Tanu, Danau. 2018. *Growing up in transit: the Politics of belonging at an international school*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 296 pp. Hb.: $135.00, ISBN: 9781785334085

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This book brings the reader into the everyday life of an international high school in Jakarta, Indonesia. Danau Tanu investigates how relatively privileged teenagers with international childhoods negotiate and enact their cosmopolitan identities. Tanu conducted ethnographic fieldwork among high school students for a year. The school caters to both the children of foreign expatriate families and wealthy Indonesian families. The concept of Third Culture Kid (TCK) is central in this book. It refers to people who spend part of their childhood and/or teenage years outside their 'parents' culture'. They feel they are a part of many cultural traditions, but instead of feeling fully belonging to any single one of those, their sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. A central factor is the families' relatively privileged position – the parents are well-off professionals. Tanu argues that although the TCK term is an important identity label for many, it is above all an *emic* concept. It does not work as an analytical tool because it is essentialising and fails acknowledging the heterogeneity of the phenomenon.

The book has eight empirical chapters. The first four chapters interrogate the broad structures that define the ideology of being 'international' while the rest of the book explores the tensions that arise as the school's ideology of being international intersects with national and transnational cultural hierarchies. As analytical tools, Tanu utilises Bourdieu's notion of capital as well as the concept of cosmopolitanism.

Tanu approaches the international school as a transnational space, and she argues that while the school claims to be raising 'global citizens', it reproduces cultural

hierarchies that privilege ‘Western’ cosmopolitan capital. Her insightful empirical material illustrates well how being international requires ‘Western’ cultural capital that is packaged as cosmopolitan cultural capital. Consequently, in order to be recognised as international or cosmopolitan, one has to be white, ‘Westernised’ and fluent in English. At the same time, being international within Asian context, for example speaking various Asian languages and being familiar with different Asian cultures, is not recognised as international or cosmopolitan.

Tanu argues that although the students in an international school share the experience of liminality and the feeling of being in constant transit in their transnational upbringing (either because they move themselves or because their classmates move), they are not a homogeneous group: culture, race, class, nationality and gender affect their identities and positions in various ways. Utilising her rich ethnographic data, Tanu elaborates on how the students utilise (and downplay) different aspects of their hybrid identities in different everyday contexts.

Tanu herself has grown up internationally mobile and has attended international schools. Throughout the book, she skilfully elaborates on her own experiences. She is able to relate to the students’ views and practices on a personal level, yet, at the same time, she is able to critically analyse the phenomenon. The book is fluently written, and it elaborates on the experiences and positions of relatively privileged international youth from various angles. It becomes clear that Tanu has gained rich insights to the phenomenon she studied. Since much of the existing TCK literature is rather descriptive, Tanu’s ethnographic insights and her anthropological analysis provide important new perspectives for the phenomenon.

Although Tanu provides a rich analysis of the phenomenon, and she carefully deconstructs dominant understandings of TCKs, at times, she tends to fall into essentialisations herself. First of all, Tanu seems to use the terms ‘West’ and ‘Western’ in a

rather uncritical manner, that is, she seems to share the everyday uses of these highly problematic terms. Secondly, although Tanu critically analyses class distinctions among her research subjects, she does not utilise the vast existing literature about class; for example being ‘middle class’ can mean very different things in different places.

Nevertheless, this well written and engaging book gives new interesting information and fresh analytical perspectives on an increasingly common phenomenon that has not been widely studied among anthropologists until now. The book is a welcome reading for anyone who has lived as an expatriate child or is parenting or educating such children. In addition, the book can be recommended to anyone interested in multiculturalism and migration; looking at the more privileged migrants provides food for thought also for scholars studying migration in less privileged contexts. The book is a useful reading for courses on migration, multiculturalism, and transnationalism. In addition, because of its rich and well-illustrated methodological approach, the book is valuable for courses on ethnographic research methods.

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