

Pedagogy of Academic Mobility

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Introduction

This chapter proposes the concept of 'other thinking' where otherness is positioned from within, instead of outside or opposite the dominant culture or host nation. Drawing from critical pedagogy and place-based approaches, it considers how academic mobility itself is a process of othering. In this autobiographic account, I explore otherness through the 'eyes of the beholder', while problematizing the monoracial tendency to impose identity and status based on my place of origin and ethnicity. To do this, the pedagogy I attend to refers to the process of (un)becoming the other by transgressing the binary logic of the neocolonial forces of globalization and immigration. It argues for the need to decolonize the focus of pedagogy from the globalized theoretical discourses of the corporate university to the particular lived experience or experiential dimension of critical pedagogy. I have become a neo-liberal and colonized subject as a non-EU/UK migrant academic. I could not escape the prescribed consciousness of the West and the coloniality of my being. However, I can replace and move my identity to an 'other' within. Such boundary-making could become a 'subject matter' to replace and reposition various disciplinary perspectives and discourses of educational research and practice.

Here

I am struggling to accept myself as an academic. Although everything about my educational preparation says that I am on track to become a notable professor [maybe] with a respected research agenda at some venerable institution, there is a lead in my belly. (Rolling 2004: 869)

These words could have easily been my own. In fact, I utter them to introduce where I am – in Liverpool, England, at least seventeen hours away from my birthplace, San Fernando, Pampanga, Philippines, by air travel. It has been more than twenty years since I lived there. Now, I am here. For some, I am away from home, and yet I do not feel the same. The distance and difference brought about by my academic mobility over time have estranged me to such an extent that there is really no going back 'home'. As a migrant academic, I have become homeless, not because I lived far away from my birthplace, but because, here in the UK, I have become aware of an irreplaceable and unshakeable minority identity that is imposed upon me and imprinted on my skin. I am simply an 'other', lacking the visible features of the 'locals', or the familiar persona of a university scholar, or the look of someone the predominantly white cohort of students could easily identify with. It is this otherness that I would like to reposition and replace within the UK, my 'host' nation.

My mobile subjectivity and 'fixed' identity do not conform. The following common-sense assumptions simply do not apply to my identity. First, it is categorized by race, inscribed in my skin colour and place of origin. Second, it emphasizes 'there', an absent place, rather than 'here', where I am. Finally, it assumes that my identity is a definite form, singular and coherent. To appreciate the othering of

academic mobility as a kind of place, these assumptions or seemingly common-sense realities must be undone or done differently. The imposed identity of an other is based on an essentialized caricature of my place of origin and Eurocentric prejudice related to the Orient. Such cultural representation has served and continues to serve as an implicit justification for monoracial identifiers. Crucially, it legitimizes the idea of race itself (Maldonado-Torres 2007).

The academic story of non-EU/UK migrants similar to mine has been told and shared by fellow UK academics in the study conducted by Willis and Hammond (2014). The study has highlighted the difference in the education system between host and home countries. The academic culture is experienced to be more commercialized, where learners-are-consumers logic applies in British universities. This is evident in student attitudes and institutional operations that are very much intent in getting high National Student Survey (NSS) scores. To fit in a UK institution, an international academic has to navigate the local social structure and develop tools and strategies to meet expectations to cope and be like the locals, and yet one could never be one of the locals. As acknowledged by Trahar and Hyland (2011), there is a continuing tendency to view internationalization from the 'host' perspective and standard. Aside from the dislocation due a decision to move from one's country to another, there is dislocation in being given a migrant or alien status as soon as the nation- state border is crossed. I became an other 'here'. There are visible markers of otherness, my skin tone, hair and accent, that could not be undone by my education, values, skills and potential or even an actual change of accent. This form of othering, naturalized by race, has become the territory of identity. At the same time, it becomes the occasion and space for what I call in this chapter 'pedagogy of academic mobility'. This pedagogy is framed within critical theory, with the voices of Paulo Freire (1970) and bell hooks (1994) ringing in my ears. It is about self-actualization in my colonized subjectivity and otherness in the rhythms of the habits of my experiences both here and elsewhere. Pedagogy of academic mobility is about the movement of the other, in this account, of a non- UK/EU migrant academic. It expands the notion of place in 'place pedagogies' written about by Gruenewald (2003) and in the 'place-becoming' (Somerville 2010) that happens through academic mobility. Absent and distant places are never left behind; they are also inscribed in my colonized (body-) consciousness. Academic mobility has not been taken up pedagogically. It should be. It is a provocative and productive tool for 'other thinking'. In response to otherness, we have to ask: How might academic mobility decolonize and relocate the way I teach towards less hegemonic visions of knowledge production?

Autobiographical account of the other

To throw light on the challenges, disorientation and position of the other and to bring the question of the other into mainstream discourse towards a pedagogy of the other, I attend to my own personal experiences as a migrant academic. It is both an autobiography inasmuch as it is about me and an autoethnography as I locate my academic story within the bounds of 'Western' culture, mostly in the UK. I repeat, this is about me, and it is personal and subjective. In saying this, I would like to enlist Roth's emphasis that instead of seeing the first-person method as 'ways of retreating into personal, inner subjectivity, we should adopt it as a way to establish and stabilize intersubjectivity' (2005: 15). Let it be clearly understood that its objectivity could not be found or established by depersonalization or impersonal arguments, and its rigour could not be denied or countered with an essentialist understanding of identity that defines otherness or the other. Rather than pretending to create an objective and decontextualized pedagogy and knowledge, this account acknowledges the relational positioning and meaning-making that I have theorized and constructed from a particular standpoint, where the line of otherness is drawn. More importantly, this line is where I have found myself at the edges of academic qualifications and practices in the West.

All too often, stories and pedagogic practices transcribed from interviews appear to be disembodied and rendered lifeless, represented as excerpts of 'voices', mostly thematized, organized and analysed by well-educated minds. This account, in contrast, is about embodied encounter, my body among bodies, in an academic experience of mobility. I focus on lived experience to create a place for a critical pedagogy that recognizes the placing that is brought about by academic mobility. Pedagogy is about places and our relationships to these, not just in terms of the geographical but also in terms of the personal and experiential. Place could refer to people identified and defined by race, gender and ethnicity. As such, place is not just about roots or rootedness, but also about routes of mobility.

'Pedagogy as a social relationship is very close in. It gets right in there – in your brain, your body, your heart, in your sense of self, of the world, of others, and of possibilities and impossibilities in all those realms' (Ellsworth 1997: 6). My very identity becomes the occasion or moment to confront otherness and to propose a pedagogy that is framed and encountered body-experiences. We know that identities are constantly shaped and reshaped, and they are best understood as situated in spatio-temporal moments. This account consists of moments that are replaced to transcend the dichotomies of inside/outside, local/global, white/ non-white, native/other and any other thing that places me on the other side of an invisible boundary line. I share moments of being: that of 'an Atenean' (described later); as someone actually 'made in the UK'; and how I have become a 'white other'. These multiple identities are organized unequally in relation to the access of identity-building resources – with the spectrum of possible categories that have been produced – name, accent, physical appearance, and PhD degree from Aberdeen. My identity/identities are also stratified. Identity in one space may not be readily converted into its counterpart in another space. Evidence of differentiation is captured in the UK compatibility measure of my four-year, undergraduate degree, an honours degree from Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines, which was 'valued' as an 'ordinary degree' in the UK. I do not intend for these analyses and contentions to be final and totalizing in my discussions. I simply suggest that place and mobility have both relocated me.

Movement changes my place and placing and yet, I am always confronted and challenged with my place of origin as if permanently fixed in position based on monoracial identifiers that have nothing to do with my experience or realities that have moved me here. Institutional practices situate and orient the academic work of its members through particular ways of teaching, learning, assessing, thinking, communicating and relating. They are increasingly serving a neo- liberal order and managerialist agenda that insists upon standardized practices. This chapter aims to contribute to the experiential dimension of a critical pedagogy of academic mobility and to reflect the implications of what it means to be situated as an other and to move as an other within and beyond dualistic perspectives and monoracial ideologies.

My experience is logged in this chapter from memory. It is a remembrance that allows me to narrate retrospectively and repeatedly a pedagogic testimony of academic mobility. It engages multiple locations of memory and experience. It addresses diverse and shifting standpoints to teach and learn inclusively, analytically and experientially. It is organized in the following ways: first, I provide vignettes of academic experiences of otherness beyond an inside/ outside perspective – an Atenean identity that was made by a medium of instruction that was predominantly delivered in the English language and a curriculum content that was undeniably 'white', Western and Catholic (this was true throughout my Philippine education); a British identity made not by race, ethnicity or citizenship but by my postgraduate English degrees, namely, an MA from the University of Leicester and a PhD obtained through a full- time studentship from the University of Aberdeen; and lastly, a provocation and self-awareness that I have become a 'white other', an identity that has given me the ability and opportunity to be a mobile, migrant academic. Then, I describe the kind of pedagogy that closely speaks to my

academic experience as an international student and migrant academic in the UK. This proceeds with an exploration of each of my identities as bracketed and contained in limited ways in this chapter to question the grand and colonized narratives of transnational identities of mobile and migrant academics towards a critical pedagogy. The response I would like to pursue is found in the notion of 'other thinking' and the value of grounding pedagogy in experience. Other thinking is discussed in relation to an identity politics that is embodied and in tension with my ethnicity and place of origin. In its autobiographical account, this chapter raises and encounters the possibility and politics of the reductive and prescriptive tendency of postcolonial epistemology, which is paradoxically neocolonial. I acknowledge my biased position as someone who has become a neo-liberal and colonized subject. There is a need to decolonize by replacing or relocating the focus of pedagogy from the globalized theoretical discourses of the academy to the particular lived experience or experiential dimension of critical pedagogy. I could not escape the colonality of knowledge and of my being that Maldonado-Torres (2007) speaks about, but I must recognize that it is a position and place that has given me the license to move and discover the 'other' position such movement brings when I make it to other places. As he says: 'Coloniality refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration' (2007: 243).

I am an Atenean

We will dare you to discover a larger vision of yourself and our world. We will challenge you to do 'the things of greater worth' because we know you are more than what the grade-givers of this world make you out to be. We do this because the Ateneo is more than just a school. (Welcome Statement on the Admissions page of Ateneo de Manila University, <http://www.ateneo.edu/admissions>)

The Ateneo de Manila was founded in 1859 by Spanish Jesuits. It is one of the oldest universities in the Philippines. Dr Jose Protacio Rizal, the national hero, was among the first graduates of the Ateneo. It is a fee-paying institution rooted in Catholicism and based on liberal education. It is, I admit, elite. To become an Atenean requires passing an admissions exam. Based on my experience, it is the toughest test I ever had to do in my life. I graduated in 1994 with an honours undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Computer Science. The Ateneo could be a lot of things, but one thing I was sure of when I was a student there was the fact that I was among the brightest.

Being an Atenean is not just an affiliation or a label; it is a status, and all my Jesuit professors would say that such status assigns a social responsibility for the less fortunate. Who would have thought that such status and excellent positioning of my academic rigour and educational value would be positioned differently, and that its academic excellence could not be retained and recognized? In 2005, I requested a 'Statement of Comparability' for my undergraduate degree from UK National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (NARIC), a national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills. The assessment letter states that my four-year full-time honours degree from Ateneo de Manila University 'is considered comparable to British Bachelor (Ordinary) degree standard'. The letter further states that the assessment 'although based on informed opinion, should be treated only as guidance'. I am an Atenean, displaced not only in terms of place but also in terms of the academic worth of my undergraduate degree.

My Atenean identity is elite, but I do not look it. This elitism defines my high expectations and an intellectual value that dares to aim high, to not fit the mould, to be different and to be worthy in unmeasurable ways. Such noble aspirations are not shared where I am, at least not in the same way.

My elitism is misunderstood and taken to mean something else through my other positioning, usually misinterpreted as my lack of understanding of the pedagogic practice or the cultural literacy in the UK. My colonized identity is white and my education was Westernized and yet, my skin becomes a boundary of difference for my pedagogic place and ability.

As an Atenean, I was trained to question and reflect and not to simply accept the state of affairs in any situation. I have embraced the possibility and risk of changing my mind and my ideas about things. There is a sense of pride that comes with my university motto to always 'aim high'. This has been inscribed in my identity in ways that I did not know. When I started my teaching profession, I quickly realized that the academic expectations I had strived for in Ateneo, and the desire to achieve high with risk and without a guarantee, is not something I could necessarily expect from my own students. In fact, for the sake of widening participation and inclusion, I have to learn to adjust my expectations. The devaluing of my Ateneo degree would suggest that the academic rigour of Ateneo was not on par with comparable undergraduate degrees, and yet as an Atenean of seemingly lower academic standing, I have found myself making academic adjustments to meet student needs. I have to come to terms with the fact that the university has become a place for the non-academic, the vocational and the 'world of work'. Based on forty years of research, Graham Nuthall, in a Jean Herbison Lecture in 2001, has confirmed that teaching and learning is a matter of cultural tradition rather than evidence-based practice and how much of what we believe about teaching is a matter of folklore rather than research. The Atenean tradition of holistic education is within me, but I could not find its place here.

It is a challenge to stay in love with learning in teaching. My cultural tradition, including my academic background and achievement, which to a large extent gave me the opportunity to be part of the UK academic community, has no legitimacy in other places and universities. They must be set aside and forgotten. I have to submit to the system of domination and capitalist culture of pedagogical practices that are far from being transformative and critical. Coming from a poverty-stricken country in the East, the value of education is more than a right but a gift. Education in the Philippines is a legacy and inheritance that families and parents could give their children and the next generation. For this reason, students are motivated with a tangible goal to better their lives. It is not the same here in the UK. It does not seem to be, anyway. What matters is more about the numbers or data that could be tracked and recorded in management and information systems. The measure that has to be satisfied relates to meeting retention and degree classification targets. It matters less what knowledge and understanding numbers or marks represent. I have to agree with Nuthall (2001), such data records are used as the primary evidence about student learning and student engagement. In fact, he further argues, that the more or higher the numbers we could track and record, the closer teaching is deemed excellent.

The educational values I would like to uphold return to the opening quote of this section: 'to dare to do things of greater worth'. This is simply muted and has become the very source of academic dissatisfaction. Furthermore, there are times that I have been confronted with the unspoken racial assumption that it is my otherness, my lack of experience in the UK educational system that serves an explanation for this dissatisfaction or my lack of suitable pedagogic strategies. The pedagogy that I value is a practice of reflection and inquiry. When I share teaching sessions with colleagues, I find myself in puzzlement and perhaps in shock to witness the exercise of control, usually by assuming a domineering stance. I have realized with resistance that I have to become the kind of educator I did not want to become. My Ateneo education with its liberal and holistic approaches did not inspire this in me. Secretly, I feel my Ateneo education is 'better', contrary to what the NARIC measure had suggested. In saying this, I do not mean to suggest that UK education is 'worse'. My argument is simply to question the value of degree comparability, which has no basis except a deep-seated bias that

maintains a system of domination and supremacy. I am perplexed as to why I could not expect the same academic rigour expected of me from the Western or Westernized institutions that made me the migrant academic that I am.

‘Made in the UK’

My identity is a confounding assemblage. It is made of diverse pieces evoked by the Catholic religion, a legacy of nearly 400 years of Spanish colonization, an inheritance of nearly fifty years of American rule, a nation under Marcos’s dictatorship for twenty years and under martial law for nine years, and a Western education. More significantly, my academic achievements, status and mobility as a UK academic bear the weight of my prescribed colonial history and submission to the neocolonial and neo-liberalist agenda of globalization. Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy argues that the oppressed or the colonized become dual beings. That is to say that the oppressor or the colonizer is found within the colonized through prescription, which is the transformation of one’s consciousness to conform to the prescriber’s consciousness (Freire 1970). I could accept and recognize that my choice of completing UK degrees was prescribed by my colonized identity, the colonizer-other within me. However, my postgraduate qualifications do not transform my race, gender and ethnicity.

Through the course of my teaching career in the UK and elsewhere, I have realized that in most cases, my doctoral degree or overall academic standing does not matter, except to gain legitimacy to supervise postgraduate students or to teach in postgraduate programmes. Before obtaining a high-skilled work visa, it matters that I am able to demonstrate that I have the expertise that is ‘comparable’ to the locals. My successful employment has to be evidenced on the basis that there is no local who could fit the job I applied for. In short, I have to be the best candidate. It never did occur to me that the selection process does not necessarily apply to locals. A terminal degree is not a nonnegotiable condition or essential criterion to teach in higher education (HE). I have had colleagues without doctorates in the university departments where I have worked. For a migrant academic, my entry clearance and work permit must be verified with advanced skills and qualifications. This does not bother me. However, this academic standing is merely required in a set of selection criteria and not necessarily recognized in my academic work. In fact, there have been situations where there is dissonance and disorientation about my presence and place in institutions and my academic status in tertiary education. In short, despite my UK (white) qualifications, I remain an institutionally marginalized other. My academic experience is denied any authority vis-à-vis the cultural literacy that is required to teach in HE institutions. Furthermore, my academic knowledge is, as I have realized, not as important as my demonstrable ability to teach through a successful application for a Higher Education Academy (HEA) fellowship. To this end, I worked to become an HEA senior fellow, mapping and aligning my academic experience to four main descriptors in three dimensions of expertise, namely, areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values. It is a required recognition of one’s professional development. It is a certification of one’s ability to teach. Regardless of race, class or gender, all academics are subjected to this same vision of conformity to a dominant cultural literacy and standardized professional development framework. My pedagogic practice is also evaluated by NSS results, where the authority of academic scholarship and experience is superseded by the authority of ‘student engagement’. Consequently, in ways unknown to me, an identity crisis begins – What does it mean to be an academic ‘here’?

I am ‘made in the UK’. My education is not neutral. It is undeniably white. Its whiteness is acknowledged and accepted as a valuable resource. My mobile subject is an entirely different matter. To be other is to be inferior. My colonized status and Western education do not diminish the gap of otherness between me and my ‘native’ academic colleagues. My whiteness leaves no marks on my

skin. It does not alter my appearance. When the body itself is marked with the social stigma of race, gender and class as a symbol of difference or nonconformity, educational qualifications and academic experience are still marginalized:

Thus the body has an identity that coincides with its essence and cannot be altered by moral, artistic, or human will. This indelibility of corporeal identity only furthers the mark placed on the body by other physical qualities – intelligence, height, reaction time. By this logic, the person enters in an identical relationship with the body, the body forms the identity, and the identity is unchangeable and indelible as one's place on the normal curve ...this fingerprinting of the body means that the marks of physical difference become synonymous with the identity of the person. (Davis 1995, cited in Rolling 2004: 881)

Within a white and colonized curriculum, my Ateneo education was the closest to having an education that gave me the freedom and encouragement to discover and decide for myself what becoming was worth pursuing. This same passion and disposition have been denied me, silenced to otherness in another place. I could only aspire to a critical pedagogy as described by Paulo Freire and bell hooks. A pedagogy of academic mobility welcomes 'other thinking' based on non-white histories, cultures, experiences and identities. And its place is not only about the local, fixed geographical location with a postcode or geographical coordinates. Place is movement. At the same time, movement has placed me as the other. This is my experience as a non-UK/EU mobile academic.

White other

The political and relational aspects of my identity here are not visible. My rootedness in my own academic biography in a white curriculum is not acknowledged, unless it is verified and certified to fit the 'teaching excellence' or 'cultural literacy' framework of Eurocentric standards. My identity has been fixed for me, that is, placed not only outside the nation, but also outside the education system I myself was and still am a product of. This border of otherness cannot be simply crossed. My academic expectations are deemed misplaced and unwelcomed because I am simply not 'from here', and yet my relocation and the number of years I have been here would prove to the contrary. Academic mobility, when confronted with race, is not an invitation to stay or to belong to the 'local community'.

As a migrant academic, I have experienced what Lionnet (1991) noted as 'a chain of destabilizing experiences that undermine forever [a] sense of belonging to a specific place' (cited in Gatson 2003: 42). These dislocations from an unexamined and imposed expectation in terms of my academic participation in a UK institution 'marginalized' the very aspect of my academic biography which formed the basis of my academic suitability and mobility in the first place. I refuse to engage in an either/or mode of thinking. Admittedly, this would not sit comfortably with single-race identifiers or attempts for a unified racial identity. On the one hand, I am the other because I am an Atenean and white because I am 'made in the UK'. I accept my otherness and from within it, it is safe to transgress (hooks 1994). And my transgression is this, on the account of both of my education and transnational experience: I am a 'white other'. I can teach with this skin. A nonessentialist identity of white other is relational, fluid and in process. Its process could be a 'subject matter' in critical pedagogy, wherein the analytical intermingles with the experiential in equal terms and when (I do mean temporally) the subject is not easily objectified for the sake of knowledge transfer or transnational identity capital.

Being 'white other' is not going to relocate me away from the margins. It is not another racial category. Instead, it is a 'third space', a place with(in), where I can proceed with a pedagogy that replaces my otherness towards a process and experience of (un)becoming. Placing my experience of 'white otherness' at the centre of pedagogy disrupts the constructed boundaries lived through the politics of skin tone. Though, ultimately, my otherness outweighs my whiteness – despite the fact that as an

academic, the measures and qualifications that brought me here and made me an academic in the UK have everything to do with my white qualifications, white language and white academic mobility. I relocate this placing and confront racial inequality with a pedagogic practice that values other thinking.

Other thinking

Neoliberal agendas exert even more control over space, time, curriculum and assessment. To develop a critical pedagogy of place with academic mobility, place and mobility need to be reinterpreted. Place is not just a fixed geographical location, and movement is not just a positional change between two or more spatial locations. Instead, they are dynamic and relational in such a manner that movement places and place moves. In contrast to essentialist or mechanistic approaches, the view of relationality encourages us to see that academic mobility shapes spatial and bodily experiences. Increasingly, universities are characterized by amplified mobilities of academic staff and students across campuses, cities and countries. This implies expanded and intensified possibilities for accessing and inhabiting multiple realities. However, '[m]obility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship' (Skeggs 2004: 49). Hence, acknowledging and exploring the power relations and dynamics of pedagogic practices is vital, particularly when the principle of academic mobility is placed and imposed upon an other identity. It is at this juncture, or restricted view, that migrant academics must engage in other thinking in their pedagogic practices. Of particular relevance to imposed identity is an investigation of its role and impact in creating effects of both movement and stasis, and uneven distribution of 'academic capital' (Elliott and Urry 2010) or 'transnational identity capital' (Fahey and Kenway 2010). Accordingly, a pedagogy of academic mobility calls for the development of alternative practices that are positively disruptive to the dominant techno-economic base of institutions that employ mobile academics and simultaneously enact more decolonizing forms of academic work. It is important to consider the placing of mobile identity as a result of cultural practices and social norms that implicate people and knowledge in uneven ways based on race, gender and ethnicity. For instance, in my academic life, my mobile identity is situated simultaneously 'now here' and 'nowhere' (Friedland and Boden 1994).

This chapter proposes the concept of 'other thinking'. Other thinking is 'not simply the self "feeling for" or "in consideration of" the other – because one can feel for the other and feel good about the self, then disengage' (Bobis 2013: 152). Instead, it entails a fracturing of the positivistic foundation of essentialism, colonialism and modernity. The other within, that is, a migrant academic like me, becomes a 'subject matter' that can challenge the neocolonial and neo-liberalist agenda in the contemporary university. To pursue this matter, I align my epistemic positioning with the notion of decoloniality, that goes beyond the dualistic view of the white/non-white that are fixated to historical projects of imperialism and colonialism. The project of decoloniality is to confront the racial rhetoric and hierarchies that have been put in place by fixed identities of the 'other', which are further strengthened by academic mobility itself. Decoloniality must acknowledge the contributions of racialized, colonized and marginalized subjectivities to the production of knowledge and critical thinking (Maldonado-Torres 2007).

My academic mobility experience has been colonized many times over by national and international history, economics, and politics. My identity overturns the bitterly adversarial attitude that underpins these global stories. My colonial history and colonized identity have given me mobility. Other thinking evokes self-and-other or self-in-other, instead of the 'self' that is individualistic in the Western sense and, in effect, denies or repositions the other in unequal terms. Accordingly, the pedagogy of academic mobility within experiential dimensions of other thinking can emerge, shift and

transform what is 'already in place' and what can 'take place'. Shifting the geography of epistemology and giving authority to experience is crucial to a 'decolonial move' of other- thinking. We do not produce rigorous knowledge by adhering to standards, measures and cultural literacies on the basis of the views and needs of only one region of the world, and even less so by a region that has been characterized by colonialist and imperialist histories that have ignored and discriminated other regions. Other-thinking means fracturing essentialist mindsets and relocating knowledge production with experiences, mobilities and places beyond dualistic perspectives and Eurocentric horizons.

Ending

In this chapter, place and mobility are interpreted as relational and experiential realities involving an otherness that is fundamentally and inevitably based on the Western image of the Orient. The pedagogy of academic mobility is an experience of boundary-working as an 'other within' in at least two ways: within me as a colonized subject and within a nation-state border away from my place of origin as a migrant (white) academic in the UK. In my journey, both academically and experientially, mobility becomes a place. It is the very context for embodied participation with self–other relations. As such, pedagogy and ways of knowing are shaped by the kinds of places and moves which we experience. The particular experience of 'othering' has been brought to bear in a critical reflection in this chapter that challenges my academic journeys and trajectories. I continue to navigate the boundary line of my otherness in my academic work. And a pedagogy of academic mobility offers 'the mobile experiences' of migrant academics like me alternative resources to invite discussions with 'other thinking' and 'other' realities that must be decolonized and relocated to less structured or stable states and fixed places. It does so by reflecting critically on the persistent dualistic perspectives and relations between local and global knowledge transfer inequalities in inside/outside boundaries accompanying academic mobility. Accordingly, a critical place approach to mobility probes into how mobility has been formed, regulated and distributed around different regions, nations and places of origin. My relocations reveal how the formation, regulation, and distribution of pedagogy is shaped and patterned by existing dominant social, cultural, political and economic structures of the contemporary university. Correspondingly, a critical pedagogy explores what understandings of practice and values underpin regulatory and privileged knowledge that exists within institutional systems. My autobiographic evidence shows contradictory things on at least three accounts. First, it shows how my foreign undergraduate degree was devalued, failing to measure up according to the NARIC compatibility criteria. Second, my UK qualifications are tangible proofs of equivalent academic standing, and yet I remain 'out of place'. Lastly, a white other as a 'place of mobility' (not origin) that is not based on race or ethnicity is unheard of though my education and colonial heritage strongly suggest my white qualification.

The critical aspect of pedagogy that I would like to emphasize in my initial and rather raw ponderings about the place that academic mobility itself brings to bear in other places, both physical and symbolic, is 'other thinking' – the intermingling of both Western and non-Western, white and non-white consciousness by the diversity of cultures that range from the Eurocentric to the Muslim, Hindu, including mixed and indigenous cultures that are well represented where I am now in the West. Other thinking must accommodate and consider 'other' places that are distant and absent 'here'. The pedagogical value of places 'not here' must be acknowledged. They are invisible and yet integral and woven into the local rhythms of bodies, cultures, values and traditions of individual identities and knowledge practices.

To bring this account to a close, I return to myself, my (body-)identities. I could not escape my colonized body. I could not deny, nor would I want to, the value and privilege that my Western education has given me. White supremacy has been prescribed into my consciousness, whether I like it or not. And yet, I am denied the status of white privilege based on racial grounds and skin politics. I do puzzle over the power of this bordering to throw me off and impose an imbalance to my academic identity. Writing this chapter has presented me with discomfort and ‘truths’ that I could not fully articulate. I have been experiencing an internal struggle that has nothing to do with an intellectual dissonance of pedagogic practice. My experience of dislocation, lived and felt through my corporeal existence, is not a matter of discourse. It matters not just epistemologically, but phenomenologically. Identity is the boundary line of otherness. It is contingent and variable, never fully determined by myself or the transnational arrangements and requirements of institutions or nations or cultural and individual expectations. My place is ultimately not somewhere. It is (t)here – both here and there. Adapting a pedagogy of academic mobility is a way to decolonize and relocate fixed categories and to challenge whiteness as a hegemonic power that oppresses the possibility of becoming and knowing a different identity, in my account as a ‘white other’. To propose a ‘white other’ status for me is an act of transgression in the global terrain, in a world where there is an increasing determination to place me outside and ‘out of the border’ for the sake of national identity, security and economic stability. How easily it is forgotten that it is this same national identity and global economy that has colonized me and pushed me into a whiteness or otherness I did not intend or fully understand.

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