THE TRAVELLERS AND THE STILL:
ON THE POLITICS OF (ACADEMIC) MOBILITY
(Translation)

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By shifting the analytical focus from the travelling/mobile subject of the discourse on travel/(academic) mobility to its still figures, the author is attempting to point to the cracks in the romanticized, elitist monolithic images of travel/mobility that open the space for the analysis of the politics underlying such discourses and practices. The metaphor of a still figure that is invisible in the (glorifying and unifying Western) discourse of travel, and emerges in the "new mobility" paradigm reveals a dynamic that can, if viewed from a new perspective, namely the perspective of those who stay still in a world of mobile travellers, and sheds light on the economy of power present in different ways in all travel/mobility practices (and discourses. The introduction gives a critical outline of the tendencies and problems in the Western discourse on travel and the topics within the "new mobility" paradigm. Furthermore, the author points to some politically relevant aspects of (the discourse on) academic mobility, which remain hidden behind its positive conceptualization.

Key words: *travel, mobility, academic mobility, social capital, cultural capital*

INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades travel and textual products of travelling practices have become the bright stars in the sky of interdisciplinary science. Critical theory deals mainly with the Western trope of travel, more or less critically, distancing itself to a greater or lesser extent from the concept burdened with "a history of European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic, recreational meanings and practices" (Clifford 1997:33). However, despite the fact that the renewed interdisciplinary interest (at the intersection of postcolonial studies, anthropology, cultural studies, cultural geography) in travel and textual products of travelling practices focuses most often on issues such as (post)colonialism, Eurocentrism, gender identity, etc. still "the terms of displacement found in Euro-American critical practice rarely

admit to (...) material conditions" (Kaplan 1996:1) in which the practices of travel and displacement[1] exist, namely "the historical phenomenon of modern imperialism in the context of European and U.S. industrialisation, the economic and cultural annexation of regions into a 'Third world' and subsequent decolonisations, as well as the shifts and destabilisations engendered by the deindustrialisation of the so-called First World" (ibid. 1). It is worth adding that apart from ignoring the contemporary travel practices beyond Western, bourgeois, recreational, literary travel for pleasure, there is a also disregard of historical practices that have existed beyond the discourse on Western travel and its conceptualisation as referred to above. In other words, although less privileged travel practices of migrants, refugees or homeless persons, are sometimes given place in the discourse on travel as metaphors, they are rarely meaningful discourse agents (ibid. 2), just as "'[t]ravel' is not a word that can be easily evoked to talk about the *Middle Passage*, *The Trail of Tears*, the landing of Chinese immigrants, the forced relocation of Japanese Americans or the plight of the homeless"[2]

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[1] Although the concept of travel is considered a distinctively modern practice, by using the terms *travel* and *displacement* Kaplan is not trying to suggest that the latter is an exclusively postmodern practice. Introducing a theoretical and conceptual shift towards displacement the author wishes to "[quera] the construction and proliferation of modernisms from a postmodern critical standpoint" (Kaplan 1996:3). Travel and displacement are viewed neither as juxtaposed sides of a binary opposition, nor as synonyms, but "as signs of different critical registers and varied historicized instances" (ibid. 3). In so doing the author understands postmodernity as "a set of economic and cultural relationships that produce specific discourses of space, time and subjectivity in atime period and in relation to multiple locations" (ibid. 11).

[2] It is also important to emphasise that the boundaries between various categories of travellers (i.e. voluntary travel for pleasure) are becoming blurred. Thus Amit writes about the overlap of several categories and even the "appropriation" of categories that used to be reserved for unprivileged travellers (e.g. various types of migrants) by voluntary "experiential" middle class travellers: "(...) there is now a significant global workforce of young travellers, many voyaging as a break before or after completing postsecondary studies, who are supporting journeys of several months, occasionally even years, by working at the destination they are visiting. Ironically, many of these young adventurers are supporting their own tourism by working in service industries serving other tourists. (...) An increasingly important segment of 'guest' workers, a status once identified with relatively disadvantaged migrants, is thus now ironically comprised of middle-class Western youths who can at one and the same time be wooed as tourists and serve as cheap,

(Hooks in Hutnyk 2004:23). The attempts (see e.g. Clifford 1997) to relieve the concept of travel of its ideological burden[3] notwithstanding, it seems that it has hardened during the long period of European (neo)colonialism and (neo)imperialism as well as the superiority of European discourse and hegemony of European knowledge and cannot expand to include less voluntary, less recreational, less male and bourgeois travel practices.

Furthermore, just as this unifying discourse on travel failed to include practices which have existed beyond "European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic, recreational (...) practices" (Clifford 1997:33), it also failed to include its still figures as antipodes to travellers in the sense of economy of power intrinsic to travel as it is understood and described above. This paper wishes to observe this relationship and point to the political position of a still subject in relation to a moving one.

Recently new "key words" have appeared on the interdisciplinary sky (albeit with a more cultural and geographical orientation). There is a so-called "turn towards mobility" or "new mobilities" paradigm (see Duda 2012:12) within which "a number of theorists across disciplines [...] have argued for a kind of thinking that takes mobility as the central fact of modern or postmodern life" (Cresswell 2010:551), that is to say the geographical fact which is "at the centre of constellations of power, the creation of identities and the microgeographies of everyday life." (ibid.). Thus, the new mobilities paradigm takes into consideration other forms of moving in space apart from travel. As Cresswell writes in the text quoted above, the incentive for giving mobility its privileged position as the basic fact of the (post)modern world comes from the tendencies which inter alia occur in anthropology (especially works of

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compliant , and temporary labor" Amit 2007:4, 5). Such overlaps seem to destabilise the already "unfruitful, fixed dichotomy" (Duda 2012:28) *traveller – tourist* used to differentiate different types of structuring the experience of travel.

[3] Although Clifford gives examples of scientific observations of different types of travel and different travel practices (e.g. the work of Rediker and Linebaugh), it is quite clear that "just considering the absurdity of including the racist violence and atrocity of the slave trade under any revamped notion of 'travel' would be sufficient to show the likely inappropriateness of generalising extensions of the travel trope in its Euro-American modes" (Hutnyk 2004:23).

James Clifford)[4], that call for rejecting the *place* as the only constitutive element in identity construction. In his text *Travelling Cultures* Clifford offers guidelines for the "de-localisation" of culture, i.e. rethinking culture in terms of mobility and travel as well as in terms of stillness and dwelling. In other words, just as dwelling and staying put constitute elements of culture (and of fieldwork in socio-cultural anthropology), so do travelling, moving, exchange, contacts: "groups unsullied by contact with a larger world, have probably never existed" (Appadurai in Clifford 1997:24). The localisation of field research in anthropology was obscuring several "border areas and historical realities"[5], contributing, inter alia, to the idea of the unproblematic nature of fieldwork and experience and of the field as a place "out there"[6] waiting to be

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[4] Furthermore, Cresswell lists Marc Augé among the precursors of the "mobility turn", and his "philosophical musings on the potentials for an anthropology of 'non-places', such as airport and motorways, marked by constant transition and temporality", Castells' concept of network society and Kaplan's explorations of various metaphoric uses of travel in feminist theory in Western discourse about travel (Cresswell 2010:551).

[5] Clifford lists several of them: "1) means of transport – the boat, the land rover, the mission airplane, etc. These technologies suggest systematic prior and ongoing contacts and commerce with exterior places and forces which are not part of the field/object. The discourse of ethnography ('being there') is separated from that of travel ('getting there'). 2) The capital city, the national context, is erased. This is what George Condominas refers to as '*préterrain*', all those places you have to go through and be in relation with just to get to your village or to that place of work you will call your field. 3) Also erased: the university home of the researcher. Especially now that one can travel more easily to even the most remote sites and now that all sorts of places in the 'First World' can be fields (churches, labs, offices, schools, shopping malls), movement in and out of the field by both natives and anthropologists may be very frequent. 4) The sites and relations of *translation* are minimised. When the field is a dwelling, a home away from home, where one speaks the language and has a kind of vernacular competence, the cosmopolitan intermediaries - and complex, often political, negotiations involved – tend to disappear. We are left with participant observation, a kind of hermeneutic freedom to circle inside and outside social situations" (Clifford 1997:23).

[6] When he talks about privileging dwelling over moving and travel in field research in socio-cultural anthropology, Clifford refers to the ideal type of modern research in the tradition of Malinowski, which involves long-term *dwelling* and immersion in the explored community, participant observation, learning the native language and subsequent systematization in an ethnographic monograph.

discovered[7]. Also, localisation practices in relation to culture obscure the history of intercultural interaction because culture is neither static nor unchangeable, but rather exposed to a whole network of historical relations and contacts. Localisation practices in relation to the research subject conceptualised the informant, a problematic figure according to Clifford, as a static figure, ahistorical and lacking their own travel history. Therefore, Clifford suggests that in thinking about culture both dwelling and travelling need to be considered, instead of emphasizing one or the other constitutive element. For our purpose, the important point in Clifford's text is his metaphor of the hotel as an epitome of "a specific *way into* complex histories of travelling cultures (and cultures of travel) in the late twentieth century" (Clifford 1997:31). Although he is aware of the multiple problems with the hotel chronotrope in the context of racial, class, gender privilege and its nostalgic connotations[8] and their unsuitability to the post-modern condition[9], there is also another problematic dimension that eludes him, to which I pointed earlier (Grgurinović 2012), and that is the hotel as a place of class inequality, not so much in terms of privileged and unprivileged *travellers* but rather in terms of static figures who are not moving, such as chambermaids and porters, i.e. all those who are working while others are travelling. It seems that this particular "static" moment of the discourse is a good entry point into thinking about the politics of mobility/travel from the perspective of the positions of its different actors.[10]

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[7] More on the constructivist nature of field work see Amit 2000 and Čapo Žmegač et al. 2006.

[8] "The hotel image suggests an older form of gentlemanly occidental travel, when home and abroad, city and country, East and West, metropole and antipodes, were more clearly fixed" (ibid. 31).

[9] A more appropirate chronotop would be that of the motel: "The motel has no real lobby, and it's tied into a highway network – a relay or node rather than a site of encounter between coherent cultural subjects" (ibid. 32).

[10] The mobile – static dichotomy is used merely as an analytical guideline, without intention to see it onedimensionally. Both positions are complex and imply a variety of nuances that thwart all attempts of simplification. One of the important aspects that need mentioning are the different tyes of mobility that, from the perspective of the static subject of the pair, can appear privileged in terms of class position or opportunities for

However, let us go back to the texts and authors who, whether consciously or not, belong to the "new mobilities" paradigm, in which the fact of *movement* as a privileged place of rethinking (post) modern reality connects various geographic sub-branches with insights from humanities and social sciences (Cresswell 2010). The turn towards mobility "focuses on (...) a fundamental geographical fact of life – moving" (ibid. 551) and that "fact connects forms of movement across scales and within research fields that have often been held apart" (ibid. 551). Scientific production with mobility as the key word is flourishing and although scientists from the field of geography still play the key role, it is markedly interdisciplinary (ibid.). The topics range from mobility and ethics, to gender dynamics of mobility, mobility in tourism research, mobility in connection with different ways and means of travel (car, plane, railway), but also "the less obvious forms of mobility" (travelling by ferry, motorcycle, including for example different types of rhythmic movement – from rhythms of urban public spaces to the natural rhythm of tides; ibid. 553). Analytical space has recently opened within this paradigm for *stillness, immobility,* which "is not suggesting a return to a discipline based on boundedness and rootedness, but rather to an alertness to how stillness is thoroughly incorporated into the practices of moving" (Cresswell 2012:648).

Rethinking stillness within the context of the new mobilities paradigm deals with the topics of waiting, stillness during travel (for example, queuing), but also with:

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social mobility. Take, for example, the different groups of "voluntary migrants", educated professionals "usually not drawn from among the poorest and most destitute sending populations. As industrialized countries have reoriented their economies (or at least their economic aspirations) toward knowledge-based industries, their immigration policies have featured an increased emphasis on recruiting highly skilled and well-educated newcomers" (Amit 2007:3). However, these migrant/mobile practices can by no means be simply and monolithically identified as privileged, especially taking into consideration, for example, the economic crisis on the global and European level, unemployment rates, especially youth unemployment in certain European Union countries (according to Eurostat youth unemployment in Spain and Greece in 2012 exceeded 50%, see http://epp. eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Youth_ unemployment_trends) and in EU27 (in 2012 youth unemployment was 22.8% and has been on the increase since 2010.), precarity, and, of course, the relationship between European center and periphery.

"(…) the often enforced stillness of undocumented migrants who are locked into containers and refrigerated trucks in order to strip stillness (as experienced by elites) of connotations of cosmopolitan authenticity. While the elite have their capsules in gated communities and business lounges where they are protected from the troubling turmoil of a mobile world, people being trafficked are locked into capsules of a very different sort." (ibid. 648, see also Martin 2011)

This space for rethinking stillness through a prism of mobility seems to be a fertile ground for curbing the "idealisation of movement" (or the destabilisation of the romantic, unifying discourse of travel which was mentioned earlier in the text), but also for a unification of perspectives of sorts. Namely, both in Clifford's attempt of the delocalisation of culture and the "new mobilities" paradigm there is a risk of narrowing the focus. When referring to Clifford, we metaphorically summarized this narrowing by reviewing his usage of the hotel chronotope, and when referring to the new mobilities paradigm we widened the focus in a way by introducing a new variable – stillness. To avoid being trapped by the same narrowing of focus, it is important to emphasise the positive aspects of movement, travel and mobility that are evident in the history of interactions, encounters with the other, sharing of knowledge, etc. What is problematized here are not the *practices*[11] and their positive effects, but rather the concepts which in their universality obscure the complexity of economic and political circumstances within which they take place. Similarly, a certain distancing is also required in the context of the next chapter of the text which problematizes *academic mobility* and its conceptualization in the language of the European Union institutions as *a priori* positive. However, this positive conceptualisation hides a whole range of problematic points which divide mobile from static scientists. We shall focus on two of these points, namely gender and class. The topic of this paper are not the positive practices of scientific internationalism, such as exchange of knowledge; instead, we will deal with the discourse which has a monolithic view of the conceptualisation of mobility and the structural conditions behind stillness.

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[11] Of course, the change of focus on travel/mobility practices from periphery to the centre (in the context of post/neo/colonialism, but also in the EU context) adds new dimensions which further complicate this picture and bring the ethics of travel into the equation.

STATIC/MOBILE ACADEMICS

According to Susan L. Robertson's critical overview of the international academic mobility published in a scientific magazine *Discourse* in 2010 "mobility is conceived of as a positive force; a powerful mechanism of social change. However, statements like this are an overly romantic rendering of mobility" (Robertson 20120:642). Robertson is referring to the official discourse of European Union bodies, but also to a wider discourse on mobility having to do with movement practices that go beyond academia, showing an 'the idealization of movement, or transformation of movement into a fetish (Ahmed in Roberston 2010:646), whereas mobility becomes an "evocative keyword for the twenty-first century" (Hannam, Sheller and Urry in Roberston 2010:642). Examples of such statements can be found in a whole range of official European Union documents, e.g.: "Mobility of staff, students and graduates is one of the core elements of the Bologna Process, creating opportunities for personal growth, developing international cooperation between individuals and institutions, enhancing the quality of higher education and research, and giving substance to the European dimension" (London Communiqué). However, mobility does not only mean physical movement and international exchange of knowledge but also intersectoral mobility of researchers, e.g.: "Mobility, both trans-national and intersectoral, including the stimulation of industrial participation and the opening of research careers and academic positions at European scale, is a key component of the European Research Area and indispensable to increasing European capacities and performance in research" (Decision No. 1982/2006/EC). Mobility is also key not only for career development but also for scientists' personal growth and development: "the Commission hopes to encourage training and mobility so that European researchers can realise their full potential" (*Seventh Framework Programme (2007 to 2013)*). In a word, "mobility is viewed as producing 'effects' that range from enhancing the quality of programmes, to creating excellence in research, strengthening the academic and cultural internationalisation of European higher education, promoting personal development and employability, fostering respect for diversity, encouraging linguistic pluralism, and increasing cooperation *and* competition between higher education institutions" (Robertson 2010:642, emphasis by I. G.).

However, as mentioned earlier, apart from revealing plenty about the discourse of European Union institutions, this positive and unproblematic conceptualization of mobility, actually obscures more than it reveals. Several problems emerge when rethinking mobility in the European research area. One of them has to do with different concepts of education. On the one hand, there is the concept of education as a commodity, sold on the market just as any other commodity, and on the other, there is the concept of education as a common good (see Milat 2010). Namely, the project of academic mobility is inextricably connected with the project of the European Bologna Reform, which emphasises in its founding document that promoting mobility is one of the key objectives on the path of building European higher education area.[12] Apart from some universal goals set out in the Declaration (and documents preceding it, e.g. *Magna Charta Universitatum*[13] or the Sorbone Declaration[14]) such as the role of education in building democratic societies

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[12] "Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to: for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services; for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights" (*Bologna Declaration*).

[13] It is important to emphasize that the universal principles laid down in this document have shown to be in complete opposition to the developments in higher education and science in many European Union member states and candidate countries. Let us take the principle of independence in teaching and research from political and economic power as an illustration. This principle has become unsustainable in the time of crisis and austerity measures. Another such example is the fact that education is opening to the market under the imperative of "connecting science and industry" within the context of neoliberal capitalism. It is also important to mention that *Magna Carta Universitatum* emphasises the importance of student and teacher mobility in the exchange of knowledge. Moreover, the distancing from this document in the *Bologna Declaration* is indicative: "European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge" (*Bologna Declaration,* emphasis I. G.).

[14] This declaration refers mainly to the unification of higher education degrees. However, it also draws a clear parallel between acquiring knowledge and the labour market – that is to say acquiring knowledge exclusively in order to get employment. Again, mobility plays an

or the goals connected with "the greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education" and the global competitiveness of European higher education systems, it also paves the way for future trends in European education and national education systems, or rather it aims at: "the unification of the European labour market"[15] (Milat 2010). In this way knowledge becomes a commodity on the market, students become users who pay for services delivered by Universities (both in terms of discourse and in practice). This is therefore the context in which mobility is located.[16]

Discourse of mobility, almost in the manner of European educational subcategory of "the new planetary vulgate" (see Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001), "from which the terms 'capitalism', 'class', 'exploitation', 'domination' and 'inequality' are conspicuous by their absence" (ibid. 45) hides several important issues, which can metaphorically be narrowed down to the static/mobile subject dichotomy.

One of them is the gender aspect of academic mobility, which becomes especially acute if we consider the mobility imperative in (especially young) scientists' career development. "Women scientists in academia have been shown to be less geographically mobile than their male counterparts" (see. e.g. Kulis and Sicotte 2002; Leeman 2010). "Constraints on women's mobility may stem from family and gender role dynamics" (Kulis and Sicotte 2002:2; Leeman 2010). Even when specific studies show seemingly small differences in academic mobility of men and women, a deeper analysis always points to "differences in the mobility patternsof women and men that

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important role in the process: "At both undergraduate and graduate level, students would be encouraged to spend at least one semester in universities outside their own country. At the same time, more teaching and research staff should be working in European countries other than their own" (*Sorbonne Joint Declaration*).

[15] The key link between the education system and (European) labour market is clearly articulated in the initial Bologna Process documents. For example: "We are heading for a period of major change in education and working conditions, to a diversification of courses of professional careers with education and training throughout life becoming a clear obligation (*Sorbonne Joint Declaration*). Or: "the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development" (*Bologna Declaration*), etc.

[16] We are referring to the more general conceptualisation of mobility in Europe as a part of the so-called flexicurity but also to academic mobility more specifically.

lead, in the long term, to unequal amounts of social, cultural and symbolic capital" (Leeman 2010:622). European Union data paint a similar picture: the publication entitled *She Figures. Gender in Research and Innovation* from 2012 states that in EU 27 "between 2006 and 2009 female researchers have generally been less mobile than male researchers, mobility being defined as having moved abroad for a period of at least three months in the last three years" (European Commission 2013:43). The only exceptions are Ireland and Bulgaria where academic mobility of male and female scientists in this period is either larger for female mobility or more or less equal. The gender gap in mobility varies widely in the remaining countries. In Latvia, for example, mobility of the female researcher population has been zero over recent years (ibid.). Therefore, female scientists who are *not mobile* have less possibility to accumulate social and cultural capital, which in turn leads to the deterioration of their position in academia.

This brings us to the class features of academic mobility (in a geographical as well as in a social sense). According to Leeman "transnational social capital" (Leeman 2010) in the form of a network of international contacts, which one develops "in the context of daily work, during qualification periods, while attending conferences, in research cooperation and through periods spent abroad" (ibid. 616), is gaining more and more importance in the academia.

Furthermore, it

> "gives access to other forms of capital and can be transformed into cultural capital (publications, internationally oriented habitus, language skills) and symbolic capital (reputation, credit, power) that are relevant for establishing status in academia. If academics are not involved in these processes of accumulation and transformation of social capital, they get marginalised. Eventually, they are placed on the edge of the academic field and fall out of the game." (ibid. 616)

On the other hand, it can be assumed that the ability to accumulate transnational social capital is connected with the already accumulated cultural (and social) capital. According to Bourdieu, one's cultural capital is essential for the reproduction of social classes as well as for the differences in academic achievements of those (children) who come from different

social classes (and in the academia in general) and depends on the family transmission of cultural capital (Bourdieu 2011). Academic achievement is not the result of inherent "talents" or "natural" ability, rather "ability or talent is itself the product of an investment of time and cultural capital" (ibid. 83). Moreover, "the initial accumulation of cultural capital, the precondition for the fast, easy accumulation of every kind of useful cultural capital, starts at the outset, without delay, without wasted time, only for the offspring of families endowed with strong cultural capital" (ibid. 84). Social capital according to Bourdieu's definition[17] and its form translated into transnational social capital (in the form of *international* networks) in the context of mobility, is another key component differentiating mobile and static scientists, while cultural and social capital remain, more or less directly, connected with the possession of economic capital, regarding that "the length of time for which a given individual can prolong his [cultural capital] acquisition process depends on the length of time for which his family can provide him with free time, i.e. time free from economic necessity, which is the precondition for the initial accumulation" (ibid. 85). In other words, so long as the individual is provided with economic means in the form of family financial support, he/she can accumulate cultural capital, wherein the importance that the family attaches to the cultural capital plays the key role. Also, the social capital in the form of social networks, which increases proportionally to the size of the network, depends on the economic capital, considering that "the reproduction of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed". This work on the reproduction of social capital "implies expenditure of time and energy and so, directly or indirectly, of economic capital" (ibid. 87). Therefore, it can be concluded that the being a mobile (or static) scientists depends on a number of structural factors, obscured by unifying positive representations of mobility which are at work, for

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[17] "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (Bourdieu 2011:86).

example, in the official documents of the European Union. One's being static does not automatically indicate "inability" but points to, among other things, gender and class dynamics at work in the academia. It also shows the connections between gender dynamics and opportunities (and time) available for accumulating cultural and social capital (see Leeman 2010). Also, when considering the politics of mobility, we cannot disregard other (geographic/global and disciplinary) relations of power, such as the relation between European periphery and centre (not only with regards to the politics of academic mobility, but also with regards to the European Union's economic/monetary policy) or the relations between different areas of science, primarily regarding competition (but also ideology).

CONCLUSION

In the introduction conceptual delineations were made between *travel* (signifying the Western concept with a problematic baggage) and *mobility*[18] (especially in reference to the "new mobilities" paradigm), emphasising those aspects of the concepts that offer the potential for considering the politics of stillness within the context of travel/mobility. Furthermore, taking into account these conceptual delineations, several problematic borderline areas were indicated in the discourse on academic mobility, which is uniformly conceptualised as positive. They enable us to see that mobility is not always conditioned only by the existing institutional framework or pure desire to be mobile, but also by a number of structural factors such as gender or class dynamics in the academic field. These structural factors have a big impact on the physical and subsequently career/social stillness of scientists, taking into consideration the (institutional and symbolic) importance attached to mobility. The aim was not to be *a priori* critical towards mobility, especially

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[18] This specifically refers to conceptual frameworks within which movement is considered in an interdisciplinary way. In so doing *travel* is understood, as was indicated in the introduction, in accordance with Clifford, prevailing Western trope is burdened with "a history of European, literary, male, bourgeois, scientific, heroic, recreational meanings" (Clifford 1997:33). When we talk about mobility we refer to a broader conceptual framework which, unlike *travel* (conceptualised in the mentioned way), allows for considerations of much broader range of movement practices.

when it implies a positive academic internationalism reflected in the exchange of knowledge and the circulation of ideas, nor was it to establish a kind of hierarchy of values between mobility and stillness. Instead, the intention was to open the space for a critical consideration of the uncritical, unifying discourse of academic immobility as an aspect of wider politics of science, education[19] and knowledge, which puts great emphasis on mobility as an important factor in what is vaguely defined as scientific "excellence" (of institutions and individual scientists) and an additional advantage in a quantified, precarious, competitive sphere of academic work[20]. Such one-dimensional discourse, as the segment of a broader "transformation of movement into a fetish" (Ahmed in Robertson 2010:646) in which mobility becomes almost a buzz regards the necessity of mobility as self-evident. Along those lines it seems that taking an attitude opposite to the "myth and necessity of [mobility]" (Kovačević 2012:25) is analytically useful in a time when technology enables us to access information without the need for physical relocation[21] (ibid.). Thus, according to Kovačević, international cooperation (and mobility) is becoming mythical and ritual[22].

Finally, opposite to academic mobility (and mobility in general) is not only stillness. The consequences of discursive and professional imperative of mobility affect the concept of mobility itself. In other words, this text attempts to emphasise the fact that one-dimensional perception of mobile scientists can close the space for a critical analysis of the experience of

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[19] This pertains to commodified education and science (versus education and science as a public good) in the context of neoliberal capitalism, following market principles and logic (see e.g. *Academia Europaea* 2012; Callinicos 2006).

[20] It does not hurt to mention the paradox of the imperative of enhancing international *cooperation* (between institutions and individuals) for the purpose of increasing *competitiveness* (of an institution on the academic *market*, or of individual scientists on the *labour market*).

[21] This refers to mobility in the context of humanities and social sciences.

[22] "[mythical] because it does not contribute to the actual exchange of information in the least, which can be achieved by spending much less money and energy; and it is ritual because, apart from the ritual repetitiveness (annual conferences, etc.), there is a whole range of activities which are a reflection of statuses and power distribution but also function as an internal and external verification of the necessity of manifestations themselves" (ibid. 26).

mobility. Such a perspective could, as was pointed out here, include looking at the price scientists pay for mobility in their private life or the dimensions of mobility which are specific in terms of class, gender, generation or scientific area.

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