-migrant perspective, which also introduces an *a priori* divide that emigrates those 'with' migrant background and those 'without' into different temporal frames.

Ethnography is inevitably is both an expression and enactment of power relations and perhaps in an autoethnographic account, this is my attempt to claim ‘a presence in the present time.’

TEMPORARY STATUS

There is more than one route which enables academics and researchers to undertake ‘work’ at a UK university. First, there is the business visitor visa, which is generally for academics who live and work abroad and who intend to visit the UK for a short period of time. Second, Tier 2 (General) visa is designed for skilled migrants who have a job offer to come to the UK to work in a role that can not be filled by an EU/UK worker. There is a cap to the number of migrants that can come to the UK on this visa. This is fixed at 20,700 per year. Not any skilled worker can come to the UK. The occupation that a skilled worker could take up must either be on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL), which outlines particular occupations where the UK is suffering from skills gaps, or employers are required to conduct a Resident Labour Market Test. To pass this test, an employer must have advertised the job in an appropriate way for the sector and be able to show that no suitably skilled, settled worker can do the job. UKVI (UK Visas and Immigrations) decides where the employer must advertise the job, for how long, and what information needs to be included in the advertisement. Each advert must run for at least a month.

Initially, a Tier 2 (General) visa holder despite a full-time permanent as opposed to a fixed-term contract of employment, is only issued a visa for a maximum of 3 years, which could be renewed for a maximum of another 3 years. Since visa or work permits are linked to particular Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from an employer, any labour movement would require going through the same process again. Only when I have ‘served’ time equivalent to five years of continuous stay in the UK could I be made

permanent and do what UK labourers do, that is, have full labour market access. Until then, I am bound to my current sponsor and job. The temporal strategy of ‘leave to remain’ in work visas, alongside the required CoS regulates the movement of migrant academics between institutions and yet dependants of a visa holder could apply for jobs without restrictions or the need for employer’s sponsorship and immigration office’s approval.

The immigration policy demonstrates an interconnectedness of time and space in the way visa categories or types are constructed. SOL is constructed as the spatial areas of employment where skill gaps could be filled by migrant workers. However, the mechanisms that facilitate this spatial location of labour in a university are primary temporal constraints and temporal eligibility structures and conditions. How can the temporal dimension be understood in the specific context of migrant academics? Temporal regulations are more than just the durations that they can legally work or change their status from temporary to permanent.

Time is the ‘thicker’ border to cross as it becomes a disciplinary mechanism of control. Eligibility to work is time-bound determined by visa schemes. For Tier 2 (General), visa is granted based on the level of qualifications they have attained, with the completion of a postgraduate study accruing greater temporal value. As clearly articulated by Robertson (2014), temporal eligibility is part of a broader framework of the intense quantification of migrant value through the neoliberalism of immigration regimes. Temporal constraints refer to specific dimensions of ‘being temporary’ that limit or control how migrants live work in the UK once they have obtained their visas (Robertson 2014). Overall, this means no access to any government-sponsored social welfare or benefits, such as child tax credits, subsidised healthcare or unemployment benefits as well as lack of electoral participation.

The relationship between immigration policies and highly skilled migrants has predominantly focused on transnational capitalism, knowledge transfer, and selective migration policies intended to attract the ‘very best’ or talented. With the exception of Mavroudi and Warren’s (2013) work on highly skilled migrants in the UK’s higher education sector, the experiences of highly skilled Non-EEA/EU migrant academics like me have received little attention. From a more personal account of immigration policies, visa application processes are unnecessarily protracted and complicated. Furthermore, the need for biometric residence cards is a border check that facilitates entry within the state border of the UK. Hence, the perception that highly skilled migrants have fast-tracked and smooth migratory flows is misleading. The simple assumption that seamless mobility is accorded to highly skilled workers is simply a myth.

TEMPORAL GOVERNANCE

Border control is essentially the effort to regulate and ultimately restrict territorial access as a core state activity (Andreas 2003). All nation-states have the right to regulate who is granted legitimate entry or who could cross their national borders. The border concept, Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) argue, has an unproductive fixation on the image or metaphor of a ‘wall’ – how we must protect borders against terrorist whilst giving a sense of security when dealing with clandestine transnational activities, such as smuggling, drug and human trafficking. Equally, they suggest that borders are less about the boundary lines of state territories. Despite a shift in emphasis towards the economic liberalisation of borders and the increasing salience of academic mobilities, the approach and conceptualisation of borders as boundary or state territorial lines are increasingly less relevant in labour migration and critical border studies (Axelsson 2016), and most definitely in academic mobility. In fact, even the expansive literature on transnational capitalism and cosmopolitanism have little to say about the realities of

transnational or academic mobilities that are generally less spatial and ‘knowledge-based’ than usually depicted. Spatial movements are not just defined by territorial arrivals and departures via immigration counters and border security checks. Beyond the point of territorial entry, there are still control mechanisms - stricter visa regimes that control the methods, requirements and speed of cross-border movements. In short, every border control activity – travel document check, luggage inspection, interrogation, filling out immigration forms or landing cards, biometric data checks - contributes to the temporal dimension of bordering. These lines of bordering are of particular interest in this article, described by Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) as the thickening of borders, which renders a migrant academic like me *time-bound*. I must serve time. Its duration is unknown and its rationale must be questioned.

The Home Office’s UKVI (previously, UK Border Agency) and its rules operate in large part thru ‘temporal governance’ (Griffiths 2017). It operates with a linear and progressive concept of time (ie. clock time), wherein migrants have to progress through a forward-facing path from arrival to settlement and naturalization. There are temporal safeguards and provisions that benefit migrants – ‘temporal reliefs’ – that is, granting of specified amounts of timespace in the UK through successful visa applications. The Immigration rules are highly time-sensitive, mainly regulated by ‘windows of eligible time’ when one could make a move, that is, apply for a visa, an extension, ILR or citizenship. If the temporal requirements that relate to the timings of applications are missed or not adhered to, then your time is simply wasted or ‘lost’ by having your application instantly disqualified.

Length of stay/residence has long been a means by which non-citizens can claim a right to reside/settle. Legislative changes have extended the lengths of presence required to be temporary – that is, outside and absent from electoral roll, paying for

immigration health surcharge (IHS) of £600 and no access to social welfare benefits.

Lived time is undermined and qualified by such temporal requirement. This means that what you do with your 'own time' is increasingly regulated and some time periods may be erased altogether if one exceeds time allowance one can have outside the UK.

Immigration policies subject migrants to 'permanent temporariness'. Time only counts if it is 'continuous', that is, I have not spent more than a total of 180 days in the last 5 years before I could apply for indefinite leave to remain or 90 days for the last 12 consecutive months if applying for citizenship. Equally, to apply for citizenship I should have not been overseas for more than 90 days to be eligible to apply. Therefore, time is used as an administrative technique that delays, punishes and trips people up. Time is complex and temporal stipulations and qualifications keep changing – always favouring the literate - those who meet the £35,000 income threshold level and who do not have chaotic lives or children or dependents over 18 years of age. My route is less complicated and my time perhaps more privileged as I do not face deportation. In fact, I am a 'wanted' migrant, but this did not mean that my dependents (ie. family) are also wanted. My commodified knowledge value does not extend to my family.

The linear chronic progression of time served as described in the following section inevitably and consistently disrupt one's lived rhythm. It creates 'temporal rips' (arrhythmia) in terms of being out of sync with a permanent job on the one hand and a temporary or conditional status produced through temporal governance.

SERVING TIME

I am a Philippine national who came to the UK as a highly-skilled migrant via a Tier 2 visa in 2012. Before I could come to the UK, I needed an employer to sponsor me.

Work visa applications are assessed by the UK border agency based on an offer of employment and an approved CoS number from the hiring university. The application

form and guidelines are lengthy. Following a successful job interview, I received the conditional offer of employment subject to ‘the successful application for a work permit’. This was the easy part. The process of applying for a Tier 2 visa was far from straightforward. The visa application required that I indicated when I planned to travel and I could only enter the UK with the Tier 2 visa 14 days prior to my start date travel date to the UK was 14 days prior to my start date. A work visa was granted for a maximum duration of 3 years for my full-time and permanent contract of employment. A letter confirming my employment read as follows:

“I can confirm that the above person is employed ... on a permanent contract which is currently fixed due to visa restrictions.

My initial 3-year visa was extended for another three years. A letter confirming my employment at this time read as follows:

“I can confirm that the above person is employed ... on a permanent contract which has a fixed term date until 1st September 2018 due to a visa.”

In mobility, individuals inevitably experience temporal rips (arrhythmic periods) which are not mutually exclusive from polyrhythmic and eurhythmic periods. In transnational context, the rhythmic coupling of permanence and temporariness produces ‘permanent temporariness’ or ‘temporary permanence’ because the capacity of temporal movers to become part of the labour market in the destination country is often dictated by the disciplining of individual bodies through the rules of regulation of the migration scheme (Marcu 2017). Obtaining ILR or unconditional and unrestricted time to live in the UK was the next step for me to continue with my full-time employment with the same university. ILR is measured by the need to prove that in the last 5 years, I only stayed out of the country for a maximum of 180 days. I had to serve time. Serving time is not a guarantee of permanence or residence in the UK. There are those who have

stayed here longer than me and yet they are not given time to stay indefinitely. Serving time includes a temporary loss of mobility rights whilst bound through a sponsorship with my employer or whilst waiting for the decision, whereby my passport is usually held by the immigration office. Waiting, then, is a central aspect of border control. There is uncertainty that comes with waiting and not knowing the outcome of your application for an extended period of time. After a long wait, my letter of employment finally made sense to me. I no longer have a fixed-term condition on my full-time, permanent contract. On 15 May 2018, my letter of employment reads: "I can confirm that the above person is employed ... on a permanent contract." An ILR re-places served time with flexibility and security towards eurhythmic change. There is security in knowing that my permanent contract is no longer conditional, nor does it have an expiry date with a particular employer. I could finally change jobs if so desired without having to worry about CoS or be rendered in a 'fixed position' with a particular employer.

Crossing a nation-border that involves boarding a plane and arriving at airports is fixed with access control, interrogation, biometric data checks, and counter-checks. In the UK, there are two lanes for entry clearance: one is fast and the other one, slow. The fast lane is for British nationals and European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) citizens. The slow lane with a longer queue for all the times I have been part of it is for all the other non-EU/EEA nationalities. This is a familiar route that takes a longer time to follow and ultimately get pass the border control area. Over the years, twenty years in fact, the pace of the queue and the time it takes to enter a nation-border has made me a nomadic subject. I have been absent in places where I could be identified with but no longer belong to. Mobility is not just a spatial disruption but a temporal too. Little did I know that the two countries, one of birth and the other of opportunity, could

disrupt my sense of place and belonging over time permanently. Time is change. This is a case of arrhythmia where the act of mobility produced ‘the corporeal impossibility of simultaneously experiencing passage of historical time in two places simultaneously. The origin keeps moving on, transforming the context that had been familiar for the migrant; it is impossible to go back completely to the place the migrant (the timely self) left behind or to remain the same person one was when one left for the first time. The aspect of migrating that I do not emphasise in this article is the transition to everyday life in the UK. This also takes time and happens with varied and sometimes unexpected rhythms. I have focused on the ‘borders of time’ and the issues they raise which are likely to be a shared and common experience with other border-crossers like me. The challenges of interpreting the logics of requirements, conditions, assumptions and practices of the immigration rules and bordering processes have confronted me with ambivalent and multi-faceted encounters with ‘being temporary’ and ‘being in time’, I have become (dis)located in time and space. This is not necessarily a negative consequence of academic mobility but an acknowledgement that there is nothing ‘borderless’ or fluid about academic mobility or transnational academic capitalism. “We need to set aside the notion of “deterritorialised” universal globalisation of higher education” (Marginson and Sawir 2005, 289). In fact, territorialisation is further impressed by temporal constraints, eligibility, conditions and overall, temporariness (Robertson 2014). The prioritisation of some ethnic and/or national categories over others inscribes migrants and the ‘natives’ into different temporal frameworks (Caglar 2016).

Despite attempts to attend to the spatio-temporal realities of migration, there remains the tendency to limit time and migrants in accounts of duration, that is, permanent settlement for those assumed to integrate and stay and temporary residence

for those who are assumed to leave eventually in a linear progression of time. Academic mobility or skilled migration in the case of foreign academics is traditionally understood as temporally linear, a mover from a place of origin to the present and future permanent residence. This is not to imply that temporary and circular/cyclic temporalities and circular mobilities have not been historically considered, but the primary discourse and practices have been through the normative framework of permanent settlement. A temporal account sheds light on the temporariness of permanent academic posts. The immobility that CoS brings to full-time, permanent employment presents an imbalance of power relations between employer and employee.

DIFFERENTIAL INCLUSION

"After crossing many physical, natural borders, I found myself facing other kinds of borders ..., those in the minds of people" (Khosravi 2010, 75).

Through the lens of Brexit and other nation-state discourses, we see immigrants objectified as unwanted citizens, welfare dependents, and employment snatchers. I position myself as being Asian and as a woman within what Anthias (2008) calls 'translocational positionality', to bring attention to the positions and identities I occupy in relation to temporal *processes*. This gives precedence to the temporal trajectories and breaks resulting from the intersections of one's 'origin' or non-Britishness within an essentialist notion of nation and identity. Identity is not an essence but a positioning. Borrowing the words of Espiritu (2003), my academic migrant status as a Filipino is shaped not only by my highly skilled status and white education within the UK, but also by the position of the Philippines within the global racial order. This positioning is what Espiritu calls differential inclusion, rather than outright exclusion, "as the process whereby a group of people (non-EU/UK in this case) is deemed integral to the nation's

economy, culture, identity and power – but integral only or precisely because of their designated subordinate standing (47)”.

Differential inclusion is made evident in how immigrants are made into minority subjects with fixed identities and who always belong elsewhere. And yet, academic mobility and migration is a process of becoming-other. The extent of my freedom to move is prescribed on a paper document (ie. passport) that fixed me to a place I no longer belong to and not on my highly skilled status or academic positioning. In fact, my highly-skilled academic status is reduced to a particular ethnic and essentialist (immobile) category as documented in my passport and classified by foreign and immigration policies. In Khosravi’s (2010) words, “[p]assports determine our spatial limits or surplus rights of mobility (61).” Furthermore, my passport determines my temporal allowance. As such, it is a powerful document. It verifies my identity. I must live up to it and Khosravi (2010) is right, I belong to my passport. It does not belong to me.

I take up this space and some of your time to speak in the margins. The notion of the becoming self/other is well developed in feminist and poststructural theory as always in process (Somerville 2010) and mine is bound by my colonial past and marginalised by my less white privileged origin. While I have gained White knowledge based on my British postgraduate qualifications and have substantial experience in teaching White curricula, I have often been misread over the years, as if time stood still or that I have simply lost both place and time when my epistemic authority, despite my white credentials, is dismissed in conference presentations, teaching sessions, meetings and immigration border checks through the racialised gaze and subordinate positioning of ‘my kind’. Epistemic justice raises questions about who has the right to create knowledge and the epistemic ignorance that exists around differential inclusion

To address differential inclusion, I agree with Espiritu (2003) that we need to study immigration, not in terms of what it tells us about integration of migrants beyond the current discourse of 'unable to integrate', therefore 'unable to belong' (Anthias, 2013), but more on what the border say about the racialised and gendered economic, cultural and political foundations of the nation-state. That is, the border must not be conceptualised as a site for legitimate access of migrants, but as a site to critique claims of liberal democracy, diversity and inclusion. My identity is persistently made into a minority subject though I would argue that I am, in fact, 'made in the UK'. I take up many positions and identities produced through the imperialist past of my country through to the academic that I am now. Over time, the thinning of the border is possible. However, what time could not diminish, remove or transform is the ethnic lens, which portrays migrants like me as having only one country and one identity. This is a product of nation-state building processes of the 20th century. Ultimately, I am the border that I could not cross.

My identity positioning is full of becoming-others -other than Filipino, other than non-white, other than Asian, etc – brought about by my academic moves between countries and continents and yet I remain stuck in my passport identity, unable to become other than what the border gaze and immigration policies inscribe upon my body. According to Khosravi (2010), the border gaze is a xenophobic gaze. It does not *see* me, but reads me as a type and locates me at a spatiotemporal distance. "The visual field is not neutral to the question of race; it is itself a racial formation, an episteme, hegemonic and forceful" (Butler 1993: 17 cited by Khosravi 2010, 80). Ultimately, the border I could not cross is in the gaze of people and the bias of differential inclusion. The thickness of the border and its conditions differentiate people based on their

citizenship, nationality, ethnicity or 'race' and it is selectively more open and thinner to some people and not others regardless of skills (Baulder 2015).

CLOSING REMARKS

I did not consider immigration policy beyond filling out forms, certifying copies of academic and financial documents to evidence and establish credibility in my visa application. In fact, I did not know the deeply othered temporal difference and epistemic injustice that comes with being a non-EU academic migrant. I did read immigration documents to follow instructions and meet visa requirements. However, immigration forms and government guidelines do not make visible the temporal bordering that someone like me has to endure or the time that I must serve to cross the border in partial and conditional terms. As with the participants in Mavroudi and Neilson's (2013) study, prior mobility or PhD student status encouraged my 'return' as an academic in an English university. The thick border of academic mobility is only experienced when one decides to proceed and apply.

I thought the temporal difference begins and ends at the immigration counter at the airport where I found myself always in a slower and longer queue. This did not bother me. I did not know that the border I had to cross had a different thickness and is subjected to heavily-managed temporal governance to such an extent that the ability to cross the border slowly temporarily remove my mobility rights to maintain my eligibility to remain a legal border-crosser. Temporally thick borders are produced through immigration policies and administrative and bureaucratic processes associated with processing times, waiting times, visa times and more deeply impressed through colonised identities and capitalist regimes and through various rhythmic modalities of arrhythmia, polyrhythmia and hopefully eurhythmia.

“The control of mobility extends before and beyond the particular journey through the process of identification, verification, authorisation, consumption, examination and confession, and arrival” (Salter 2013, 10). The temporal aspect of borders in terms of the issuance of the certificate of sponsorship, visa sticker, biometric card and ultimately that of a certificate of citizenship and British passport radically changes the rhythms of academic mobility. These realities are ultimately a matter of *served* or *lost* time: processing time, waiting time, visa validity and expiration. As a migrant subject, I am ‘time-bound’.

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