Introduction

Paul's Experience Growing up on the Move: Combining Ethnographic and Transcultural Approaches in Expatriate Youth Research

It is Saturday afternoon and seventeen-year-old Paul is sitting opposite me at a café on Wulumuqi Road in downtown Shanghai. Below our window, buses, taxis, honking electric scooters, and pedestrians carrying umbrellas to shield off the sun pass by until they disappear into the narrow, sycamore-tree-lined streets of the former French concession. Inside, the air conditioning is humming and music is playing in the background, while Paul, who has been introduced to me as an "American student" by our common acquaintance Matthias, shares his story of growing up on the move. Paul is a German national, born in Brazil to a Brazilian mother and a German father. He grew up in Brazil and the United States and moved to Shanghai six years prior to the interview. Here, he is enrolled in one of Shanghai's American schools. Learning that his father is German, like me, I wonder if we should switch to my native language for the interview. Noticing my general difficulty comprehending the many moves, places, tongues, and people that he references, Paul helps by clarifying his language skills:

> PAUL: *I speak Portuguese, I don't speak German. My mom is Brazilian.*
> INTERVIEWER: *Your mom is Brazilian, your dad is German, but you grew up in America?*
> PAUL: *And China. And Brazil. But I speak very little German. I can understand it. Okay. But I can't speak it really. I can say like: hello, thank you, please. <L>.[1]*

As I listen to his account of the many moves and languages to which he has already been exposed at his young age, I begin to understand that Paul can hardly be sufficiently represented by the label "American student" that I had assigned to him before our encounter. His experiences include growing up on the move in a bi-national family. His and his parents' nationalities, languages, and cultural practices differ both from those of his school and from his country of residence. Until recently, he never lived in Germany, the country that issued his passport, nor does he speak the language that it is written in. He has limited Chinese language skills and few contacts to

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1   For an explanation of the interview transcript abbreviations used throughout this work, see Appendix A.

locals of his age because activities and friendships outside of Jinqiao,[2] or the expatriate "bubble" as he calls it, are rare.[3] His description of this "bubble" is reminiscent of the accounts by mobile professionals' transnational practices summarized by cultural and urban geographer David Ley:

> Foreshortened time and space create a circumscribed lifeworld around work, bars, and sporting and expatriate clubs. [...] The outcome is a lifeworld that is the opposite of the expansive and inclusive networks implied by ungrounded or deterritorialized networks. Instead, the social geography of the transnational elite may be highly localized, restricted to particular territories. As they are dispatched internationally from city to city, the transnational capitalist class are island hopping from one expatriate enclave to another (Ley 2004, 157).

Paul seems to have mastered this art of "island hopping," of finding a place in expatriate communities as a way of coping with growing up transnationally. He is not alone. As my own descriptions of the spatial practices of expatriate youths will demonstrate, this "island hopping" that Ley describes is a very location-based practice involving very concrete sites.

Paul's experience of mobility, shifting borders, and differences is one of the most extreme among the expatriate youths I encountered. His situation of living in China, being born in Brazil and speaking Portuguese at home, having lived and been educated in the United States, yet being German according to his passport are hard to grasp for me during our first encounter. Paul seems unsurprised by my confusion and by being labeled differently depending on his place of birth, country of upbringing, or passport. When we talk about his private, Christian, American school in Shanghai, for instance, he mentions that, including himself, only two Europeans are currently enrolled. Just hearing him label himself "European" in a perfect American accent, when he has never even lived in Europe, is surprising. Paul's particularly flexible way of positioning himself in terms of national or cultural identity clearly depends on his point of reference (schooling, passport, family ties) and seems to respond to different labels others appoint to him.

How do young people like Paul deal with a frequently changing environment and how do they manage such varied and shifting sources of cultural identity? This ethnographic study addresses this question by exploring the everyday lives of expatriate youths in general and Paul's and

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2   Jinqiao is the district where Paul lives. It is located in the eastern suburbs of Shanghai and, with its Western food supermarkets, restaurants, and villa housing, seems to represent for Paul the physical manifestation of the expatriate community.
3   Fechter (2007a) also encountered the term "bubble"—among other metaphors, such as "bunker," "hothouse," "ghetto," and "Disneyland"—during ethnographic fieldwork among western expatriates in Jakarta, Indonesia, who used the term to describe their residential compounds.

his peers' own perspectives in particular. I am interested in foreign students' experiences of living abroad in Shanghai, their age-specific views on growing up on the move, and their notions of "home." Their stories raise important questions about our understanding of national or cultural identity and ways of belonging. Their experiences illustrate that common notions of either are often too limited to capture the cultural complexities in the lives of youths who have spent most of their childhood outside the country that issued their passports. Some of them, like Paul, were born into a bi-national marriage and, while living abroad, might wonder which of their parents' cultural frameworks seems most applicable, or has had the most influence on them. Others attend an international school that teaches in a language other than the one they speak at home or in the streets, which requires a significant linguistic flexibility. Still others have parents who have migrant backgrounds themselves. Their children's stories show that it is too simple to assume that, for instance, a child born to Chinese parents in France, who is "returning" to China and attending a French school, could simply feel "Chinese." Furthermore, someone who is fifteen and has moved five times across national borders might question if a current place of residence can actually still provide some form of belonging or cultural identity.

These scenarios show that Paul and his peers are, despite their youth, experts on the effects and challenges of migration. By studying their stories and everyday practices, I want to understand which competencies and strategies are important for young people moving globally. In short, this ethnography traces what it means to pass through Shanghai—to move to the city and leave it again within a few years—and to actively cope with the experiences that go along with it.

Increasingly, expatriate communities and international schools around the globe answer Paul's and his peers' questions about the effects of moving and negotiating cultural identity by referring to Pollock and Van Reken's ([1999] 2009) concept of "Third Culture Kids." The concept addresses one aspect of expatriate lives that my fieldwork and in-depth interviews with expatriate youths will also reveal: despite all its privileges and opportunities, growing up "on the move" and/or in a transient space demands that these children constantly cope with changes, loss, and questions of belonging and identity.

Is Paul a "Third Culture Kid?"
Ethnographic approaches to young expatriates' lives

Well-received and popular among—at least Anglophone—expatriate circles today, the concept of "Third Culture Kids" (TCKs) was originally introduced by John Useem and Ruth Hill Useem in the 1950s (see Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 20; Knörr 2005, 53; Richter 2011, 20). Studying American families living and working in India, the researchers described the parents' home culture as the first culture and the culture of the place of residence as the second culture. "The 'Third Culture' to them was the culture of the expatriate community, which they understood as a 'culture between cultures' integrating cultural features of home and host societies" (Knörr 2005, 53). Later, Ruth Van Reken and David Pollock's ([1999] 2009) book *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* helped the concept gain immense popularity. Their work sets out to be a self-help book for members of expatriate communities and their ideas have been developed further in various (parental) guidebooks (see for instance Pascoe 2006; Pittman and Smit 2012), on special website forums dedicated to TCKs, as well as in the expatriate press circulating in Shanghai, such as *That's Shanghai* and *City Weekend*. The common definition of the term is as follows:

> A third culture kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 19).

The findings of these studies, guidebooks, magazines, and websites (with a focus on Western children) discuss how a life outside the parents' home country and particularly a lifestyle of constant moving affects children. TCKs are represented as a group sharing many qualities, despite growing up in different countries. Pollock and Van Reken ([1999] 2009, 39) argue that "for TCKs the moving back and forth from one culture to another happens before they have completed the critical developmental task of forming a sense of their own personal or cultural identity." This quote reveals the container-like, or as Homi Bhabha ([1996] 2012, 53) has put it, "absurd notion of an uncontaminated culture in a single country," that seems to occasionally underlie the reasoning behind the TCK concept. Based on such a notion of culture, Pollock and Van Reken see how the children's upbringing results in "the paradoxical nature of the TCK experience—the sense of being profoundly connected yet simultaneously disconnected with people and places around the world" (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 38). Problems associated with belonging and identity formation are presented as central for TCKs. These problems, Pollock and Van Reken

argue, are due to "an interplay of these factors—living in both a culturally changing and highly mobile world during the formative years" (ibid., 39). The general idea of development and identity formation underlying all these arguments—that adults possess a stable identity, while children are still developing and something of adults-in-the-making—has been criticized by many scholars on youth in other disciplines (see for instance Bucholtz 2002; Hirschfeld 2002).

Pollock and Van Reken, as well as authors following the TCK tradition like Robin Pascoe (2006), also see other specific, common challenges that many TCKs face, such as issues of relational patterns (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 131–143), "unresolved grief" (ibid., 165–182), "uneven maturity" and "delayed adolescence," or "delayed adolescent rebellion" (Pollock and Van Reken 150–158 and Pascoe, 25). They also describe the benefits of being a TCK, such as having an "expanded worldview" (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 79–80), and well-developed "cross-cultural skills" (ibid., 107–110), "observational skills" (ibid., 112–110), "social skills" (ibid., 112–114), and "linguistic skills" (ibid., 114–118). Concerning the relational patterns, the frequent experience of goodbyes, according to Pollock and Van Reken, can sometimes lead to "patterns of protecting themselves" (ibid., 131) and struggles with a "fear of intimacy because of the fear of loss" (ibid., 139). But the authors also describe how TCKs "will go to greater lengths than some people might consider normal to nurture relational ties with others" (ibid., 131). TCKs, according to them, place a high value on their relationships and often jump into "deeper levels of relationship" (ibid., 136). Unresolved grief is another issue that Pollock and Van Reken address, an issue that is related to losses expatriate children experience by moving. However, these losses are often hidden and unrecognized for a variety of reasons. The authors also attest that an "uneven maturity" troubles TCKs. Although their experience with TCKs often lead adults to view them as extremely mature—a maturity and comfort level with adults that most TCKs also perceive in themselves (ibid., 151), according to Pollock and Van Reken—few spaces are available for TCKs "to test rules during their teenage years" (ibid., 152). TCKs are therefore often unsure of which norms to rebel against. This uncertainty can lead to a postponed rebellion that usually manifests itself later, in college. The benefits of TCK life, including the expanded worldview and the well-developed skills mentioned above, are linked to the experience of differences and having to learn how to deal with them through observation and adaptation.

Although it appeared in 1999, Pollock and Van Reken's book is based on surveys that were conducted in the early and mid-1980s with adults aged twenty-two to twenty-seven, who were asked to reflect upon their childhood and the impact that moving had on their lives. These "kids," in other words, were mainly born in the 1960s. Processes of globalization and the spread and gaining influence of media and communication technologies have surely led to changes in the experience of growing up abroad

since then. More current results, based on an online survey,[4] are offered in the self-help book *Expat Teens Talk* (Pittman and Smit 2012). The book collects answers from parents, counselors, and other TCKs to questions the authors received from expat teens. Consequently, their approach only presents advice with very limited insight into expatriate youths' daily practices and social worlds.

Such everyday experiences, however, explain how children and teenagers cope with moving, and how they create world-views and ways of belonging within certain communities, cultural environments, or nations. Paul, for instance, excitedly talks about having met our common acquaintance Matthias during various nightlife activities and how he eventually started hanging out with him. They became friends, played music together, and founded a band which, however, no longer exists, due to difficulties they had arranging practice sessions (the students live one and a half hours apart by car or metro). It becomes clear, though, that nightlife practices, hobbies, and friendships significantly impact Paul's and his fellow expatriate teenagers' Shanghai experiences.

Ethnographic works on expatriates have attempted to capture such practices and to examine the daily lives of expatriates. They include research conducted in the 1970s, such as Dennison Nash's (1970) *A Community in Limbo* and research by Erik Cohen (1977). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, research into expatriates' everyday practices and forms of privileged migration became a strong field of study (among others: Beaverstock 2002; Willis, Yeoh, and Fakhri 2002; Willis and Yeoh 2002; Yeoh and Willis 2005; Fechter 2007b; Coles and Fechter 2008; Butcher 2009; Hindman 2009a; Hindman 2009b; Dobeneck 2010; Farrer 2010; Farrer 2011). Books such as Anne Coles and Anne-Meike Fechter's (2008) *Gender and Family Among Transnational Professionals* and *Going First Class? New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement* edited by Vered Amit (2007), exemplify this recent focus: they analyze everyday spaces outside the multinational companies where most expatriates work and also highlight the particular role of women, who are not themselves employed by the multinational companies, but accompany their spouses abroad. In the wake of these edited volumes, a range of articles has appeared, usually focusing on specific practices of privileged migrants.[5] In the context of this increase in

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4   The average expat teen respondent, according to their data from 248 questionnaires, is fifteen years old, has lived in three countries, has attended four schools, and speaks two languages fluently. Based on the questionnaires, the authors also offer lists of issues expatriate teenagers have most questions about (top issue: "general worries/concerns/fears"), experimental behaviors they engage in (top behavior: "drinking alcohol"), and things they worry most about (top: "grades") (ibid., 175–176).

5   Geographer Georg Glasze (2006), for instance, brings the particularities of expatriate housing practices to the fore, describing the role of gated communities among expatriates in Saudi Arabia. Katie Walsh (2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2011) focuses on British expatriate identities in Dubai, examining cultural practices of domesticity, intimacy, and consequent articulations of belonging and national identity. Heather Hindman (2009a; 2009b) pays detailed attention to the meaning-laden

empirical works on expatriate communities, Fechter and Walsh (2010) discuss the necessity for further theoretical conceptualizations of expatriates, calling for an integration and inclusion of studies on mobile professionals into mainstream migration studies. They propose linking the subject theoretically with postcolonial theory, consequently integrating both topics. Integrating research on expatriates into migration studies, so the argument goes, is necessary to contest limited notions of migration processes and images of migrants. Although many of these qualitative research projects take ethnic, racial, and particularly gendered experiences of privileged migration into account, most neglect the age-specific experiences of children and adolescents. With the exception of Danau Tanu's (2011) work on an international school in Indonesia and Fiona Moore's (2008) contribution to Coles and Fechter's volume on gender and family (2008), which investigates the role of the German school for the German community in London, none of the publications have particularly focused on expatriate youth. Even Moore's contribution does not center on the children's point of view.

While these ethnographic works lack expatriate youths' own perspectives, TCK studies focus on that age group but lack contextualized, detailed ethnographic descriptions. All these guidebooks, Pollock and Van Reken's *Third Culture Kids,* Pascoe's *Raising Global Nomads* (2006), and Pittman and Smit's *Expat Teens Talk* (2012), are written from within the community and offer to help expatriate youths facing problems of belonging and identity by establishing a feeling of community. Based on

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activity of shopping for expatriate women in Nepal and reveals that behind the shopping for art objects and an interest in cuisine lies the need for easily transferable elements in a world of constant movement. Food and art, unlike language skills and local friendships, "can be utilized as anecdotal parallels in future postings" (Hindman 2009a, 256). The collected objects at the next destination "act as means of transferring knowledge and status between locations" (Hindman 2009b, 676), helping the expatriate women to recreate themselves. Willis and Yeoh (2002; 2005) contribute a comparative angle, writing on British and Singaporean Expatriates in Hong Kong and China based on material from 247 interviews that were conducted between 1997 and 2001. They also provide insight into the gendered experiences of privileged migration, a perspective they pursue further in their article on single British migrants in China (Willis and Yeoh 2008).

James Farrer (2008; 2010; 2011) examines expatriates' nightlife activities, sexuality, and intermarriage and their relevance to encounters with the "local" in Shanghai. In addition to his emphasis on the interaction with "locals," Farrer also broadens the view on expatriates themselves by investigating foreigners in Shanghai who stay longer than five years. Foregrounding their narratives of emplacement, he questions the standard "equation of expatriates with highly mobile transnational elites" (2010, 15) and points out the increasing diversity of the expatriate community in social composition.

In addition to these writings with their particular foci, two complete ethnographies focusing on two distinct expatriate communities have appeared. Fechter's (2007b) *Transnational Lives: Expatriates in Indonesia* and Von Dobeneck's (2010) work *Mobile Eliten. Deutsche Entsandte und ihre Familien in São Paulo,* on German expatriates in São Paulo, both give detailed insights into expatriate communities' structures and everyday practices. Anne-Meike Fechter's work particularly concentrates on the boundaries present in expatriate life in Indonesia.

these publications, the concept of TCK was also used and promoted in Shanghai's expatriate community centers and by school counselors. The author Ruth Van Reken had even given a talk at Paul's school. It is this reinforcement of the sense of belonging to a special TCK, Global Nomad, or expat community that the guidebooks and the talks in Shanghai promote that raised my awareness of something I call "TCK nationalism." This "TCK nationalism" offers a simplified form of belonging for what is otherwise a complex phenomenon and attracts individuals through its rhetoric, clear definitions of insiders and outsiders, and feelings of superiority.

Talking to Paul and other students, I find it difficult to see their flexible and reflexive ways of negotiating identity as claiming clear belonging "in relationship to others of similar background" (see Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 19). In other words, as simply being a TCK. During our first encounter, Paul seems to make very few claims of belonging at all. Home is a rather vague idea to him which he reluctantly refers to as "wherever I am staying." When he describes his multi-local experiences, it is almost a non-attachment to places and people that comes to the fore. This adjustable idea of home also relates to his particularly flexible and ever-shifting way of positioning himself in terms of cultural identity depending on the point of reference. I argue that it is therefore clearly necessary to complicate and critically reinvestigate the TCK issue outside of the guidebook phenomenon to further understand Paul's and other expatriate youths' ways of situating and comprehending themselves in a world that is in constant flux.

While some academics (see Selmer and Lam 2004; Franke 2008; Grimshaw and Sears 2008; Greenholtz and Kim 2009; Peterson and Plamondon 2009; Walters and Auton-Cuff 2009; Richter 2011) have readily taken up the TCK category, Danau Tanu's (2011) article, "Vignettes from Another Perspective: When Cultural Hierarchies Matter at an International School," is one of the few ethnographic works that questions this approach. Tanu updates and complicates some of the dynamics described in the standard works on TCKs, criticizing former research for its limited perspective—mostly Western researchers conducting studies on Western participants—that is likely to overlook how "race, ethnicity, culture, finances and even the name of the country on our passport(s) impact upon our access to global mobility, ability to feel at home in different places, and the way others relate to us" (2011, 224). Having conducted ethnographic fieldwork at an international school in Indonesia, Tanu's accounts show how cultural hierarchies are prominent not only outside, but also inside international schools.[6] Tanu's study highlights an aspect of my own ethnographic work:

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6   Tanu's study reveals that different labels, such as "Indonesian" or "White"—that seem to be linked rather to a native English speaker status and mannerisms than to actual physical appearance (ibid., 230)—are prominent in everyday discussions at school. While for the school administrators "the ideal student is the 'global citizen,'" many of the students with Asian backgrounds are seen as

that expatriate youth—although often forming a notion of "we"—are a heterogeneous group. This group, as Tanu demonstrates, has inner divisions and hierarchies:

> Money and cultural hierarchies influence perceptions and interactions that take place on the campus. Racial and other identity labels are sometimes used to signify status and cultural difference, but their meanings constantly shift. Various forms of social assets, such as language, accents, mannerisms, and money, are used to make and vie for status (Tanu 2011, 231).

Tanu explains how these hierarchies influence familial relationships and peer as well as student-teacher relations at the international school campus. International school culture, she claims, is often westernized. For students with Asian backgrounds "cultural dissonance" may arise between "'Western' culture by day and 'Asian' culture by night" (ibid., 223). Tanu finds that, in describing feelings of "cultural dissonance," previous analyses of TCKs only address repatriation or "life after the expatriate microcosm"—life after the "bubble," as student Paul phrased it. Observing these feelings (and, I would add, the need to creatively cope with the different cultural worlds at home and at school), Tanu witnesses "similar, though not identical" experiences of "Asian" TCKs and those "of second generation immigrants growing up in Western countries" (ibid., 223). These migrant groups have seldom been put in the same context. Anthropologist Jacqueline Knörr (2005) even criticizes the TCK concept for reinforcing this gap between "immigrants growing up in Western countries" and those treated as TCKs. While Tanu's work has revealed the heterogeneity of TCKs, urging for a more sensitive look at the divisions within the TCK community, Knörr (2005) takes her criticism of the TCK concept even further.

Knörr (2005, 54) notes that Pollock and Van Reken have broadened the definition of the term to include "all children who move into another society with their parents," thus making TCK too wide a term that no longer allows for distinguishing between "a Sierra Leonean refugee in the United States and an American son of an ambassador somewhere in Africa." Knörr, an anthropologist, takes a long overdue critical stance against the TCK concept and rightly points out that this broadening of the concept covers up ideologies connected with the TCK approach and remains associated primarily with "Western children brought up in the so-called Third World" and not to immigrant children in Europe or the USA (ibid.). She criticizes the concept of TCK as an ideology that implicitly reinforces qualify-

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"add[ing] to the school's overall sense of visible diversity," while "fall[ing] short on being 'international'" (ibid.). Internationalism renders the dominant Western culture invisible, establishing hierarchies of who is or is not "international." In Tanu's words: "International schools may be a multicultural bubble, but it is a bubble that is not immune to the dynamics at work in the world outside the school gates" (ibid., 231).

ing distinctions between TCKs (Western Children) and other (im)migrants, as well as between TCKs and the population in the "home country." On this point, she argues:

> Whereas the upper class of young, mostly Western migrants to—mainly—Third World countries are likely to be considered "Third Culture Kids," producing creatively a culture for themselves, the lower classes of young migrants—those from Third World or poorer countries migrating or fleeing to mostly Western countries—are likely to be considered immigrants with a cultural background, which does not fit their new environment and thus produce problems for themselves and their host society. There is an implicit—and qualifying—distinction made between TCKs on the one hand and other young (im)migrants on the other. With regard to the former, (appropriate) cultural creativity is emphasized; with regard to the latter (inappropriate) cultural conservatism. Academic approaches thereby largely and mostly implicitly reflect the—usually not so implicit—qualifying distinctions made in society at large (Knörr 2005, 54).

Knörr succinctly points out the differences in everyday life, as well as in academic discourse, when it comes to the discussion of issues of cultural practices or cultural identities among privileged migrants—expatriate youths—and migrants coming to Western countries—immigrant youths. Whereas the "cultural background" of migrant youths in Germany, for example, is seen to cause problems, expatriate youths—TCKs—are associated with cultural creativity. While I acknowledge the "appropriate cultural creativity" of the TCK concept and how it might help expatriate youths to realize that they are not the only ones with such experiences—especially after a move "back home"—I nevertheless agree with Knörr's position.

One way to save this well-meaning concept of TCKs, which acknowledges creativity and offers support through creating a like-minded community from its "ideology of difference," is a radical extension of its use: the term TCK does not need to be reserved for qualifying Western expatriates alone. If the label were broadened to include all migrant youths, it could help acknowledge the full range of their creative practices and their universal potential to create "Third Cultures." When capturing immigrant youths' experiences in Europe or the USA for instance, I suggest linking the TCK concept to approaches in postcolonial studies, such as Homi Bhabha's ([1994] 2009) metaphor of the "Third Space" that describes a chaotic meeting space, "the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the inbetween space" (ibid., 56), where migrants discuss and create multiple new meanings and cultural affiliations. The TCK idea can help simplify or ground the cultural creativity that lies in such concepts as Bhabha's. However, as my own empirical focus on privileged migration is too specific to meaningfully contribute to such a broadening, and as the concept, in my view, still contains ideologies of difference in its usage, I refrain from using it in this study.

This rejection of the TCK concept does not mean that the—mostly implicit—ideologies of difference will remain hidden; on the contrary, depending on social status and origin, such differences clearly affect the migration experience. "Global migration is far easier for highly-skilled workers and those with capital than it is for those without training or resources," writes geographer Doreen Massey (1995, 197). But there are other terms more suitable to describe the phenomenon at hand. For instance, the term "privileged migrant" immediately addresses the inequalities that TCK obscures. By following the TCK concept I would a priori accept the children and youth under discussion as having "relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any" (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009, 19). I argue that, instead of choosing samples of self-defined TCKs as previous research has repeatedly done (Franke 2008; Richter 2011), it is important to look at practices of expatriate youth more generally—including everyday practices and identity performances that contradict such a definition. All these studies based on the a priori TCK definition only investigate youth (or mostly adults' reflections on their youth) that fit into the category, therefore automatically finding "homogeneity within heterogeneity" (Griese 2004; quoted in Richter 2011, 24). This might also be due to a methodological problem, because former studies, with the exception of Danau Tanu's (2011) work, have been built on interviews and surveys (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009), and have focused mainly on group discussions (Franke 2008) during which primarily adult "Third Culture Kids" were asked about their past. Other studies have been based on the anecdotal, fictional, and biographic literature of those concerned (Richter 2011, 18). I think that these adult retrospectives may often be linked to established narratives that attempt to make sense of the experience. I therefore follow an ethnographic practice that further distinguishes my study in Shanghai from former research focusing on TCKs. Instead of inquiring into adult retrospectives, I spent time among youths to understand their own points of view on expatriate life.

How does being young shape the expatriation experience? Toward an age-specific perspective on privileged migration

To further understand expatriate youths' own cultural positioning, it is necessary to consider their age-specific perspectives and to critically reflect on what the category "youth" means. Youth, children, adolescents, and their social worlds have been studied and conceptualized from various angles. Psychoanalytic and neo-psychoanalytic theorizations, for instance the works by Peter Blos and Erik Erikson, (Blos [1962] 1966; Blos 1970; Erikson 1968), usually inform studies that focus on the universal development of children from early childhood through adolescence (see Smetana 2010, 15–18). Such approaches to development are linked to debates about defining "adolescence," be it biologically based, "as the period encompassing the

onset of puberty and going until individuals are capable of sexual repro-duction," or sociologically, as "the period when individuals begin train-ing for adult work and family roles" (Smetana 2010, 11). Judith Smetana suggests following conventions of practitioners, defining ages eleven to thirteen as "early adolescence," ages fourteen to seventeen as "middle adolescence," and ages eighteen to twenty-one as "late adolescence" (ibid., 12). In the 1990s, however, with a combined focus on psychologi-cal and social development and influenced by anthropological studies, a more prominent discussion emerged that addressed diversity and, conse-quently, "the universal and relative features of adolescent development" (ibid., 26). This greater emphasis on diversity, according to Smetana (ibid.), converged with a shift towards a much greater consideration of the con-text of development.

The societal context of development has always been the focus of stud-ies investigating youths' cultural practices. These approaches can mostly be traced back to the early to mid-twentieth century American sociologi-cal tradition of the Chicago School and the British tradition of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which opened in 1964 in Bir-mingham. US sociologists focused on attempts to explain deviant activi-ties. Interested in crime, drug consumption, and gang membership, they looked for collective normative behavior and moral codes specific to the groups studied (Hodkinson 2007, 3; Bucholtz 2002, 536). These scholars regarded youth as a difficult liminal phase and delinquent youths as victims and products of a deprived urban environment (Moser 2000, 17). While the Chicago School took a strong ethnographic approach, the Birmingham School favored the textual analysis of media and the semiotic analysis of cultural forms (Bucholtz 2002, 536). Although one of the most widely-read studies to come out of the CCCS was Paul Willis's (1990) ethnography of counter-school, working-class white boys, or "lads" (Bucholtz 2002, 536; Hodkinson 2007, 5), the British scholars specifically focused on subcultures based around distinctive music and style. Their "prevailing view was that such subcultures represented an enactment of stylistic resistance; a sub-versive reaction by young people to a contradictory situation in respect of both age and class" (Hodkinson 2007, 4). The Birmingham studies therefore understood working-class youth's practices as responses to the conflict between their class-based position in society and the "hegemonic values of capitalism and consumption" (ibid.). The scholars, and Dick Hebdige (1979) in particular, saw the subcultures under examination as "carving out dis-tinctive semiotic spaces for themselves" (Bucholtz 2002, 537) and regarded the creative practice of assembling the distinctive styles to be symbolically relevant.

Both the Chicago School and the CCCS's approaches are criticized today for their tendency to "seek out distinctive or deviant minority groups and to place emphasis on collective systems of norms and boundaries rather than to detail the complex positioning and movement of different individuals in relation to these" (Hodkinson 2007, 7)—a critique that also applies to the

studies that create the fixed category of Third Culture Kids. A focus on collective deviance alone—or distinction towards the home and host society in the case of TCKs—precludes a thorough understanding of the complex practices, values, and identities associated with youth culture. Fragmentation, fluidity, consumerism, and media consumption have led to a rethinking of the term "subculture" in favor of more temporary cultural groupings with weaker ties and limited dedication.[7] Research on diaspora and the role of ethnicity in youth culture has contributed to a larger emphasis on the shifting and "hybrid" nature of youth culture and cultural identities; most influential in this regard is the work of Stuart Hall (1990; 1994; 1996; [1996] 2012). Furthermore, both the Birmingham and the Chicago schools left young women out of their subcultural analyses, as Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber ([1975] 1997) pointed out in the 1970s (Bucholtz 2002, 537; Hodkinson 2007, 7). Additionally, their focus on the attention seeking and deviant behavior of certain male youths excluded other everyday aspects of youth culture. Research on these less noteworthy activities, however, can help us better understand the multiplicities and fragmentation within youth culture, since these works dispute the clear dichotomy of subculture versus mainstream introduced by some variants of the Birmingham subcultural theory and set out to understand young people's lives more deeply (Hodkinson 2007). Such a research focus on the "mundane" has also been called for in the field of transnational migration studies (see for instance Conradson and Latham 2005, 228) and further supports the need to trace the everyday activities of expatriate youths in particular.

While the Birmingham and Chicago studies understood youth mainly as a social category, cultural sociologist Andy Bennett (2007, 34), referring to the cultural practices of young people today, observes that youth can be understood as "a discursive construct expressing an increasingly varied and, in many cases, conflicting range of political and aesthetic sensibilities." Contemporary cultural studies see the category of "youth," therefore, in contrast to definitions of "adolescence" in developmental frameworks, as a "discursive construct"—a perspective also found in popular discourse. Fuelled as it is by the marketing of products and practices designed to help older adults feel and look younger, today's media shows that definitions of what it means to be young are contested. Consequently, divisions in terms of leisure and lifestyle preferences and practices across the generations become increasingly less obvious (Bennett 2007, 35). Despite this fuzziness of the boundaries between youths and adults, Bennett supports the utility of the term by convincingly arguing that differences nevertheless remain. These differences manifest themselves "in terms of youth's economic marginalisation and legal dependency, and in the responses of

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7   In response to this criticism, Hodkinson (2007, 8) stresses that detailed research has continued to show that some youths actually do develop strong attachments to "substantive and distinctive cultural groupings whose particular norms and values dominate their identity and life-style for a period of time."

the young and old to consumer goods and resultant patterns of taste and leisure" (ibid.). Furthermore, the "distinction between being culturally and physically young" (ibid., 34) is important because the physical difference generates distinctions in cultural practice.[8]

While sociology and cultural studies have moved from focusing on deviant behavior in youth studies to broader cultural practices and a discursive understanding of youths, anthropology, as Bucholtz (2002) points out, had established adolescence as an important theme early in the discipline's history from a perspective that emphasized the transition to adulthood. The classic ethnographies by Bronislaw Malinowski ([1929] 1968) and, particularly, by Margaret Mead ([1928] 1929; [1930] 1963; [1939] 1948), investigated the role of coming of age initiation ceremonies and marital traditions. However, these early anthropological studies, in contrast to the sociological and cultural studies approaches, did not investigate "youth as a cultural category." Rather, similar to developmental studies, they investigated "adolescence as a biological and psychological stage of human development" (Bucholtz 2002, 525). In other words, they considered youth to be a process, which is why anthropology's tradition of researching adolescence still focuses on change and development at the individual and cultural level. Its interest lies in "the social staging of adolescence in particular cultural contexts in which the universal developmental arc of adolescence is shaped by historically specific processes of social, political, and economic transformation, as well as by existing cultural practices" (ibid., 531). Bucholtz criticizes these approaches because they are dominated by the teleology of the developmental process from adolescence to adulthood. While she agrees that developmental issues are certainly part of the study of youth, Bucholtz reminds us that

> the lived experience of young people is not limited to the uneasy occupation of a developmental waystation en route to full-fledged cultural standing. It also involves its own distinctive identities and practices, which are neither rehearsals for the adult 'real thing' nor even necessarily oriented to adults at all (2002, 531–532).

Anthropologist and psychologist Lawrence Hirschfeld, investigating the marginalization of children in anthropological research, makes similar claims for even younger age groups. "By focusing on the adult end-state and adult influence on 'achieving' it, children's activities are cast as ancillary or subordinate. As a consequence, the contributions that children make to their own development are often obscured if not effaced" (Hirschfeld 2002, 614).

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8   Bennett describes practices at clubs and concerts to exemplify this point, arguing that "the sheer levels of physical stamina they demand may ultimately present their own obstacles to participation in particular forms of 'youth' activity beyond a certain age" (ibid.) Clubbing is also a favored leisure activity for many expatriate youths in Shanghai, as Part IV, Chapter 2 describes in more detail.

Hirschfeld criticizes the underlying socialization theory that emphasizes how adults intervene in children's lives and teach them, noting that it allows researchers to overlook and underestimate the contributions children themselves make "to the acquisition of cultural sensibilities" (ibid., 614). Harkening back to Baudler's earlier criticism of the "adult bias" (1996, 146), German anthropologist Cordula Weißköppel (2001, 42) argues that academia's view of childhood and youth, and consequently its theorization of them, is based on perspectives of and definitions by adults. Likewise, Bennett (2007, 30) criticizes the construction of youth by "empowered 'outsiders'—journalists and other social observers with access to the 'official' and 'authenticating' channels of the media," emphasizing that youths' voices, which are crucial for understanding their lives, are starkly absent from these portrayals.

This unquestioning tendency to approach the subject from an adult perspective is linked to the constant comparison between the categories of adolescence and adulthood. Bucholtz (2002, 532) consequently argues for a conceptual shift from an anthropology of adolescence to an anthropology of youth, thereby rejecting the term adolescence because it always refers to an idea of "growth, transition, and incompleteness [...] while adult indicates both completion and completeness." In Bucholtz's view, the category of youth therefore understands age

> not as trajectory, but as identity, where identity is intended to invoke neither the familiar psychological formulation of adolescence as a prolonged "search for identity," nor the rigid and essentialized concept that has been the target of a great deal of recent critique. Rather, identity is agentive, flexible, and ever-changing— but no more for youth than for people of any age. Where the study of adolescence generally concentrates on how bodies and minds are shaped for adult futures, the study of youth emphasizes instead the here-and-now of young people's experience, the social and cultural practices through which they shape their worlds (Bucholtz 2002, 532).

By suggesting a shift in focus from adolescence to youth, Bucholtz (2002, 544) urges future scholars to "admit both the ideological reality of categories and the flexibility of identities" and to continue to draw on "theories of practice, activity, and performance to demonstrate how youth negotiate cultural identities in a variety of contexts, both material and semiotic, both leisure-based and at home, school, work, and in the political sphere."

My own ethnographic approach to expatriate youths in Shanghai follows Bucholtz's objective. I highlight Paul's and his fellow students' performances of cultural and youth identities by listening to their own accounts, while simultaneously capturing their everyday practices in various locations, such as school, urban street spaces, and night clubs. My underlying conceptual understanding of youth as practice, performance, and nego-

tiation is new for studies of expatriate youth because, until now, most approaches were based on the retrospectives of adult "TCKs." Similarly, in migration studies in general, children's perspectives are quite scarce. Knörr and Nunes (2005) acknowledge that recent approaches to research on childhood in the social and cultural sciences have started to consider children's own perspectives, thoughts, feelings, and views of their social world, but that this shift has had relatively little impact on migration studies regarding children:

> Little is known about children's particular understanding of (migrant) life, their concepts of their place of origin and their host society, their ways of building identity for themselves. This is true despite the fact that children make up a large proportion of migrants and despite the fact that children take on important roles in mediating between their world of origin and the host society (2005, 14–15).

Geographer Madeleine Dobson (2009), in her article "Unpacking children in migration research," explains the reasons for this lack of including children's perspectives in migration research. She argues that perceptions of children have long been based on ideas stemming from economic models because of the prominent focus on economic aspects of migration. According to these approaches, only adults are of economic significance; therefore children are seen as irrelevant and ultimately ignored. However, research on family migration and transnational families in particular has received increasing attention. Such research argues against the economic models by showing that children do in fact play a vital role in the migration process and contribute to its (economic) success (Dobson 2009, 356). Marjorie Orellana and her colleagues (2001, 588), for instance, argue that children are "an important reason why families move across national borders and sustain transnational ties." Children might sometimes even move without their families in order to gain valuable education that can consequently improve the socioeconomic status of the whole family (Orellana et al. 2001; Waters 2005).[9] Family migration research has thus been "vital in decentering a single 'lead' migrant" (Dobson 2009, 356).

However, despite recent efforts to include children in migration studies—"from silent belongings to visible anxieties and active agents, demanding attention in their own right" (Dobson 2009, 358)—few of these studies capture youths' perspectives on the experience of migration. Dobson (2009, 355) thus notes: "more could be done to foreground the perspectives of children in their own right."

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9   This is, for example, the case for "parachute kids" migrating from South Korea to the USA. These children attend schools in the USA while their parents stay in South Korea. They not only work abroad "to advance their families' social and economic mobility," but even play the lead role in "a migration process that may eventually result in the chain migration of other family members" (Orellana et al. 2001, 581).

A study conducted by Deborah Sporton et al. (2006) on asylum seekers in Britain presents insights into the under-examined experiences of Somalian child refugees ages eleven to eighteen and their perspectives on the asylum-seeking process. The authors skillfully highlight the children's narratives of the self and the role that their mobility plays in this process. Their work delineates the different challenges posed by immigration policy, racism, social exclusion, and different age expectations. It further demonstrates how elements that may provide stable identity references, such as Muslim faith, are consequently of particular significance (Sporton, Valentine, and Nielsen 2006, 214). This impressive example of migration studies concerning children identifies how "dominant narratives of childhood" (and asylum seekers) are constructed and how children then position themselves within these powerful narratives by "actively negotiating and accomplishing their own identities in specific geographical sites" (ibid., 215).

Two other recent contributions to migration studies (Hatfield 2010; Hutchins 2011) focused on the experiences and perspectives of children in the dynamics of family migration. Both studies address the cases of British households, whose children's backgrounds resemble those of the youths I met in Shanghai.

Teresa Hutchins's (2011) study explores the experiences of families who have recently moved from the UK to Australia. Her ethnographic account privileges the perspective of the children in her study group, ages five to seventeen at the time of the interviews, and discusses the ways in which they experienced and made sense of the migration. Hutchins particularly analyzes the family's decision-making process prior to moving abroad and illustrates how different unspoken conceptions of childhood influence this process, as parents often argue for making decisions in their children's "best interest." As "individual members of the family often have different interests, [...] family migration decision-making is based upon a process of negotiating individual influence and power within the family" (Hutchins 2011, 1233). While her article lays open the use of parental power in these negotiations and demonstrates how this power often results in the young actors' exclusion from the decision-making process, Hutchins also identifies ways in which children actively attempt to influence the decision or the overall migration process. Hutchins' findings prompted me to discuss the events and decisions that led to the move to Shanghai with Paul and his peers. Their perspectives describe a lack of their involvement in this decision. Drinking coffee on Wulumuqi Road, Paul tells me that he had not wanted to move to China initially because he had not "even googled it before" and thought it would be all "mud houses" and "bamboo forests." He remembers his father telling him about the move to China in a very straightforward way:

> PAUL: *So he doesn't try to butter you up or anything. He ... If your*
> *dog dies, he won't make up an excuse. <L> He would just tell*
> *you he ran over the dog, you know. So he was kinda like:*
> *"Paul, we are moving to China." Oh.*

My work—in particular Part II, Chapter 1, which examines students' perspectives on the decision to move abroad in depth—shows that this lack of involvement in the decision, as in Paul's case, leads to or at least contributes to the youths' initial reluctance to relocate to China and that it renders the arrival more difficult for them.

Another study by Madeleine Hatfield (née Dobson) (2010) addresses the issue of return migration and presents, through innovative fieldwork on domestic spaces in Britain, the experiences of "children as equal movers." The actors of her study are between seven and seventeen years old. They are members of households headed by a highly skilled migrant and have returned "home" to Britain after living in Singapore. Her work explores how the children in her study understood and negotiated this return. Additionally, by drawing on photography by the children, she highlights the significance of their everyday routines and demonstrates children's specific home-making practices, which she often finds more "mobile, transient and smaller-scale" than those of adults. Based on Hatfield's insights, Part III, Chapter 2 of this work discusses expatriate students' home-making processes in Shanghai in more detail.

Inspired by these case studies and the recent shift in youth studies—from an emphasis on development to a focus on cultural practices and discursive understandings of youth—this ethnography investigates expatriate youths' everyday activities and focuses on their own narratives. By understanding age as a collective identity and not as a trajectory, I privilege the experiences of the "here-and-now" over the process of development. In order to capture these age-specific experiences, my work, despite its focus on the lifestyle that comes with a particular mobility, mainly addresses everyday routines at school, at leisure sites, or at home. The focus on the youths' own perspectives and experiences that informs my approach has led to many passages in this ethnography in which the students' experiences are described through their own words and testimonies. This framework means that I focus on the youth's relations with each other rather than their relations with adults. I am well aware that their relations to their parents and other adults might hereby be underrepresented. Nevertheless, I think overcoming the "adult bias" and understanding the youth's own perspectives will contribute to the larger picture of privileged migration.

My choice of terminology reflects the outlined developments in the study of youth and adapts them for the purposes of this book. I use the term "youth" or "youths," "young people," or the age-specific term "teenagers," and not the term "adolescent." The latter implies a narrow developmental framework, which I reject for my work. I acknowledge processes of

development, but regard transformation, change, and learning as some-thing that is present not only in youths' lives, but for everyone. Because I worked with youths that were enrolled at Shanghai's numerous interna-tional schools, I also refer to my research participants as "students." Fur-thermore, I occasionally use the term "children," not in contrast to "adult," but in juxtaposition to "parents"—an understanding similar to Hatfield's (2010, 247). I have done so to underline the young people's dependency: at the time of my fieldwork, all of the actors of my study still lived with one or both parents. The term "expatriate," or its short form "expat," is suited for my work because the student interviewees at the international high schools in Shanghai all identified with it, regardless of their parents' occupations, nationalities, or migration trajectories. "Expat" can therefore be seen as a term that refers to a shared set of practices and privileges.[10]

One more conceptual dimension needs to be addressed. While "expa-triate youth" is a suitable replacement of the TCK label for this particular study, it does not offer any insights as an analytical concept with which to investigate Paul's and other international students' mediations of cultural complexities. For this I have to turn towards the notion of transculturality and related ideas.

How can we understand the cultural entanglements of Paul's world? Transculturality as progress, practice, and perspective

There seems to be a common view that, in the broadest sense, "transcul-turation is the process of individuals and societies changing themselves by integrating diverse cultural life-ways into dynamic new ones" (Hoerder, Hébert, and Schmitt 2005, 13). Such notions disregard the fact that trans-culturality or transculturation is not a "given" concept but has its own con-ceptual history. Since the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch coined the term "transculturality" (Welsch 1999), a burgeoning field has developed into an interdisciplinary pursuit that scholars of various backgrounds have approached from a variety of angles.

Welsch (1999) developed the term "transculturality" to challenge the classical idea of singular cultures and more recent concepts of intercul-turality and multiculturality. He strongly criticizes these concepts and has argued that cultures are not "constituted in the form of islands or spheres" (1999, 197). The idea of transculturality, according to Welsch, can solve the misconception that cultures have "the insinuated form of homogeneity and separateness" (ibid.). The concept of transculturality, Welsch argues,

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10 Although "expat(riate) kids" are often mentioned as a subcategory of Third Cul-ture Kids, along with "military brats" and "missionary kids" in the TCK literature (Richter 2011, 20), I use the term "expatriate youth" as an umbrella term that is broader than the conventional usage of TCK.

"sketches a different picture of the relation between cultures. Not one of isolation and of conflict, but one of entanglement, intermixing and commonness" (ibid.). Furthermore, Welsch also acknowledges transculturality not only on society's macro level, but also on the individual level: "Work on one's identity is becoming more and more work on the integration of components of differing cultural origin" (ibid.). Unfortunately, as cultural anthropologist Gertraud Koch (2008, 14) points out, Welsch's development of transculturation is rather generalizing and not based on specific examples.

Aoileann Ní Éigearteigh and Wolfgang Berg (2010b), in their collective volume *Exploring Transculturalism,* took up Welsch's (1999) idea of transculturality on the individual level and pursued a biographical approach by presenting texts "of a range of curious, open-minded protagonists who managed, through perseverance and affinity, to adapt to new, alien cultures" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010a, 11). In the introduction, the editors explain that the volume focuses on transnationally mobile persons. The aspect of cultural identity they pursue is based on the underlying premise that certain individuals "find ways to transcend their native cultures, in order to explore, examine and infiltrate new, seemingly alien cultures" and that these experiences show that "it will become increasingly difficult to identify and separate people according to previously accepted delineations" (ibid.). The chosen protagonists, from their point of view, are defined as "transcultural personalities [...] because of their willingness to rise to the challenge of living in unfamiliar, sometimes even hostile, societies, and forge new, hybrid narratives of identity for themselves, without compromising their own individuality and cultural heritage" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010a, 16).

Éigearteigh and Berg term these individuals "transculturalists" and argue that looking closely at their experiences and narratives provides insights into "the conditions under which cultural change takes place" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010a, 11). The editors add a critical aspect to their overtly positive portrayal of transcultural experience in their introduction. They point out that Welsch's (1999) optimistic outlook on transculturality as a state that "can help the migrant to overcome feelings of isolation, dislocation and foreignness" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010a, 12, in reference to Welsch 1999) ought to be regarded with care, as "people who cross borders continue to struggle with unfamiliar social norms and behaviours" (ibid.).

In a similar way, Nina Richter (2011, 117) has suggested that transculturality offers an identity model through which TCKs can be understood. Her work combines the popular concept of TCKs with a theoretical interpretation of transculturality. Richter draws on Welsch's concept and understands transculturality mainly as "jenseits des Gegensatzes von Eigenkultur und Fremdkultur" (Welsch 1995, cited in Richter 2011, 117), which, in the English edition of Welsch's essay, translates to "beyond the contraposition of ownness and foreignness" (1999, 196). Richter argues that TCKs encoun-

ter diverse cultural elements, bridge several cultures, and are marked by being part of a third, newly-formed culture. Consequently, Richter argues that TCKs represent and articulate different cultures, cross-cultural values, and norms ("kulturübergreifende Werte und Normen"), as well as international experiences and intercultural competencies or, to cite Welsch (1995), "Fusionen bis in ihren Kern hinein."[11] Richter concludes that TCKs are thus "transcultural personalities" (2011, 117).

While the concept of "transculturalists" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010a) and the understanding of TCKs as "transcultural personalities" (Richter 2011) draw attention to experiences and narratives of individuals similar to those of Paul, they fail to acknowledge processes of change within "cultures" which are unfortunately still based on a problematic understanding of homogeneity. This tendency stems from Welsch's understanding of transculturality, according to which cultures have a "core" (Kern). As Brosius and Wenzlhuemer (2011, 11) argue, "the matter is even more complicated since we must reflect on the role of local notions of, for example, beauty, authenticity, or realism without essentialising them."

For my analysis, the terms "transculturalist," "TCK," and "transcultural personalities" are too static because they presuppose a specific, mixed identity that is in opposition to fixed "authentic" others. Processes of cultural identity negotiations, however, are flexible, relational, and situational. My work does follow Richter's (2011) initial linking of TCKs—or better, expatriate youths—with transculturality. However, my ethnographic approach goes beyond Richter's account, which is based on established narratives of people who label themselves as TCKs, by including practices that contradict or impair the building of the "transcultural personalities" that Richter sees. To analyze such contradicting practices—for instance the retreat from urban China to comfortable and familiar expatriate enclaves in Shanghai—it is necessary to go beyond Welsch's notion of transculturality as a state of being.

In contrast, transculturality's dynamic processes have received more attention from authors such as Fernando Ortiz, whose early writings on what he termed "transculturation" were seemingly unknown to Welsch when he coined his term. Ortiz developed the concept of transculturation in the 1940s, in his work *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Ortiz 1970), which analyzes the production of these crops in Cuba. Based on empirical evidence, Ortiz describes the rapid global spread of tobacco farming and assesses the reasons for its change in "social significance as it passed from the cultures of the New World to those of the Old." He calls

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11 Richter here refers to the German article from 1995, but the passage quoted here appears in an online abstract at: http://www.forum-interkultur.net/Beitraege.45.0.html?&tx_textdb_pi1[showUid]=28. In the summary provided on the forum website, Welsch writes, "Vielmehr sind Kulturen charakterisiert durch vielfältige Verflechtungen, Durchmischungen und "Fusionen" bis in ihren Kern hinein" (cultures are rather characterized through manifold entanglements, mixtures, and "fusions" reaching into their core).

this process "the transculturation of tobacco" (ibid., 183) and argues that transculturation defines what he saw as "the highly varied phenomena that have come about in Cuba as a result of the extremely complex transmutations of culture that have taken place here" (ibid., 98). The term, he claims, more adequately describes these historical events than the term "acculturation," which had been frequently employed until then to describe similar processes (ibid., 97). Bronislaw Malinowski (1970, viii), who wrote the introduction to Ortiz's book, supports the term and claims that "acculturation" is "an ethnocentric word" that connotes the idea that "the 'uncultured' is to receive the benefits of 'our culture'." He argues that "by the use of the term *acculturation* we implicitly introduce a series of moral, normative, and evaluative concepts which radically vitiate the real understanding of the phenomenon" (ibid., emphasis in the original). This phenomenon, which Ortiz defines as transculturation, is well-described by Malinowski as a

> process in which something is always given in return for what one receives, a system of give and take. It is a process in which both parts of the equation are modified, a process from which a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent (Malinowski 1970, viii–ix).

It is the emphasis on the "new, original and independent" realities that makes Ortiz's understanding of transcultural processes, as German cultural anthropologist Gertraud Koch (2008, 12) points out, an early acknowledgement of the emancipatory potential that lies in the concept of transculturation. It shows, according to Koch, that "the dominant culture" does not remain uninfluenced in this process (ibid.). Yet, while Ortiz's concept of transculturation emphasizes the creative processes of new formations, it remains problematically close to essentializing "authentic" cultures that then merge into new ones. Even better suited to critically examine Paul's and his peers' lives in Shanghai and, particularly, their cultural identity negotiations is ethnologist and psychoanalyst Maya Nadig's idea of "transculturality in progress."

Nadig's (2004) concept of "transculturality in progress" is highly sensitive to the dangers of essentializing culture and describes migratory milieus, cooperative spaces, and transcultural relations as the "frames in which people with different cultural backgrounds perceive the difference of cultures and negotiate their identity and self-design" (ibid., 9). Instead of talking about distinct cultures, Nadig suggests that "experiences, emotions, perceptions of others, and strategic positions are consciously and discursively modelled along the forming of affiliations, the drawing of boundaries, and differentiation between the alien and the own, selves and others" (ibid.). If we base our understanding of transculturality on a concept of culture that, as Nadig (ibid., 10) suggests, sees culture "as plural and in motion" and defines it "as a practice," we can use transculturality as

a concept to investigate "the development and transformation of identity constructs within the context of transcultural relations," and focus on "the subsequently developed forms of translation, convergence, mergence, the new boundaries, and differentiation." According to Nadig, transculturality leads us to analyze both "the context within which individuals and groups interact" and "the material, discursive and practical manifestations of cultural identity and their change to the extent that mutual (transcultural) understanding is either made possible or impaired" (ibid.).

Many of Paul and his peers' spatial practices that I will discuss throughout this ethnography are linked to boundaries that often impair exchanges and understanding with local Chinese youth, such as the physical, social, and cultural boundaries of gated communities and international schools. Their forms of belonging and identity positioning, however, demonstrate the students' own perspectives and identification with being "in-between" and their need to improve their (transcultural) understanding in various contexts. Nadig shows that, in cultural studies and psychoanalysis, similar conceptualizations of such spaces of progress and "in-betweenness" were developing. She argues that these concepts of in-between spaces in regards to cultural identity (harkening back to Bhabha 1990; Bhabha 1997; Bhabha [1994] 2009) and the intermediate spaces conceptualized in psychoanalytical approaches to identity (drawing on Winnicott 1971) both entail "mediating between inner/individual and outer/cultural reality, or between selves and others" (Nadig 2004, 17). The individual, self-reflective narratives of Paul and other teenagers I met include such mediations. While some students negotiate between differences they perceive between their parents and themselves, others mediate between school and home, or across dividing lines in class between their former social networks and their new expatriate circles in Shanghai.

Human geographer Robert Pütz (2004) argues that there are also strategic elements in such identity negotiations. Writing about entrepreneurs of Turkish origin in Berlin, he sees transculturality as practice. This concept explains and resolves a contradiction between the theoretical standpoint that homogeneous cultures do not exist on the one hand, and the everyday use and experience of signs and practices that permanently (re)produce such essentializations of fixed, homogenous cultures, on the other. Pütz does not consider cultural embeddedness to be something fixed, but argues that it is created through communicative practices in a specific situation and is thus open to change (ibid., 29). He admits that different cultural symbolic systems are important for an individual's social practice but understands these systems as forming a "repertoire" to which the individual has access and from which he or she chooses which practices to adopt and when (ibid.). Combined with such an interpretative and symbolic understanding of culture, Pütz's concept of transculturality as practice begs the question of why cultural boundaries are drawn (Pütz 2004, 11), rather than inquiring about the state of seemingly homogenous cultures. Concepts of transculturality allow for individuals to articulate belonging to

different imagined communities in whose construction processes they are permanently involved (ibid., 13). The self-positioning on both sides of certain borders can, according to Pütz's view, be seen as the ability of individuals to deal flexibly with codifications of identity (ibid.). He takes up the idea formulated by Welsch (1999) that individuals possess or have access to different cultural frames of reference. Pütz (2004, 27) maintains that, with the help of the concept of transculturality, the inner-outer differentiation that comes with every border is conceptually shifted onto the individual. Furthermore, Pütz sees transculturality as an observational concept (Beobachtungskonzept) (ibid., 13) or analyzing concept (Analysekonzept) (ibid., 28) that can serve the researcher as a methodological tool. Transculturality is a useful tool for sharpening one's focus and shedding light on the cultural aspects of practices, their borders, and their entanglements. Consequently, it can, as Brosius and Wenzlhuemer (2011, 11) put it, "be used to relate to a particular research topic as well as to an analytical method."

Pütz defines transculturality as a certain practice of specific subjects, which can be divided into "everyday transculturality" and "strategic transculturality" (ibid., 13) and describes the former as concrete routines with which the subjects are able to position themselves in different frames of reference (Deutungsschemata). If these frames of reference are reflected upon by their actors and used intentionally, "everyday transculturality" becomes "strategic transculturality." "Strategic transculturality" means moving self-reflexively in different symbolic systems (Pütz 2004, 28), and is reminiscent of what the British social anthropologist Steven Vertovec (1997, 294) described fittingly as "milieu moving:"

> Such examples of "crossing" and "milieu-moving," I believe, differ from the usual notions of "hybridity" discussed in much literature within Cultural Studies. While the latter celebrate new mixtures, the former indicate ways in which individuals not only create syncretic forms, but are competent in—and can improvise from—a number of (in some ways discrete, in some ways overlapping) cultural and linguistic systems (Vertovec 1997, 294).

This competence in "milieu moving" is, for instance, illustrated by one of the students I met in Shanghai, Xia, who was raised in Germany by his Chinese parents, and who describes how alternating between his German school in Shanghai and his home forces him to alter his role, speech, and behavior to suit each location. Such a self-reflective practice of strategic transculturality also enables us to understand Paul's way of labeling himself differently in regards to nationality, as he did during our talk on Wulumuqi Road. This becomes even clearer when we meet again a few months later in Germany. Triggered by leaving Shanghai and his move to Germany, he suddenly labels himself Brazilian. It is a strategic decision based on his judgment of what actually might be accepted and confirmed by others in his new situation. Paul expresses no worries about his recent choice to

move to Germany after graduating and stresses his ability to adapt anywhere—especially as his private, English-language university provides another international "bubble." During this second interview in Germany, he conveys a calmness and effortlessness about his many relocations—and his recent move to Germany in particular—before he suddenly tells me he considers himself Brazilian, now, even though he only lived in Brazil until he was six years old. I am surprised by his new choice of cultural identity. While I wonder whether my presence makes him feel obliged to make a statement of belonging, he lists his very pragmatic reasons for this choice by explaining why his other places of upbringing are unsuitable to define him: he simply does not want to identify himself as American and, given the way he looks, he cannot be Chinese.

Paul's way of thinking about and rationally arguing for his current cultural identity in Germany can clearly be seen as strategic in Robert Pütz's (2004) sense and also supports Pütz's (ibid., 30) observation that actors themselves have self-reflective access to culture—a necessary premise to use transculturality strategically. I find Pütz's argument for self-reflective actors who continuously (and sometimes strategically) re-position themselves by drawing from their "cultural repertoire" (ibid., 29), thus simultaneously adding to this "repertoire" more convincing than the simple TCK (Pollock and Van Reken [1999] 2009) or "transculturalist" (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010b) label. To further stress this self-reflexive access among young privileged migrants to cultural practices and the consequent (strategic) mediations between inner/individual and outer/cultural realities (Nadig 2004), I suggest framing their experiences, viewpoints, and practices in terms of gaining and employing "transcultural perspectives."

This ethnography examines and presents in detail how young privileged migrants like Paul view and narrate their experiences of moving and how they consequently construct subjective flexible cultural identities. Their stories show that "culture" is, as an ever-changing set of practices and meanings in an on-going process, "plural and in motion" (Nadig 2004, 10). This understanding of "culture" has been widespread in the discipline of anthropology since well before the rise of transcultural studies, as Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992), for example, have put forward by calling for a focus on the production of cultural differences rather than viewing "culture" as a distinct entity. I draw on this understanding of "cultures" as continuous processes when speaking of transcultural perspectives. By using the term "perspectives," I additionally emphasize the idea of self-reflexivity, the ability to focus and reflect on the processes that manifest our understandings of "cultures" and their boundaries. For this reason, I agree with Brosius' assertion that transculturality also serves as a heuristic device (Brosius 2011, 28).

Based on my accounts of 43 expatriate youths in Shanghai in 2010, 2011, and 2012, I show that many of these students, especially those born of bicultural marriages or to parents with migrant biographies, develop such a transcultural perspective toward their own lives, a perspective that

is highly self-reflective upon their mobility and position, and the influence that family, the school environment, or Shanghai has on them. The term "perspective," which is common in transcultural studies, was even explicitly used by one student who was already mentioned, Xia—the son of Chinese parents, who grew up in Germany and was enrolled at a German school— to describe his challenges and desire to cope with such variations in his immediate environment. Despite the fact that my presence might have triggered some of the students' reflections and influenced them accordingly, I argue that transculturality as a method or specific perspective is not only reserved for the anthropologist or the academic, but is a form of reflection acquired by many of the teenagers who shared their experiences with me. Many students develop such self-reflexivity about their own entanglement as a coping strategy for a lifestyle of constant moving, whether it is they or their close friends who move.

This transcultural perspective on their own lives may at first seem to contradict the youths' everyday spatial practices of demarcation, such as Paul's bubble. However, spatial demarcations and transcultural perspectives actually go hand-in-hand. The students' own mobility can evoke a desire for stability on the one hand and a desire to broaden their point of view in order to manage the changes they experience on the other. Living on the move by no means erases but instead often provokes the desire to create familiar spaces, to settle despite having to face the next move. Thus a constant negotiation takes place between drawing boundaries and crossing them.

When applied by the researcher, a transcultural perspective sheds light on how these youths shift and merge different cultural practices, positions, and creative formations of new subjectivities. It can also serve to inform moments of boundary-drawing and practices of making distinctions.

During the interviews, I get the impression that Paul, like me, has difficulty grasping the full breadth of the changes he has experienced throughout his lifetime. Instead of describing or contemplating these differences that he experiences like the other students, Paul simply describes what has helped him to emplace himself: the social worlds of "bubbles." It is thus impossible to understand the "transcultural turbulences" (Brosius and Wenzlhuemer 2011), the experience of borders and difference in narratives of cultural identity by people like Paul, without a more detailed ethnographic investigation into the "production of difference within common, shared, and connected spaces" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 16). In other words: transcultural perspectives that focus on the shifting and transgression of boundaries require detailed ethnographic insights into the production of cultural differences at specific sites. For this reason, I chose to investigate expatriate youths' spatial practices in Shanghai.

Why are spatial practices insightful?
Tracing the importance of place

To further understand expatriate youths' everyday lives and their collective and cultural identity performances, I studied their spatial practices in Shanghai. Drawing on the research tradition of urban anthropology,[12] my work therefore examines specific places favored by expatriate youths and connects them to their experience of Shanghai as a rising mega-city, as well as to their memories of places elsewhere. With this emphasis, I not only contribute to filling the gap of research on geographies of youth that scholars have recently turned to (e.g. the founding of the journal *Children's Geographies*), but also attune my work to methodologies in ethnographic studies that foreground the importance of place in a world of flux.[13]

While ethnographic fieldwork is usually tied to the idea of "being there," it is less clear what and when "there" means and what we can actually call "the field." This is particularly true when studying phenomena of migration. The lives of the individuals researched—as I will show throughout this ethnography—are tied to and embedded in many locales and diverse transnational spaces. Katie Walsh (2010), in a review of Fechter's (2007b) ethnographic work on expatriates in Indonesia, pointed out the difficulties inherent to using single-site research to trace such mobile practices: "Finally, there is a tension, evident in ethnographies of transnationalism and globalization more generally, that is connected to the difficulties of

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12 The Chicago School of Sociology, founded in 1915, laid the groundwork for this field of study in particular with its later monographs in the 1960s and 1970s focusing on specific quarters, districts, and communities within the city (Wildner 1995, 6). Robert Ezra Park, founder of the Chicago School, studied in Berlin under Georg Simmel (Hannerz 1980, 22), whose progressive writings contemplating the living conditions of people in modern cities (Simmel 1903) can be seen as early stepping stones towards an urban anthropology (Wildner 1995, 6). Urban anthropology has always been influenced by history, sociology, and geography (Hannerz 1980, 4), in addition to its beginnings in Chicago. Hannerz has argued that the "remarkable pioneering work in urban ethnography carried out there particularly in the 1920s and 1930s" has shown that the boundary between sociology and anthropology can largely be disregarded (1980, 16). Only by the 1960s did anthropologists, habitually concerned with rural societies, increasingly turn their attention toward cities, faced with urbanization in their "traditional fields" as well as changes and so-called "urban problems" in their cities at home (ibid., 1). According to Hannerz, it was not until a decade later that the term "Urban Anthropology" emerged (ibid., 2). While early ethnographers focusing on cities investigated particular places within the city, later works in urban anthropology saw the necessity of considering the city as a complete whole with a central function in global society (Wildner 1995, 2).

13 Sociologist Les Back, who highlights how young people learn to make a cosmopolitan and multiracial city their home, shows how teenagers demonstrate local knowledge and sophisticated tactics on how to move through a city with its racism and high- and low-risk spaces. Back argues that youths combine their social knowledge to negotiate "the chequerboard of hatreds and violence" (ibid., 20) and seek out "places that give space *to be,* not places of identity or unitarity or fixed notions of selfhood, but a space to perform and claim belonging amid the inferno of contemporary city life" (ibid., 41).

trying to use single-site research to trace the mobile practices of transnationalism in everyday life" (Walsh 2010, 140).

In line with such criticism of single-sited research, I was often asked why I did not follow a multi-sited approach (Marcus 1995). While fieldwork in multiple places could produce other insights, I agree with Mark-Anthony Falzon's (2009) critique of multi-sited work, when he points out that, although a multi-sited approach at first seems to counteract a certain "incompleteness," the researcher's reflective choices inevitably limit the field in any approach: "Ultimately, both [single- and multi-sited approaches] are partial because both have their self-/imposed limits. Multi-sited ethnography is no more holistically inclined than its predessor [sic]" (ibid., 13).

Despite focusing exclusively on Shanghai, my work is informed by the strong global connections across multiple and large spatial scales that are part of expatriate youth's everyday lives. Expatriate children have often already moved several times. The continuous presence of these places in the students' lives is obvious not only in narratives of migration experiences, but particularly through the constant comparison of Shanghai to former places of residence. Furthermore, daily practices involve memories of other places that are constantly evoked through material connections (clothes or furniture bought elsewhere), sensuous experiences (food from home), and emotional paraphernalia (a postcard or an email from a close friend abroad). Urban geographer Jennifer Robinson (2010, 16) stresses the importance of the imaginary in the way we associate different places with each other, whether we have been to those places or not. She shows that these mental connections permeate our everyday lives: "Within a topological imagination, making one's way in a city commonly entrains a wide diversity of other places" (Robinson 2010, 16). Robinson underlines her argument by referring to case studies by Simone (2004), De Boeck and Plissart (2006), and Malaquais (2007), which illustrate that

> the livelihood strategies and imaginative worlds of city residents in places such as Doula and Kinshasa are entwined with other places elsewhere (such as New York and Brussels) both practically and imaginatively, in the sense that residents are always in the process of preparing to leave for an imagined elsewhere, that they already know much about other cities, or live an imaginary world that is both here and there (Robinson 2010, 16).

Robinson's approach helps us to understand that, for the students in my ethnography, the process of moving through and living in Shanghai is constantly tied to that which is elsewhere.

By acknowledging the continuous presence of other places in our daily lives, as it arises through the global circulation of people, images, technology, goods, money, and ideas—which anthropologist Arjun Appadurai

(2002) has conceptualized as ethno-, media-, techno-, finance-, and ideo-scapes—we can observe that global cultural flows touch down in specific sites. For children on the move with their expatriate parents, this means that, although they may grow up transnationally, they always live somewhere particular, if only for a limited time. Brenda Yeoh and Katie Willis (2005, 270) point out that "transnational elites belong as much to the 'space of place' as to the 'space of flows'," and so do their children. Choosing to ground my research in Shanghai, I therefore decided not to focus on the links of one expatriate community to another, or the relations of family members dispersed across the globe, but rather to see how these global connections are negotiated in the everyday spaces of expatriate youths.

Consequently, my methodological approach follows those concepts of ethnography that promote the idea of grounding ethnographic research in particular sites, as scholars such as Zsuzsa Gille and Seán Ó Riain (2002) or Harri Englund (2002) have put forward. These approaches argue that focusing on specific places enables us to gain insight into the global networks of each site's actors: "We have argued for a global ethnography that still locates itself firmly in places but which conceives of those places as themselves globalized with multiple external connections, porous and contested boundaries, and social relations that are constructed across multiple spatial scales" (Gille and Ó Riain 2002, 290–291).

Similar to Gille and Ó Riain's suggested perspectives on specific places as "globalized with multiple external connections," Englund promotes a methodological focus on sites in recognition of their global connections. Englund (2002, 286), however, rejects the concept of localization due to its inherent misleading dichotomy as the opposite of globalization, and suggests a "postglobalist" perspective that works with the idea of "emplacement"—a term anthropologist David Howes ([2005] 2006, 7) later formed into a full-fledged concept that focuses on the "sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment"—to enhance sensitivity to situatedness in a globalized world. Englund's perspective enables an emphasis to be placed on the transformation of global elements in particular places:

> This perspective is postglobalist because it both builds on earlier insights into flows and circulations in a global space, and it recognizes specific sites and terrains as the conditions of their existence and transformation. Even the apparently most global phenomenon is continuously emplaced as it reaches its new destinations. As such, localization is doubly disqualified to capture the contours of emplacement. Not only does it evoke globalization as its logical opposite, it also conveys a sense of closure in local appropriations. If persons, institutions, and capital are always emplaced, the challenge is to understand the variable capacities of places to act as springboards for traveling, whether by people, ideas, or institutions (Englund 2002, 286).

Englund's (2002) postglobalist perspective supports my focus on Shanghai and the various specific locales within it. The methodological approaches by Gille and Ó Riain as well as Englund, however, prompt a consideration of the global connections these places are part of: "Not only is the so-called local an emergent property of nonlocal processes, the so-called global also requires particular sites and terrains to operate" (Englund 2002, 266). Willis, Yeoh, and Fakhri (2002, 506) have pointed out how this principle works within expatriate spheres: "Transnational elites may be evidence of processes at a global scale, but this 'global' is constructed and understood by operations of particular individuals in local spaces." A postglobalist perspective is thus useful for my research because it enables an understanding of expatriate youths' ways of life not only as the outcome of globalization, but sees these individuals as mobile yet emplaced actors.

To understand their experience of specific places in Shanghai further, my research on spatial practices is also theoretically informed by Howes's ([2005] 2006) idea of "emplacement" that I mentioned above. His concept of emplacement encourages paying particular attention to a variety of sensory impressions and enables us to recognize and highlight the importance of physical and emotional experiences in specific places. I therefore understand emplacement as the process of engaging with the "here and now."

Furthermore, ethnographer and filmmaker David MacDougall's (2006) notion of "social aesthetics" is helpful in highlighting the sensorial and embodied experiences of the youths' preferred spaces in Shanghai. He suggests paying attention to specific objects, such as "the design of buildings and grounds" or "the use of clothing and colors," and daily practices, "for instance the organization of students' time," to understand the "social aesthetics" of an environment (2006, 98). By understanding the "social aesthetic field" as a coalescence of different elements such as "objects and actions" (2006, 98), we can then analyze it by focusing on a specific community, its material environment, and the quotidian practices that occur within it. Social aesthetics are "both the backdrop and product of everyday life" (ibid., 108). MacDougall's notion directly relates to my own fieldwork experience. For example, the aforementioned concept explains how the social aesthetics of a classroom (the room's shape, lighting, and seating arrangements, which for students are intertwined with specific behavioral rules) can influence the range or depth of topics of the interviews I conducted at the students' schools. In these discussions, school-related issues were elaborated upon more than leisure activities. MacDougall's idea of social aesthetics thus helps us to further understand how the materiality and atmosphere of select places can foster certain practices or discussions among the youths, whether it be the school premises (Part III, Chapter 3) that evokes a certain behavior and conversation topics, or a nightclub (Part IV, Chapter 2) that promotes certain ways of dressing up. It demonstrates the students' active involvement in creating their own spaces as well as their roles in shaping Shanghai as a world city and stage for their own identity performances.

Youth culture scholar Andy Bennett (2000) shows that locality continues to play a role as "a relatively stable base for otherwise unstable and transient […] identities" (Hodkinson 2007, 12). To understand how expatriate youths shape and use specific spaces as a source for identity and age performances in more detail, I also draw on geographer Doreen Massey's (1995, 204) argument that "space and place are never just the physicality of plans and bricks and mortar," but "products of our social interactions and imaginations," which we construct "in a constant negotiation with each other." Space and identity constructions are reciprocal. Massey (1998) has shown that this is particularly true for age identities. This correspondence is striking when looking at spatial ordering within populations, for example, which individuals are allowed on a playground vs. a cinema or bar, and which are not. As Massey notes, "indeed the very drawing of age lines and the definition of the spaces where particular age groups are allowed is part of the process of defining an age group in the first place. The control of spatiality is part of the process of defining the social category of 'youth' itself" (Massey 1998, 129). Massey's argument of reciprocity thus helped me to analyze how these particular teenagers' identity constructions and their typical performances were related to specific locations in the city of Shanghai.

In summary, in addition to focusing on cultural identity negotiations and youths' age-specific perspectives, my third theoretical and methodological focus analyzes expatriate youths' everyday spatial practices and their (dis)engagement with the "local" to find out what role "place" plays in their lives on the move. This is not an attempt to understand culture geographically. Rather, by following approaches in post-global ethnography, I aim to highlight how these teenagers embed different global elements in a host of particularities. Examining physical experiences of particular places in Shanghai provides a foundation for the overall experience of mobility that this ethnography traces.

The structure of this book

Paul's story exemplifies how entangled expatriate youths' positions toward their cultural identities can be. To gain a detailed understanding of such processes of positioning and forms of belonging, this ethnography will illustrate international youths' subjective and collective experiences and ways of managing migration processes. It will chronologically delineate the expatriate students' experiences of the decision to move, their arrival, ways of life and how they rationalize their stay, as well as the moment of leaving and moving on. Following this central narrative, the transit space of Shanghai will unfold successively, affording insights into its various spaces and meanings for expatriate youths. This book will also highlight how the majority of the teenagers in Shanghai understand it as a temporary or transitory space, and a liminal phase in their lives, or, as my seven-

teen-year-old interviewee Giovanni, who had been living in Shanghai for three years at the time of the interview, described it: "You are only here for a temporary period; like a long vacation." This book will follow, capture, and conceptualize this experience of "passing through," of transient emplacement.

To understand this experience in more depth, my ethnography will center on three main aspects, the theoretical foundations of which I have laid out in this introduction: the process of cultural identity negotiation, the age-specific experience of expatriation, and the role of places in a life on the move. This book therefore seeks answers to the following questions: How can we understand these mobile youths in terms of cultural identity? How do youths experience the move to Shanghai and how does their age shape that experience? And, finally, what roles do specific places and the city of Shanghai play in their globally connected lives? In addressing these questions, the individual chapters will focus on various aspects of the lives of young expatriates.

Part I, "Getting Acquainted," introduces the international youths whose lifestyles and world views I examine. It also depicts how I, as a researcher, approached and encountered expatriate students in Shanghai. The part opens with a summary of the general situation and size of the expatriate communities in Shanghai. Insights into the daily routines of international school life and portrayals of two peer groups follow, before I introduce the individual experiences of four expatriate teenagers.

Part II, "Leaving," provides the youths' retrospectives of the circumstances that led to their relocation to Shanghai. Chapter 1 shows that many of the teenagers felt they were denied an active role in the decision-making process regarding the move and were often reluctant or initially even against the idea of moving abroad. Connected to discussions about leaving, Chapter 2 delineates the emotional challenges of moving to Shanghai. Based on the students' commentary, it identifies their "culture shock," their reaction to an unfamiliar urban environment, new sensory impressions, and a lack of friends and extended family, as well as problems within the family related to the move. The different experiences of youths all underline that the times of leaving and arriving—or what Ahmed, Castañeda, Fortier, and Sheller (2003) call "uprootings"—are highly emotional.

Part III, "Arriving," describes students' everyday practices upon arrival in Shanghai and their agency in making Shanghai their new home and community. Chapter 1 presents different students' ways of making sense of their new urban environment, not just in terms of navigation, and sensorial experiences, but also in terms of positioning themselves within the city. It demonstrates that managing the city means managing everyday life and the experience of migration, for instance by learning how to navigate between spaces of everyday practices and consumption, by giving spaces a social meaning, or by dividing Shanghai into familiar areas and "the city." Chapter 2 is concerned with practices and notions of home. After providing a detailed description of expatriate housing spaces—gated communities—

it identifies youths' small-scale home-making practices, such as room decorating or family dinners, as well as larger processes of locating "home(s)" in their transnational networks. It demonstrates that, due to the expatriate teenagers' experiences of mobility, "home" is a fluid concept with no single location and is simultaneously tied to various places, items, and people. It becomes evident that making and (re)imagining home(s), or collecting material goods to produce a sense of belonging, helps these teenagers to manage feelings of loneliness. For a deeper understanding of these practices and the notion of "home," the chapter draws on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) concept of the rhizome. Chapter 3 examines the spaces of international schools and their critical roles as important nodes of the expatriate communities in Shanghai. The schools are sites for the continuous everyday routine of expatriate youths, as well as the place for meeting new friends and for engaging in various leisure activities. Chapter 3 also identifies how these schools underpin certain narratives of what it means to be an expatriate and illustrates how they foster the development of collective identities and provide a sense of community for many of the students and their families. Conversations with students also reveal that their perspective of being enrolled at an international school is linked to the interdependent feelings of privilege and pressure.

Part IV, "Living," zooms in on particular age-specific spatial and social practices and foregrounds the youths' efforts to create their own spaces. Discussions on age identities in Chapter 1 and ethnographic evidence from nightlife practices in Chapter 2 underline how the construction of collective age identities and related spaces are crucial for teenagers to gain meaning and agency in their migration experience. Chapter 3 provides a specific example of a teenage hangout spot close to the school campus which they refer to as "the shop"—a little street with eateries, a snack shop, and pool tables. This small alley constitutes an "open space" (Hassenpflug 2009, 31–33) in the city, which is shaped by the habits and economic interests of the shop-owners, as well as by the youths' own agency and interests. Here local Chinese shop-owners, customers, and expatriate youths can meet. For the youths, most importantly, the shop provides an everyday space that, unlike the gated communities or the international schools where they spend most of their time, is not characterized by explicit behavioral expectations or rules. Chapter 4 investigates the teenagers' relations to China and Shanghai's local citizens. Based on discussions with the young expatriates on the issue of "integration," the chapter highlights how the youths accept or even strengthen the exclusion of "China" from their everyday spaces. It also shows how many of the expatriate youths experience their physical difference as whites, and how this promotes a preference for locations in Shanghai that are mainly occupied or frequented by whites. It then demonstrates how the teenagers' lack of interaction with Chinese youths and the experience of special (and often preferential) treatment by Chinese citizens lead to their feeling like "guests" in China.

Part V, "Moving On," first presents the "fateful moment" (Giddens 1991, 112–114) of leaving Shanghai. It investigates the graduation festivities at a German school as a rite of passage (Van Gennep [1960] 1992) that prepares the students for their farewell and the transition to new social positions. The collective celebrations help the students to work through their emotions about leaving—an amalgamation of sadness, anxiety, and anticipation of what is to come. The last chapter summarizes the various facets of privileged migration experienced by these young expatriates and offers initial glimpses into their earliest experiences after leaving Shanghai.

In a larger context, the youths' perspectives on their own lives and the experience of moving and living in expatriate communities that this ethnography captures, aim to contribute to an understanding of the interdependence and contradictions between the aspired flexibility of twenty-first century identities and the rigidity of cultural divisions based on nationality, ethnicity, gender, and class that are so apparent in our world.