

Call for Papers
International Conference at Bielefeld University, Germany

Transnational Academic Spaces

27 March 2015

Organizers: Başak Bilecen and Christof Van Mol

Keynote Speaker

Prof. Russell King, University of Sussex

Since several years, the nexus of education and migration has been on the research agenda, with a particular emphasis on international mobility of students and faculty members. In addition to the internationalization of higher education systems, we also talk about of their transnationalization today, referring to intensified and regular cross border ties of social actors as well as higher education institutions. With the rise of the so-called 'knowledge economy' and the related global competition for talent, student and academic mobility has increasingly caught the attention of researchers, policy makers, higher education institutions and other stakeholders. The terrain of academia has been reshaped not only by student and staff exchanges but also through changes of knowledge practices and the repositioning of the higher education institutions within neoliberal economies. Nevertheless, further theoretical and empirical elaboration on these processes is much needed.

The ties and flows within academia situated across a variety of state borders can be investigated through the concept of "transnational social spaces" (Faist 2000), indicating dynamic cross-border social processes, in which various social actors, networks, institutional infrastructures and nation-states are interlinked. Within the context of transnationalization of higher education, labor markets and social life-worlds, academia represents a crucial case for understanding the ways in which inequalities are produced and reproduced. After all, not all institutions or nation-states might foster internationalization of their higher education systems to the same degree.

At this one-day conference in Bielefeld, we focus both on international student and academic mobility around the world. We particularly seek to explore how transnational academic spaces are organized, with a focus on processes leading to social inequalities at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels. Theoretical and empirical contributions adopting a transnational focus are welcomed, especially when they take into account opportunity structures of host, home and third countries and explore the relationships between them. Instead of focusing solely on mobile individuals, we also welcome contributions that situate non-mobile students and faculty members who are also an integral part of transnational academic spaces. And finally, we welcome contributions that explore the dynamics of transnational network construction of academic institutions as well as the impact of internationalization processes and the macro-context on transnational academic spaces, transgressing micro-level approaches.

Abstracts may include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- What constitutes transnational academic spaces and what are the conditions to form, function and sustain such formations?
- How do transnational practices of students and academics differ from other forms of mobilities?
- How do transnational academics and students fit within wider contemporary migration and mobility theories?
- How is academic mobility imagined and experienced by different institutions and actors?
- How is academic mobility constituted, produced, assembled, or governed?
- What kind of infrastructures underpin, determine, sustain or hinder international educational mobility?
- How do students and academics cope with inequalities at home and host institutions or countries?
- How do students and faculty categorize themselves in addressing inequality formations within and across nation-state borders?
- What are the processes enabling and restricting academic mobility?
- Can we talk about transnational student or alumni communities? Do such transnational communities create or perpetuate inequalities among different groups and across geographies?

Submissions

We welcome abstracts of no more than 500 words including your name, title, email and institutional affiliation by **January 09, 2015**. All files must be submitted in pdf format to Başak Bilecen basak.bilecen@uni-bielefeld.de and Christof Van Mol mol@nidi.nl with the subject line "Transnational Academic Spaces". A selection of presented papers will be considered for inclusion for publication. The conference is free of charge. Travel and accommodation costs of presenters will be partly covered. Please indicate your interest for travel and accommodation grants when submitting your abstracts.