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Going Global: A Contrast Ethnography of New Cosmopolitan Elites and their World Schools, in Beijing and New York City

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PhD Sociology

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Signed Declaration

This is to declare that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Jennifer Ann Lang Kirkwood
Glasgow, 18 August 2022

ABSTRACT

World Schools are examples of an emergent category of elite schooling guided by the pursuit of creating global citizens as a key educational aim. They provide a cosmopolitan, globally minded education. This new form of independent schooling, recently created institutions found in global cities around the world, offers an expensive and privileged fee-paying primary and secondary education to the children of the new economic and global elite. Interested in the production of educational ideals, and by focusing on reinvigorating certain distinctive cosmopolitan values, these schools develop an educated cosmopolitan elite that live, work, and aim to thrive in the twenty-first century.

My research conceives of these world schools as sites that allow exploration of elite class (re)production, power, and cosmopolitanism in an age of high globalization. This research draws from studies of cosmopolitanism and studies of elites and education to explore where, how, and why elite parents use world schools as an essential component of their child's being and becoming a worthy, meritous elite. Drawing contrast between two cases of world school, two cases of cosmopolitan elite, one in New York City and the other in Beijing, this dissertation fractures the powerful universal narratives of cosmopolitanism, reorienting exploration of its nature and value. As such, this research recognises cosmopolitanism as an aspirational, normative and strategic concept that is rooted and given life within the social mobilities and (re)production of the new global elite. Using theories of class privilege and its (re)production I draw attention to the production of elite cosmopolitanism and the confluence of its discursive value and associated dispositions. By viewing elite cosmopolitanism as parental aspirations and as educational strategy this thesis explores the nature and production of the new global elite in those terms.

Through ethnographic methods this research shows families and institutions engaged in the pursuit and definition of themselves as worthy, meritous and powerful cosmopolitan elites, within and through world schools. In both New York and Beijing, I provide an insider account of the familial and institutional (re)production strategies of the new cosmopolitan elite. As a result, abstractions of cosmopolitanism become specific and gritty instantiations serving real life motives, emotions and beliefs. And this academically ill-defined group become parents, with faces and children and security lanyards that give them access to luxurious world schools, where real world goals and expectations are pursued within materially privileged circumstances. This dissertation speaks ethnographically to the ways these new schools negotiate relationships with voracious parents and engage in the daily, messy work of ensuring young learners thrive. All the while, world schools actively reassert cosmopolitan ideals, both internally and externally. As a result, I present the cosmopolitanism of these families and schools in two forms; as reflecting elite worldviews and aspirations for freedom, as strategic cosmopolitanism acutely leveraging notions of inclusion and, as cosmopolitan conditioning of young people through which a core set of attributes reflect a selective cultural openness. So, while elites in both cities commit to the educational ideals of cosmopolitanism this research contrasts two cases to show the ways in which they negotiate and construct a version that is all their own. This research draws attention to the pluralities and specificities of these two forms of elite cosmopolitanism. And, in doing so, I show what it means for the new cosmopolitan elite to be, “Going global” with their choice of World School.

LAY SUMMARY

This research explores two cases of World School one in Beijing and the other, New York. I explore the aspirations of newly elite parents and the social worlds of these globally oriented schools to consider how and why a cosmopolitan education is considered worthy and strategic as part of elite (re)production and distinction in a globalising world.

As a result, I draw attention to the pluralities, specificities and normative aspects of two formulations of elite cosmopolitanism; aspirational and strategic. And, in doing so, I explore what it means for the new cosmopolitan elite to be “Going global” with their choice of World School.

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1. Introduction

Manhattan World School, 2012

Manhattan World School (MWS) opened in 2012 in Chelsea. Arguably the most ambitious educational event in New York City for years, the vision of the school claimed to be unique in concept and execution. Not an international school, MWS called itself a Global, World School, with a vision extending far beyond New York. It's site in Manhattan was therefore not simply a school but the Flagship campus for a World School with a proposed collection of twenty further campuses across Asia, South America and Europe to be built year-on-year "over a decade or so." In 2011 the school's prospectus brochure asked parents to "Imagine…" the possibilities.

> *"Imagine that a student in Middle and Upper School spends (during a portion of several summers) a number of six-to-eight-week periods studying at campuses in Buenos Aires, Paris, Delhi and Cairo. Imagine that in Upper School that student deepens his grasp of the Mandarin he has been studying since pre-kindergarten by spending a full semester at the MWS campuses in Beijing…"*

> *"Imagine that a career opportunity requires family to move from New York to Hong Kong or London for two to four years in order to gain important international experience. Rather than going through the trauma of finding a new school, the children would be automatically admitted to the world school in the new city – as well as back at the World School in New York upon return. No need to "miss a beat" because the educational design is completely consistent from campus to campus."*

Offering an "authentic global citizenship" and intending to prepare students for "global life" the MWS Mission Statement printed in the matte brochure promised to graduate students, *"…at ease beyond their borders…and, most importantly, architects of lives that transcend the ordinary."* Using a for-profit model, securing $75 million of capital investment and launching a fifteen-grade school with approximately 700 students on its first day in September 2012, the school's ambitious vision generated a fair amount of media coverage and was not short of parent interest. Some of the more enticing media headlines included:

> "Chelsea School Will Offer Avenue to Get Global Education"
> (The Villager, Feb 2011)
> "The Best School $75 million Can Buy"
> (The New York Times, July 2011)
> "Move Over Dalton" (The Economist, Sept 2012)
> "Private School Goes All In With Tech"
> (Wall Street Journal, Nov 2012)

My research began to formulate around 2011, with the knowledge that a new school was opening in Manhattan. This research stems from this and a broader phenomenon, an emerging, new form of elite education called World Schools. Such schools serve the super-rich and claim / aim to define, develop and project cosmopolitan education – forms of elite cosmopolitanism – that is "world class" and offers ideal preparation for the globally oriented elite. These are new schools about which little is known with regards to lived experience, institutional relationships and the families that support and drive their existence. This leads to a flurry of questions for better understanding their aims and operation; Are these schools aiming to achieve the same ends and outcomes, through their cosmopolitan education? Are world schools enacting and making a cosmopolitan education that is similar, regardless of location? Do they see "the world" the

same way? Do they have similar orientations towards what it means to be elite and cosmopolitan? My research began with an intention to better understand and explore the schools and social worlds of the elite families within.

World Schools, as I define them, are examples of an emergent category of elite schooling guided by the pursuit of creating global citizens as a key educational aim. They seek to provide cosmopolitan, globally minded education. This new form of independent schooling, found in global cities around the world, offers an expensive and privileged fee-paying primary and secondary education. Interested in the production of educational ideals, and by focusing on reinvigorating certain distinctive cosmopolitan values, these schools develop an educated global elite that live, work and aim to thrive in the twenty-first century. My research conceives of these world schools as sites that allow exploration of elite class (re)production, power and cosmopolitanism in an age of high globalization.

International schools and internationally-oriented forms of education are experiencing unprecedented, exponential growth (Steiner-Khamsi et al, 2018). The number of international schools has grown from 50 in the 1960's to over 7,000 by 2018 (Dvir et al, 2018), with projections of growth suggesting 16,500 schools by 2028 and estimates of 9.7 million students (Brummitt & Keeling 2013, Brummitt, 2021). In turn, the value of international and transnational forms of education is the subject of much research. At times this has led to the confluence of elite education, internationalisation and public-private partnerships and the International Baccalaureate (IB) in national systems, transnational accreditation (Steiner-Khamsi et al, 2018).

Normative cosmopolitan positions are a central feature of the school's self-promotion and play a role in the legitimisation of the world school

experience, as these young people are successfully positioned within elite higher education in the US and English-speaking world. Significantly, these world schools uphold cosmopolitan discourse through their globally-oriented education. Yet, whether elite or otherwise, international education, visible through international and world schools, arguably draws from a banal form of globalism (Szerszynski et al, 2002). In such terms, it is often versions of exotic places, notions of effortless mobility and images of a memetic blue earth that characterise a global view from space, or at least from a privileged space and yet, from no-particular place on the planet.

Global imagery was particularly evident in the promotional materials and mission of the New York world school. Rather than rating how well or to what extent they were achieving their aims, something the school continuously asked of themselves, my research was interested in understanding why and how such aims were pursued. In Beijing too, the promotion of a cosmopolitan education, albeit not-for-profit, provided to a local economic elite gave rise to questions about the aims and motivations for a radical alternative to schooling, for those families during this time period. Recognising the elite, fee-paying nature of these schools, their locations and globally-oriented mission, I was resigned to look more closely at this kind of institution; offering a cosmopolitan education and globally-oriented space for elite families who, in practice, were rooted firmly in one place and city.

The most recent literature surveys the increasing trend of globalised and international education as the domain of local rather than “expat” families (Bunnell, 2022). Literature overwhelmingly shows that international/ globalised education is now a popular route for global middle classes (GMC) , amongst which discussion of their school choices and outcomes related to higher education is the prominent focus (Maxwell, 2018. Poole 2020, Machin, 2017). The motives for such choices are frequently assumed

and limited to the instrumental outcomes of university acceptance, which is framed as transnational achievement (Kenway & Koh, 2013., McCarthy et al, 2014., Loh, 2016.) or, in the later work in this area, are framed through the "co-constitutive nature of local, national and global" distinction (Higginson et al, 2019). This opens a fruitful tension in the literature between the local, national and global formulations and fields of power; I draw on this tension in my analysis of elite cosmopolitanism and World Schools and ultimately argue that an insider account and understanding of motivations for and enactments of a world school education are required, using a conceptual framing of elite and actually occurring cosmopolitanism. In light of this literature, my focus on motivations for, and subsequently diverse formulations of, elite cosmopolitanism make a unique contribution to the field.

In areas when cosmopolitanism has been explored, debates emerge as to the nature of "authentic" (Howard & Freeman, 2020), "rich" or "soft" (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2016:781) levels of cosmopolitan engagement. As such, the cosmopolitan orientation of teachers, curriculum and educational outcomes/destinations are amongst the most popular foci in the field at the time this research commenced (Kenway et al, 2014., Weenink, 2008, Waters, 2009., Liu et al, 2014., Kenway et al, 2013 and Kenway & Fahey, 2014). I see this as a limitation and an area where my research, again, contributes. I recognise that in the literature cosmopolitanism is too frequently measured against, or in light of, normative Western conceptions of mobility, liberal cultural openness and celebration of diversity and social solidarity (Rizvi, 2005).. By focusing on whether or not, or the extent to which, forms of education/action are/are not cosmopolitan there is an inherent blindness to the "actually occurring" formulations of contemporary cosmopolitanism and an inherent bias towards Western/Northern formulations of the cosmopolitan. My research builds on the work of Guerreo-Farías (2020) and Poole (2020) as those who problematises the

seemingly universal presentation of Global Citizenship Education through that which is happening rather than imagined ideals. Recognising then, but not limited or bound to these educational and moral ideals, my thesis focuses instead on the "actually occurring" formulation of elite cosmopolitanism, as part of the processes of elite (re)production. In light of this literature my focus on motivations for, and elite formulations of, cosmopolitanism make a unique contribution towards understanding how the ideals of "global solidarity and social cohesion" come to adhere to elite values and forms of distinction.

Building upon existing literature I consider the educational destinations and outcomes of the young people from these schools. I recognise the contemporary trends and domination of Western universities (US/UK) as sites of privilege, power and status. These universities are considered part of the elite global gaze and form one part of the goal on which the cosmopolitan strategy is based. This skewed trend for Western, elite and English-speaking universities and the Anglified nature of international education more broadly, reflects a further blindness in the theorising of the field. It is my hope that my research contributes to noticing and adjusting this blindness. In the most recent literature of late 2021 and 2022, Maxwell, Howard and Koh have started the work of temporally and geo-politically situating their analysis of elite education and cosmopolitanism, allowing for pluralities to emerge more readily. I hope to contribute to and build upon this work.

This research considers the motives for a cosmopolitan education and the corresponding distinctions of elite cosmopolitanism; what I identify as the cosmopolitan habitus of the elite parents and their motivations for a World School education. This contribution will hopefully push the academic thinking of "elite schools in globalising circumstances" as sites of interest, beyond their existence as purely instrumental machines, concerned with

“staying ahead of the game” in terms of university applications and labour market transitions (Kenway & Fahey, 2015:177).

Most importantly then, in ways that recognise and question the value placed on globally elite Western universities, insights from this thesis provide more than numbers and trends related to international or elite education; a common feature of work in this area. I achieve this through the methodological choice of cases and contrasting of two geo-politically diverse cases of elite World Schools. This research speaks to the mores and values of the parents, (whom I term, the new cosmopolitan elite) and from the contrast of two cases, fractures notions of the seemingly universal notions of Western cosmopolitanism. Instead, I provide insight to the pluralities of elite cosmopolitan status in our globalising world and contribute to our broader understanding of “the game” that structures elite cosmopolitan habitus. As such, this thesis contributes to questions in the field, such as, “What shapes the formation of elites across local, national and global spaces?” (Maxwell, 2015) and offers distinctions within contemporary formulations and diverse forms of elite cosmopolitanism.

Simply put, the research problem that drove this research came from an emerging, new form of elite education called World Schools. Such schools serve the super-rich and claim/ aim to define, develop and project cosmopolitan education that is world class and offers ideal preparation for the globally-oriented elite. These were new schools about which we knew little (prior to my research). Questions from the outset included: Are these schools (located around the world and not corporately or institutionally related to each other) really aiming to achieve the same thing? Are they really enacting and making a cosmopolitan education that is similar, regardless of location? Do they see “the world” the same way? Do they have similar orientations towards what it means to be elite and

cosmopolitan? My research began with an intention to better understand and explore the schools and social worlds of the elite families within.

Research questions

1. How and why did these schools develop cosmopolitan education for newly-moneyed and globally-oriented elites?
2. How did the elite parents enact and justify a cosmopolitan habitus?
3. What distinctions might we recognise between geo-politically diverse formulations of elite cosmopolitanism?

I explored these questions within two world schools; in New York and Beijing, between 2013 and 2016. World schools were considered for their production of cosmopolitan education, representing the (re)production of a new kind of elite cosmopolitanism that valorizes globalization. These schools were viewed as instantiations of an emergent set of values, priorities and practices that characterize what I theorise as a new global cosmopolitan elite. Two ethnographies then, situated in world schools, accounted for the social worlds and aspirations of the global elite families engaged with the schools. In the pursuit of a "world sociology" (Calhoun, 2015) these two ethnographic cases were used to form a contrasting analysis; each forming a commentary on the other. In doing so, this research is able to fracture such notions of cosmopolitan universality as deployed in the work of Appiah (2006, 2008) and instead draw attention to the located, culturally inflected and embodied ways in which cosmopolitanism is produced and valued.

Throughout my research I recognise cosmopolitanism as an aspirational and strategic concept that is rooted and given life within the social mobility and elite cultural (re)production of the new global elite; where it is borne of, produced within and refined by parental biographies, institutional

experiences and individual negotiations of the young people. These ethnographies afforded the opportunity for "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of in-progress production of cultural values and day-to-day negotiation of priorities amongst these families and schools. In practice, this meant I was privy to the in-progress thinking and strategizing that drove parents and schools, understanding their practices, values, actions, attributes and characteristics and contextualising their beliefs, at particular moments before outcomes of their world school education were a certainty.

This research therefore addresses several gaps in existing literature. Firstly, through its cosmopolitan methodological approach, this contrast ethnography acknowledges that understandings of global social change are enriched through, "trying to get inside another setting" (Calhoun, 2015:121) and substantively then this research aims to edge away from any Western domination in cosmopolitan studies. I will also be building upon and contributing to ethnographic, insider accounts of education of elites (Cookson & Persell,198), Khan 2012 and Gaztambide-Fernandez 2009).

Secondly, this research begins to address the call for greater insight into the formation of new elites in the formative stage of childhood (Abbink and Salverda, 2013) and adolescence, by closely and contextually interpreting the lived realities of the young people in world schools as they are shaped and themselves negotiate the demands and expectations of being and becoming elite in a global world, adding to recent literature (Khan, 2016). Most substantially and uniquely, this research provides an insight into the ways in which global elites manifest their material and cultural contexts in order to (re)produce privilege for their offspring in a globalising world in normative and embodied ways. In turn, this research hopes to reorient recent discussions around the role of education and cosmopolitan capital in ways that draws attention to the multi-layered, perpetually evolving and

responsive ways in which elites and their offspring use places, institutions and ideologies to legitimise and (re)produce their privilege.

Thesis Outline

This thesis then, unlike some elite studies, is not a retrospective history that traces college attendance, job titles or qualifications. Instead, it is an insider account of the doing and making of young privileged people who are being groomed and positioned by their elite families within a cosmopolitan framework. This work provides an insight to the anxious, strategizing, intergenerational and institutional workings that takes place in the early years of primary and secondary schooling where a cosmopolitan education is produced and lived. This thesis begins with a conceptual framework chapter where I introduce the frameworks that supported the research.

My central contribution is that I study an emerging type of elite school, called World Schools. I draw upon a contrast ethnography of how two such schools, one located in New York and the other in Beijing, cultivates “elite cosmopolitanism” as a distinction of the school. Using Bourdieu’s theoretical tools this research shines light on the specific capitals the schools wish students to accumulate and the relationship between these institutional aims and the parent’s cosmopolitan habitus and aspirations for their children.

The research “problem” is identified through by the presentation of a new form of schooling about which little is known; the starting point for my PhD. The “problem” is further articulated through a review of literature – engaging with the recent surge of academic interest in elites, education and class-making practices in a globalising world. The most recent literature surveys the increasing trend of globalised and international education as the domain of local rather than “expat” families (Bunnell, 2022). Literature

overwhelmingly shows that international/ globalised education is now a popular route for global middle classes (GMC) , amongst which discussion of their school choices and outcomes related to higher education is the prominent focus (Maxwell, 2018. Poole 2020, Machin, 2017). The motives for such choices are frequently assumed and limited to the instrumental outcomes of university acceptance, which is framed as transnational achievement (Kenway & Koh, 2013., McCarthy et al, 2014., Loh, 2016.) or, in the later work in this area, are framed through the "co-constitutive nature of local, national and global" distinction (Higginson et al, 2019). This opens a fruitful tension in the literature between the local, national and global formulations and fields of power; I draw on this tension in my analysis of elite cosmopolitanism and World Schools and ultimately argue that an insider account and understanding of motivations for and enactments of a world school education are required, using a conceptual framing of elite and actually occurring cosmopolitanism. In light of this literature, my focus on motivations for, and subsequently diverse formulations of, elite cosmopolitanism make a unique contribution to the field.

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Building upon existing literature I consider the educational destinations and outcomes of the young people from these schools. I recognise the contemporary trends and domination of Western universities (US/UK) as sites of privilege, power and status. These universities are considered part of the elite global gaze and form one part of the goal on which the cosmopolitan strategy is based. This skewed trend for Western, elite and English-speaking universities and the Anglified nature of international education more broadly, reflects a further blindness in the theorising of the field. It is my hope that my research contributes to noticing and adjusting this blindness. In the most recent literature of late 2021 and 2022, Maxwell, Howard and Koh have started the work of temporally and geo-politically situating their analysis of elite education and cosmopolitanism, allowing for pluralities to emerge more readily. I hope to contribute to and build upon this work.

However, I go further by considering the motives for a cosmopolitan education and the corresponding distinctions of elite cosmopolitanism; what

I identify as the cosmopolitan habitus of the elite parents and their motivations for a World School education. This contribution will hopefully push the academic thinking of "elite schools in globalising circumstances" as sites of interest, beyond their existence as purely instrumental machines, concerned with "staying ahead of the game" in terms of university applications and labour market transitions (Kenway & Fahey, 2015:177).

Chapter three is a methodological chapter in which I outline my global ethnography in both Beijing and New York world schools as interpretive research, drawing upon the ethnographic imperative of "being there" (Geertz, 1974) as a way to understand the motives and meanings of the social worlds I studied. I discuss the ethical challenges of researching within and across two sites; working with parents, staff and young people in differing cultural and linguistic contexts, as well as reflecting on some of the strengths and limitations of my findings and approach to research.

Chapters four, five and six are substantive data chapters. Four and Five consider Cosmopolitan Aspirations, locating and rooting the emergence of the new global elites, the parents of the world schools. I show the production of elite cosmopolitanism as rooted in places through the influences of global capitalism, geo-social histories and the personal biographies and educational aspirations of the world school parents. I show how they came to be located in both Beijing (Chapter Four) and New York (Chapter Five) and the ways in which those locations shape and are home to the cosmopolitan aspirations of parents. Cosmopolitan aspirations then, are shown as the manifestation of parent's concepts of freedom; both at once global and deeply located.

Chapter six will examine the Institutional Cosmopolitan Strategy; the ways in which world schools support production and promotion of elite cosmopolitanism. Considering the institutionally negotiated layer of

production I draw back from the seemingly shared end goal of both world schools; to have students accepted to elite higher education in the US. While this shared goal remains substantively true, instead, this chapter unpicks the ways in which the value of such an educational outcome and gaze towards elite English-speaking universities are in fact part of a locally defined cosmopolitan strategy. As such, acceptances at elite English-speaking universities are not similarly valued across the two sites. Cosmopolitan strategies then are plural and speak to the production of institutional cultural capital with aspects of international "visibility" but, in ways that are neither universal, nor "global" in terms of scale/scope, but in fact only take on substantial, dependent value, when located in their appropriate local and national context.

Finally, this thesis concludes with Chapter Seven, a reflection on the nature of elite cosmopolitanism. The distinct characters that emerge in the pursuit of elite legitimisation and power in these two world schools provides evidence of diverse cosmopolitanism. This contrastive ethnographic data captured a moment in the lives and efforts of the newly-moneyed elites, at a moment where the parents were "all in", acting and strategizing on behalf of their children to construct and secure cosmopolitan capital. I find this significant in the study of elites because too often analysis of elite (re)production is undertaken in retrospect and is covered by the veneer of institutional membership and legitimacy; which obfuscates and smooths the anxieties, precarity and decisions made by parents and young people at a time when they didn't know how the "story" was going to end. What resulted was insight into the values and beliefs that oriented the super-rich in times of action; not just the institutional associations they desired for their children, but the cosmopolitan habitus of these parents. What I managed to "get at" was a sense of who these people were and how they see themselves. When taken alongside their personal biographies and their commitment to and relationship with the World School, I find that

formulations of elite cosmopolitanism can serve a common institutional goal, that of strategic positioning for entry to elite higher education in the United States and UK. Yet, those same formulations can be understood and held differently; that is to say there are varied formulations of elite cosmopolitanism, based on personal biographies, national and global experiences and orientations. While the World Schools, the educational institutions, may benefit from the projection of cosmopolitan virtues (Rizvi, 2005) the embodied, lived and experienced versions speak more plainly to the aspects of distinction that matter most to the holder. This research therefore supports the arguments made by Howard & Maxwell (2021b) that notions of cosmopolitanism are understood and practiced quite variously. This research also builds upon the suggestions from Howard (2022) that as a global-orientation, cosmopolitanism is informed by, "maintaining attachment to the values, norms and customs of their origins."

My research findings show the production and nature of this new kind of elite cosmopolitanism is diverse, contextualised and driven by an interest in legitimising elite power through familial and institutional and inter-personal negotiation strategies, ways of negotiation that are at once; global, national and local. Substantively, this research reveals a hidden demographic of elite cosmopolitan Chinese who have in turn, given cause to return to and extend dominant understandings that, "students must go to the West to advance their privilege and power" (Howards, 2022:8). My research has shown that while students and parents strategize towards an Anglophone university, their doing so is purely part of a strategy, and is considered a risky one. This finding mutes notions of "West is best" and instead, suggests, "West is second-best, but it will do" when compared to the highly-regarded and widely revered Chinese elite universities. Given this contrasting insight to the production of elite cosmopolitanism can we begin to imagine a historical, contextual life for" the cosmopolitan"? Once, "the prerogative of the European elites" (Bertron, 2016, Cousin & Chauvin,

2021) but now, produced for distinction by newly-moneyed and cosmopolitan elites in Beijing and New York, each with their own characteristics and priorities. By exploring the (re)production of the new global elite in both Beijing and New York City, my work has shown the class practices of elite families, the establishment and networking of institutions and the habitus of cosmopolitan merit; produced and negotiated by the parents in these families. What emerges from these insights is a diverse rather than singular, "globalised class" (Cousin & Chauvin, 2021). Not "ever more singularly educated" (Ibid) but rather, formulating a sense of who they are and should be.

Significantly, these perspectives on elite (re)production provide insight to the actually occurring forms of elite cosmopolitanism. The provincialisation of cosmopolitanism is made visible through the parent's engagement with the World School.

2. Going Global: World Schools, Elite (Re)Production & Cosmopolitanism

World Schools and the elite families that populate them provide this research with instantiations of cosmopolitanism that valorise globalisation. These global elites, their children and their world schools are recognised, not just as representative of "the 1%", but illustrative of the contemporary processes and nature of elite-class (re)production in our globalising world; their attempts to generate symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) through cosmopolitan education and to define and profit from their formulations of that which is conceptually universal. As the makers of global forms of "distinction" (Bourdieu, 1984) through cosmopolitan lifestyles and education, I view these elites as cultural producers and "…societal front runners… the loci of dynamics and change…" (Abbink, 2013:1).

This chapter will provide an overview of the concepts associated to this interpretive exploration of world schools. This research hinges on several aspects of relational analysis and dialogue; matters of class, cosmopolitanism and globalisation. As such, this research tacks a conceptual route between matters of family and institution, the global and provincial, the universal and the plural, the material and the symbolic. I identify and define a new cosmopolitan elite as products of particular moments of global capitalism and situate them within the processes of class (re)production. First I define the World Schools at the heart of this study before identifying and theorising the newly-moneyed and globally oriented cosmopolitan elites who populate and support these institutions.

In this chapter I then outline a commitment to understanding the practices, motivations and outcomes of class (re)production amongst the new global elite using Bourdieu's conceptual tools. Recognising cosmopolitanism as a

cultural dimension of globalisation, this research explores the ways in which embodied and institutionalised forms of capital may be produced. I recognise that while cosmopolitanism is a seemingly universal concept it is actually the product of very specific social conditions (Calhoun, 2003); it is imagined, enacted and leveraged in elite families and world schools who benefit from the instantiations as much as the rhetorical notions portraying them as "citizens of the world." I argue that cosmopolitanism is therefore not an abstract "solution" to globalisation as some would wish, but rather a product of it, constructed within its processes and imbalances and in turn embedding new provincialized global inequalities. As such, I explore existing scholarship on cosmopolitanism and consider the ways in which the largely normative conceptions may play a role within the real world instantiations and elite cultural production. The project is all about the relational and layered ways in which the elite cultural dimensions of our globalising world are produced.

As a new economic elite define how the world should be and their place within it, so the nature of inequalities in our global world takes form; fracturing cosmopolitan abstractions of interconnectedness and inclusion. In recognising such locally-informed orientations and cultural production, I situate and ground my analysis of this global phenomenon. I emphasize the agency, nature and production of these global forms of power. In a Bourdieuian spirit, this research considers the relational nature of class and pursuit of legitimisation, drawing on the conceptual tools of field, habitus and capital. I consider the ways in which the production of cosmopolitan capital rests upon and is informed by families' wealth and social position. Focus is herein given to elites and to world schools as sites of socialisation and a "productive locus of a particular habitus" (Bourdieu, 1989). It is through these choices; to theorise and locate global elites in world schools, to recognise these as instantiations of cosmopolitanism and, to explore the

nature and production of symbolic capital, that this research provides substance by which to understand the nature of our globalising world.

World Schools

World Schools build upon the existence of international schools. Hayden & Thompson (2016) present three types of international schooling: those which assume the traditional purpose of international schools which cater to mobile expats, those which "ideologically" pursue an international curriculum (Lee et al, 2016) and a third type, international schools that cater to wealthy national elites. World Schools arguably fall across the final two categories proposed by Hayden and Thompson. World School in Beijing is a private Chinese school, in a category of its own. This school was founded by a private Chinese national and had permission, unique until 2014, to educate local families in an international curriculum from the early primary stages to the International Baccalaureate diploma. While new international schools are part of a growing trend (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013) the World School in the very centre of Beijing and the World School in Manhattan cater to a particularly elite and privileged group. As such. the two schools in this study offer unique characteristics, worthy of note; their student-family make-up, their globally oriented curriculum and their geographic location. The matter of a national or international curriculum is pertinent since, traditionally, international schools offered expats the national curriculum of their home country, transposed to a new location and this type of school continues to exist. In some cases, the export of an English-style of schooling has travelled well. The curricula of the world schools in Beijing is based on the International Baccalaureate. In New York, the curriculum, "World Course" was designed for the school by a Harvard professor and team. It is not my intention to over-state the influence of a curriculum, but to identify some of the globally-minded aspects that oriented and characterized the schools; enough that the parents were drawn to, and.

found resonance in their form and mission.

The first world school of interest in this study was based in New York.

As a newly moneyed elite define how the world should be and their place within it, so the nature of inequalities in our global world takes form; fracturing cosmopolitan abstractions of interconnectedness and inclusion. In recognising such locally-informed orientations and cultural production, I situate and ground my analysis of this global phenomenon. I emphasize the agency, nature and production of these global forms of power. In a Bourdieuian spirit, this research considers the relational nature of class and pursuit of legitimisation, drawing on the conceptual tools of field, habitus and capital. I consider the ways in which the production of cosmopolitan capital rests upon and is informed by families' wealth and social position. Focus is herein given to elites and to world schools as sites of socialisation and a "productive locus of a particular habitus" (Bourdieu, 1989). It is through these choices; to theorise and locate global elites in world schools, to recognise these as instantiations of cosmopolitanism and, to explore the nature and production of symbolic capital, that this research provides substance by which to understand the nature of our globalising world.

Globalisation of Education

The internationalisation of education and the impact, specifically on elite education, is the focus of this research. This work therefore contributes to discussion on the globalisation of elite education and the education of elites in world schools. A recent study by Kenway et al, (2017a) considered the ways in which elite schools choreographed class in national and transnational ways. Their study was undertaken as a multi-sited ethnography and spanned seven schools, each established in the nineteenth century, under colonial rule by the British Empire. Their study

sought to offer commentary within areas of “major silence” regarding the conceptualisation of schools as influenced by and negotiating social distinctions within global forces. Engaging with schools in former-colonial nations, with institutions which were each over 100 years old, this work sought to understand how such schools “best capitalise on contemporary globalizing circumstances” (2017a:9). Viewing their conjunction of schools as operating on a “global stage” their work offers some insights to the global and cosmopolitan discourses at play, while these schools reshape their curricula and articulate their markers of prestige. Yet, largely, the young people in my World Schools are not, until college and university at least, participating in the flurry of transnational mobilities that characterise many studies in this area (Kenway et al, 2017b, Pearce 2011, Ball & Nikita 2014, Findlay et al, 2012, Hayden et al 2000, McCarthy & Kenway 2014) Studies investigating gap-years and study abroad programmes (Carlson et al, 2017, Snee 2013) have sought to understand the competencies and transferrable, or transnational, forms of cultural capital that result from engaging with the “other”.

New international schools are a growing trend (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013). World Schools build upon the existence of international schools. Hayden & Thompson (2016) present three types of international schooling: those which assume the traditional purpose of catering to mobile expats, those which “ideologically” pursue an international curriculum and a third type, international schools that cater to wealthy national elites. World Schools arguably combine the final two categories proposed by Hayden and Thompson. The World School in Beijing is a private Chinese school, in a category of its own. This school was founded by a private Chinese national and had permission, unique until 2014, to educate local families in an international curriculum from the early primary stages to the International Baccalaureate diploma. The Beijing World School and the Manhattan World School are both recently founded institutions, opened in 2005 and

2012 respectively and, cater to economically elite and privileged families. As such the two schools in this study offer unique characteristics; their student-family make-up, their globally-oriented curriculum and their educational approach relative to their geographic locations.

The matter of a national or international curriculum is pertinent since, traditionally, international schools offered expats the national curriculum of their home country, transposed to a new location. This type of school continues to exist. In some cases, the export of an English-style of schooling has travelled well. As with many international schools, the curricula of the world school in Beijing is based on the International Baccalaureate (IB). In New York, the curriculum, “World Course” was designed for the school by a Harvard professor and team. It is not my intention to over-state the influence of a curriculum, but to identify some of the globally-minded aspects that oriented and characterized the schools; enough that the parents were drawn to, and. found resonance in their form and mission.

There has been a confluence of cosmopolitanism with international mobility and global citizenship (Steiner-Khamsi et al, 2018). Where, through education, global citizenship is an aim of normative competencies and universal values, not actual citizenship of one or many nations (Delanty 2000, Dower & Williams 2002, Linklater 1998, Preuss, 1998 & Turner 2001). The fact that mobility can be a choice or a class-strategy is significant for this research (Maxwell & Yemini, 2019). This type of mobility-through-choice extends to giving birth in a preferred country in order to secure an advantageous citizenship or passport (Balta & Altan-Olcay, 2016). Economic resources, of course, underpin these kinds of mobility practices. And, interest in the motivations as well as the existence of such class-practices that there is a need to further explore the extent to which,

and the role that mobilities or global-orientations, perhaps involving little actual movement, play in the formation of global elites.

Cosmopolitanism has been historically associated with elite lifestyles in ways that supported travel and an international perspective; whether through the “Grand Tour” of Europe as a rite of passage, an insight to foreign industry or, as a way to understand a family’s multi-territorial chain of business (Cousin & Chauvin, 2021). The value of a cosmopolitan orientation for a young person’s future work-life has been examined by Reay et all (2007) and comparatively by Power et al (2013). Considering transnational mobility as an indicator of cosmopolitanism, they showed students attending an English elite university were more likely than those at Sciences Po, France, to consider transnational mobility as an integral aspect of their futures. Presented as a “soft currency” (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2016:781) such as cosmopolitan sensibility has been considered within elite education.

My research recognises the need to better understand these “actually existing” (Calhoun, 2002) forms of cosmopolitanism, bringing attention to the nature and production of elite cosmopolitanism as a relational, empirical and normative phenomenon, shaped within and because of our globalising world (Calhoun, 2002; Inglis, 2014; Mann, 2013). Through these instantiations of elite cosmopolitanism I sought to investigate the located, “local and particular” (Calhoun, 2002:871) ways in which cosmopolitanism was produced. I was therefore guided by the aim to understand rather than assume the nature of elite cosmopolitanism.

Significantly, these world schools uphold cosmopolitan discourse through their globally-oriented education. Yet, whether elite or otherwise, international education, visible through international and world schools,

arguably draws from a banal form of globalism (Szerszynski et al, 2002). In such terms, it is often versions of exotic places, notions of effortless mobility and images of a memetic blue earth that characterise a global view from space, or at least from a privileged space and yet, from no-particular place on the planet.

Normative cosmopolitan positions are a central feature of the school's self-promotion and play a role in the legitimisation of the world school experience. These cosmopolitan positionings seem to play a role in these institutions and in legitimising the status of these elites, as these young people are successfully positioned within elite higher education in the US and English-speaking world. However, a focus on educational outcomes and destinations alongside their promotion of so-called universal values, does not wholly illuminate the motives, means and therefore the nature of cosmopolitan cultural production taking place. Of course, matters of mobility are not exclusive to or determinants of being elite (Lui & Curran, 2020); emphasizing the question of what defines and makes one elite in a global world? Those matters of distinction are the substance of this research. If a globally oriented, cosmopolitan education at a world school is considered suitable by families of the global elite, why is that? A view on the processes rather than product, the empirical as well as the normative work, of world schools is required if we are to understand these instantiations of new, elite cosmopolitanism.

Studying Elites is the Study of Power

Studying elites is the study of power from above (Khan, 2012:362). More specifically, to study elites is to "study the control over, value of and distributions of resources" (Ibid). Indeed, a central concern of sociology is to

understand the nature of such social stratification; a task made ever more contestable within our globalising world. Here I discuss existing definitions of the global elite as largely an economic affair. In turn, I raise issue with these limited understandings. And, turning to a broader interest in their resources and sources of power, I highlight the legitimacy problem that faces the new global elite; their need to convert economic resources into cultural capital as they look to secure intergenerational reproduction. I suggest this need is what offers my research opportunities to better understand them.

During the noughties and amidst the most exaggerated globalisation narratives, a new socio-ecocnomic elite class was suggested; by Friedman, a “new global elite” (2000), and from Sklair, a “transnationalist capitalist class” (2001) (Carroll, 2010) and as if a united and group, Bauman named them, “the globals” (1998:99). It has been suggested a transnational class is emerging (Sklair 2001) and Corporate Transnationalist Elite and Billionaires (Carroll 2010) - Lillie (2021) Academic attention suggests these globals are hyper-mobile and “unconstrained by nations, national societies or communities” (Elliott:2016:141). Studies concerned with business elites and financial networks look at the “global reach” of certain networks (Hartmann, 2015), defined largely by the number of countries engaged. The “permeation” and therefore the measure of globality is seemingly found through a labelling of “foreign” CEOs working in any given country (Abbink and Salverda 2013). Academic blindnesses exist in the areas of Asian, Arab and South American elites, of which little is known (Piketty, 2010., Khan, 2012); this is an aspect of significance and one which my research aims to address. In reference to China in particular, this is an area I will speak to in my methodology chapter. But fundamentally, as I reviewed the landscape of globalisation, cosmopolitanism and elite educational scholarship, it became clear that the issue of directionality and western-

centric notions were perhaps problematic and evidenced their own blind spots when surveying the nature the of globalising world.

In more recent studies, more specific attention has been given to the nature of transnational elite wealth and lives. Rodrigo Fernandez and colleagues drew a picture of the investment networks focused on London and New York as “safe deposit box” investments (Fernandez et al, 2016). Most notably in their work was the idea that while such investments made elites’ wealth and investments transnational, the families themselves maintained a separate and fixed residential base. This small distinction allows us to consider that while elite money may be circulating the globe, such mobility is not a defacto indicator of what constitutes family life or child-rearing for the elite. Fernandez’s research and the work of Bruno Cousin and Sebastien Chauvin, in Parisian social clubs, (2014) is a helpful counterpoint to assumptions and images of a networked global elite, resonating with the works of C. Wright Mills (1956). Again, it is through the discourses and images of globalisation that much is imposed and assumed about the lifestyles, motivations and global orientations of the super-rich.

There must therefore be questions about whether and how new global elites are situated beyond the nation state (Dogan, 2003) and if so, what forms this takes and what significance that holds to the elites themselves. Schijf recognizes an “economic elite that do not necessarily operate in their native country” (2013:32-33). But, in a similar vein to the review I will undertake of cosmopolitan studies, the identification of potential ways of being, as international or globally-mobile, is not the same as exploration of actually existing social processes or consequences. Existing studies of the global elite provide a heavy corporate character, perhaps reflective of their economic status and certainly, reflective of class analysis consumed with measures of occupation as a central aspect of definition. Trends “contributing to the gradual transnational homogenization of a wealth-based

elite in terms of culture, lifestyle, accumulation practices, and overall valuation of international ties" have been most recently detailed by Cousin and Chauvin (2021:6). Further diminishing the potential of studies in this area, theoretical impositions of hyper-globalisation and disproportionate focus on geographic mobility remove any need for a located and authentic exploratory approach. The supposed freedoms of the global elite, and indeed the very nature of what is considered "genuinely global" (Ibid) by lack of national associations, will feature as a contested aspect throughout this research.

However, what is not in doubt, are the financial resources in play and the ways in which these globals are economically elite (Keister,2014); varying between the "ultra-rich" to the "truly staggering" (Ibid) amounts of their wealth. We know the global elite are typically "more diverse", entrepreneurial and internationally distributed (Khan, 2012). Data is typically historical and economic, because of the nature of taxation in many countries; analysed to show trends within and where possible, across countries. What we know from such works is that the income of top earners is increasing at rates that outweigh the gains of other groups. For example, across North America and Europe, the pay of CEOs "grew exponentially – in Europe from 40 to 300 times that of the average employee; in the US, CEOs of the 15 largest companies earned 520 times more than the average worker in 2007, up from 360 times more in 2003" (Elliott, 2016:143). Even allowing for margins of error caused by taxation rules and loopholes, Piketty and colleagues found that in countries as diverse as India, Norway, France, New Zealand and the USA, the top 1 per cent had on average between 8 to 12 times the average income (Atkinson and Piketty, 2010:650) and, for the top 0.1 per cent of eighteen countries

studied,[2] "had between 26 and 39 times the average income" (Ibid). Even accounting for the 2008 global financial crash, the most wealthy 1% (in America) increased their total net worth (Keister, 2014). And, from the latest World Inequality Report (Alveredo et al., 2018) the incomes of the 1%, 0.1%, 0.01% and 0.001% have risen at the fastest pace in China, India and Russia. Yet, when even the economic data to understand the global elite is limited (Piketty, 2014), how should we approach a sociological understanding? Do we really know who the global elite are? (Hartmann, 2015) Who are the one percent, within and across countries? And in what ways are they to be considered "essential to understanding inequality"? (Keister, 2014). Although there is evidence of an economic global elite, the questions of where to find them and how best to understand them remain; and world schools are the beginnings of an answer.

This research provides an interpretive account of how we can understand the social worlds and class reproduction of the new global elite, as refracted through their use of world schools. Most importantly for this research, economic data helps initial identification but doesn't get to any of the aspects of symbolic power, processes, or world view that drives or informs these elites. Scholarship has not kept pace with who these elites are in terms of the nature of their social power and the processes by which they produce, collate value, develop and intergenerationally promote themselves in a globalising world.

Grounding Global Elites: Matters of Class (Re)Production

Power is both material and symbolic; it is made, enacted and continually (re)enacted in relation to changing circumstances. I agree these elites hold

[2] Indonesia, Argentina, Ireland, Netherlands, India, Germany, United Kingdom, Australia, United States, Canada, Singapore, New Zealand, France, Norway, Japan, Finland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Italy and China.

a disproportionate amount of wealth. But what we don't know is if they, or how they, constitute this as symbolic power and meaningful indicators of status. Shamus Khan suggests that understanding elites is not simply about identifying resources they control, but "considering the conversion of those resources into other forms of capital" (2012:362). I propose that it is possible then to gain insight to our globalising world through the elites who are most heavily resourced and materially benefitting from it. The identification of this elite class then is the first step in this project, to "pin down" and find substance within globalisation.

This research, assumes a Weberian definition of class, "generally thinking of elites relative to the power and resources they possess" (Khan, 2012:362). I also chose to orient data around a Bourdieuian sociology, where cultural production is part of securing one's social class and position (Bourdieu, 1984, 1993) using that framework to consider the class practices, "class-making" (Kenway et al,2017) and cosmopolitan cultural production within and around the world schools in which the new global elite enrol their children. I take Bourdieu's assertion that, "groups such as social classes are to be made." (Bourdieu, 1989:18) and that "groups are not found ready-made in reality" (Bourdieu, 1987:8) (Supported also by Thompson, 1966). That is, they are not simply a given within social reality but are subject to the processes of making and remaking themselves; producing and reproducing; class as "a definition made vis-à-vis attributes and material conditions, social positions and opportunities, power and exploitation" (Wright, 2009 in Lin, 2013)). For Bourdieu, class is determined through the distribution and volume and composition of capital; both economic and symbolic. In this study I provide insight to the insecurity and precarity of global elites as they seek to (re)produce their privilege while recognising, "Elites are almost by definition the object of contestation and challenge, and despite the deserved or enforced perogatives they have

they can never be secure in their possession of them" (Abbink & Salverda, 2013:7).

For Bourdieu, the approach to class relates to symbolic systems and the boundaries between classes. Yet the very nature of what constitutes symbolic boundaries or matters of distinction in our global world are not predefined and are the work of this research. Approaching this research through an analysis of class therefore requires consideration of globalisation theory also and raises certain questions around agency and the theories we use to understand our globalising world. How might elites seek to define merit? And what role might world schools play in their pursuit of legitimacy?

Scholarship concerning instances of elite education and global education often approach the topic as a matter of how a group or people are managing or coping or working "under" or within global conditions (Kenway et al 2013). Yet I wonder if this kind of a stance doesn't offer enough latitude to consider that the people involved are also the makers of and contributors to those conditions. Weis and Cippolle (2013) offer an institutional dimension, as a contribution to studies of social stratification, where they see middle class families position their children for a global knowledge economy (Ibid:704). This, and other studies of the so-called global middle classes are concerned with the "struggle" of middle class to best access opportunities within the landscape of international education. These struggles are most often contextualised with a global economic perspective, towards the job-market. Matters of agency and success of such groups, tends to be defined by admission to or the outcomes of education; qualifications and graduations as forms of institutional association. Cosmopolitan education in world schools is perhaps an attempt to supercede or trump this level of congestion and access to elite higher education; perhaps situating the world school students as being the

most worthy, ready and able to succeed in a globalising world. Certainly, the discussion of field of power and directionality, to follow, will consider that. From existing scholarship there is much to be understood about the nature of class-making for the middle classes through their use of education; most recently through forms of international education (Ball and Nikita, 2014). What is most interesting from these studies are the ways in which the familial strategies are shown to be enacted through the schools themselves; shifting notions of schools as the "sorting machines" claimed by (Kerckoff, 1995:326). However, I suggest that notions of congestion create an unhelpful sense of homogeneity and that such a singular notion removes adequate space for exploration of familial strategies and the class-work involved. So while the literature on middle class strategies thrives this provides two implications for my study of elites and Bourdieu's conceptions of symbolic capital. First, while international education is an established locus for stratification in terms of institutional associations, content, knowledge and dispositions developed.; somehow preparing the young people "best" for a global world, I find it is these very notions of distinction or advantage through international education that creates or adds to the sense of singularity and uni-directional nature of class competition and "congestion" (Weis & Cippollone, 2013) at least in terms of middle class educational access. The directionality of such distinction has been largely documented and associated with Western and English-speaking forms of education as superior. However, this suggested skew towards the English-speaking world as the main source of legitimacy and distinction and such a position is not taken for granted in my study of elites. As I mentioned before, there are blind spots in our understandings of significant portions of the global elite and, while I recognise the literature on global middle class educational strategies, I do not presume and indeed I challenge this directionality. Secondly, the positioning and agency of global elites will continue to feature as an area of exploration; as I will explore here subsequently. According to Weis and Cippolle, class-making is but a

"globally induced phenomenon" that is "produced and reproduced at the lived level on a daily basis" (2013:704). This is just one example of the attempt many have made to recognise the homology between class and globalisation. Yet what is still required is insight into the relationship between class-work and the global world, to which I believe a Bourdieuian perspective on cultural production can contribute.

Globalising World "Has No Content of It's Own": A Focus on Processes and Production

How we understand our global world, its nature and our place within it is inevitably a partial, situated and evolving affair. Within sociology, diverse claims have evolved regarding the voracity and homogeneity of contemporary globalisation. Least helpful is when global phenomenon become defined in ways that promote a universalising sense, such as "the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson, 1992:8), where the interconnectedness of a global age is superficially prioritised. Such perspectives not only ignore the diverse empirical realities that challenge such a coherent picture, but they also set the tone for the subsequent landscape of scholarship. For example, cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitanisation as distinguished by Beck (2006:6) suggests the inescapable nature of social connections through a "global web of interdependencies" (Weenink, 2008:1091). Although perhaps intended to give a comprehensive appraisal of global matters these works reach out, as if to embrace everything, but in turn, grasp only fresh air and in truth almost nothing at all. I shall turn to a fuller exploration of cosmopolitanism in turn.

First, it is relevant to consider a scholarly economic vantage point and the empirical economic position of global elites. This is important for a few reasons. With regards to the economic elites that are the focus of this

research, it's significant to remember the sources of their vast material wealth; they are economically elite, made through moments of global capitalism. And it's helpful to remember that globalisation scholarship has grown from an initial, almost singularly ,economic focus. Yet, there are some significant aspects to clarify and glean from that scholarship, to apply here. Joseph Stiglitz would suggest globalization is an economically-driven affair, "the removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national economies" (Stiglitz,2002:ix). Globalization under these terms brought unprecedented development across East Asia in the decades preceding the late 1990's, fueling the perception of economic growth, free-markets and globalization as synonymous, universal terms, bringing "immense benefits" in health, life expectancy and civil society (Ibid). Indeed, it brought about the opportunities for my Chinese elites to gain their wealth. Aspirations fueled by East Asia's success and, it could be argued, genuine economic desperation, led many countries to accept rather than question IMF rhetoric even when experiencing negative impact both economically and socially. It was Stiglitz who most explicitly criticized the overbearing ideology of market fundamentalism enacted by the IMF as blind to the needs and agency of developing countries. Defending his economic beliefs while enriching the understanding of East Asia's success, Stiglitz contended that "they benefitted from globalization because they made it work for them" (in Lechner & Boli, 2004:201), crediting their choice to reject rapid privatization and liberalization, preferring instead to create a hybrid situation with national government in control. It is this sense of making things "work" for you in a globalising context, that has permeated scholarship on the global middle classes educational strategies and, driven subsequent scholarship on forms of cultural global negotiation; glocalization (Pieterse, 1995:100) and a glonacal (Global-National-Local (Maxwell, 2018) as just two examples. Although I am not subscribing to these specific terms, what I take from them that is helpful is the sense that globalization has no content of its own

(Mann, 2012) but rather can be understood as and through the processes of negotiations, production and choices made, by people, in places. This is, of course, a gross over-simplification, but an important one to make when proposing to understand the global world. I chose instead a theoretical framing that will allow me to explore the multiplicity of choices that occur amongst processes and to understand and interrogate their interactive and ever-evolving nature. I prefer to operate with processual theories then since, as Stigliz suggests, "ideology provides a lens through which one sees the world, a set of beliefs that are held so firm that one hardly needs empirical confirmation" (2002:222), something I believe is also largely true for theories of globalization. Scholarship on the cultural negotiations and processes within globalisation remain varied and, within sociology of education work specifically there is a tendency to draw from the less grounded versions, preference is often given to ideas of flows and scapes, as ways of noticing trends and perhaps often to support or drive agendas for social justice. The motives behind different factions of scholarship is important to recognise, as the overlap of cosmopolitan theory and globalisation theory in this chapter will demonstrate.

Globalization has been seen as a project and also a process, a reality and belief (Mattelart, 2002). Diverse perspectives regarding impact and inequality capture the tension between globalization as calculated domination and the belief in it as an out-of-control, "new world chaos" (Waters, 1995:164). Hobsbawn offered caution, declaring entry into a period where we would be unable to control or understand global forces (Hobsbawn, 2005:19). Michael Mann tackles the largest criticism levelled at those dealing with globalization; that it "remains an overused and little understood or evidenced concept" (2013:3). This research embraces Mann's position that,

> *"While accepting that globalization is hybrid, I resist a giddy descent*

into liquidity, fragmentation and indeterminancy, preferring to see globalizations as driven by a few networks that are far more powerfully structuring than others, and that have a relatively hard and durable reality. They have new forms but old pedigrees. General narratives are possible, if rendered plural and a little less grand." (Mann, 2013:8)

For some, the emphasis on change has been so profound as to create what Mann calls, hyperglobalizers; those who suggest a fundamentally altered and new kind of society. Using the metaphor of a "network society" Castells suggests this has changed the material foundations of life, space and time (1997, 1998). Virtual and ubiquitous communications via digital technologies have inspired Appadurai to claim, "interactions of a new order and intensity" (2000:322). Yet Mann's central critique of such theories is their gross exaggeration in relation to the social world or, differently put, "globa-loney" (2013:3). On review of hyperglobalizers largely theoretical claims it appears a great deal is taken for granted in an attempt to articulate what is distinctive in a global age and, as a result, much is hidden. Even those attempting to draw in matters of agency and negotiation have not achieved so. Local interpretations and transformations of globalization (Tomlinson, 1991:307) broaden the matters of responsibility and influence to multiple sources. This proposed integration and exchange mirrors Hannerz's view of cultural interactions (Hannerz, 1996) suggesting that there is an ongoing tension between what is shared, global and what remains local. The process of glocalization emerges as a process of appropriation and choices, problematizing the concepts of local and global and helping to bring contextual issues that guide decision making into focus. Glocalization draws on the worldview and history of a location. As a type of hybridization, glocalization suggests both historical and contemporary relevance. While the suggestion of hybridity can provide an appealing framework, I agree these very same definitions can prove

"maddeningly elastic" (Kraidy, 2002) covering a range of processes and inequalities.

Michael Mann's view of globalization dismisses those who describe global change by way of a singular process or driver, a critique aimed at both materialists and idealists respectively. Surveying a range of descriptive accounts Mann identifies, "the most popular way of giving content to globalization has been to identify capitalism as its essential driver" (2013:3). While for those emphasizing an economic focus (eg, Sklair,2001). Mann agrees that capitalism is indeed an essential driver he indicates the weakness of any perspective that "ignores ideologies and other drivers" (2013:4). Crucially, for this research project he recognizes, "…the economy is not the only driver of human societies" (Ibid:6). It is within Mann's conceptualization of globalization processes that the study of elite cosmopolitanism becomes potentially rich content. Presenting globalization processes as plural, he suggests, "In itself globalization has no distinctive content other than its range…globalization in itself cannot be praised or blamed for the state of human society, for it is merely the product of expansions of the sources of social power" (Mann, 2012:3). This presents one of the most important elements in the framing of my research; the need for content and context. Exploring elite cosmopolitanism as content within a globalized world, Mann's perspective resonates with an interest in class (re)production as a material and symbolic matter.

Compounding this landscape, philosophical perspectives of cosmopolitanism have been strongly represented in academic terms, as responses to and roadmaps for a changing global world (Appiah 2018, Nussbaum, 1997). For them, at the heart of moral cosmopolitan thought is the universalism that every human being matters (Appiah, 2019:3). Such normative perspectives are often muddied amongst narratives seeking to understand our actually existing globalising world. And as a result, even the

more muted works, none-the-less retain interest in some form of elusive, universal global condition, forces or ideals. The consequence of such works is arguably an imbalance and under-emphasis of agentic production, of and amongst globalising structures; something this research aims to address. Although, the actually existing nature of elite cosmopolitanism will be reviewed, in turn.

"New Forms But Old Pedigrees" : Elite Cosmopolitanism

As this guiding statement illustrates, Mann's approach offers a productive avenue for my research. For indeed, some are more advantageously positioned to negotiate the world than others. I have identified an elite class and identified their driving need and social process for them; the intergenerational process of status reproduction. It is through this exploration of the new global elite and their attempts at (re)production that content for negotiation, definition and understanding can be found; through cosmopolitanism and the cosmopolitan education of world schools.

The globalizing world has increased unequal conditions. It is the economic elites created through these processes of global capitalism that are now pursuing cosmopolitanism by way of newly created institutions called world schools. These schools are privately run, one for profit and the other not. They charge high fees and appeal to the newly moneyed elite as part of their efforts in social reproduction in both places. So not only is cosmopolitanism visible concretely in the classification of a cosmopolitan education in world schools, but so too should it be conceptually appropriate in exploring the elite aspirations, operating as the cultural dimension of globalisation, instantiated through class practices and elite cultural production. How and why they are doing this is of interest and this gap in knowledge is increasingly noted in scholarship… "…a focus is needed not only on practices, but significantly, on narratives that are articulated by

individuals, families, educational institutions, social clubs and so forth about how particular groups come to understand themselves as elite or otherwise" (Maxwell, 2015:23). Khan's suggestion that understanding elites is not simply about identifying the resources they control but "considering the conversion of that resource into other forms of capital." (2012:362). What is important for these elites is the transformation of their economic capital; that they are seen to be worthy of their social position; the legitimate conversion of economic capital to symbolic capital. And a broader interest in that aspect, the relational nature of class-making, whereby these elite families are situating themselves in particular parts of social space.

It is the combination here of familial resources and those from the new world schools that is significant and using Bourdieu's framing of elite schooling, it is an aid to recognising the constituent parts. Bourdieu cautions us from isolating the sources of capital from the school and home, rather, to consider, "…a type of familial management that makes use of the school…" not just family in isolation. So while world schools may come to depend upon or operate on the "domestic transfer of cultural capital…" the family continues to use the relatively autonomous logic of its own economy, which enables it to combine the capital held by each of its members, in order to accumulate and transfer its wealth" and status (1996:292). And as a result of the theory review thus far, I turn to Bourdieu as guidance for how to best consider an agentic and structural combination of class-making in a global world; that we "must focus on strategies, but always in reference to the structural conditions under which they develop…" (1996:121). And what is perhaps indicative of new forms, but old pedigrees is not only the production of a new elite but the contemporary instantiations of cosmopolitanism.

The normative pedigree of cosmopolitan echoes many of the universal tones from globalisation theories. Yet it is the roots and elite nature of the

concept that is being promoted, if not championed in much of the world school's self-publicity. It's necessary then to consider how the new forms of cosmopolitanism may draw upon the "old pedigree".

Cosmopolitanism, as an area of academic study has seen a resurgence of sociological interest over the last 15 years (Inglis, 2012:1). Its revival has been an opportunity to promote consideration of the relationship between its political philosophical roots and strengths of empirical sociology. Drawing on its original sense of "political non-affiliation – declaring oneself to be a "citizen of the world" rather than of any particular polity" (Ibid) has been reiterated in similar forms throughout history; to indicate freedom from local bonds and a broader sense of common citizenship across the world or universe. Indeed, "cosmopolitanisms in the plural" (Pollock et al, 2002) as a result of cosmopolitan iterations must be recognized, in contrast to perceptions of a singular doctrine (Inglis, 2012). Those mapping its historical roots argue that classic cosmopolitanism was never a purely "abstract normative structure" (Calhoun, 2003:532). They argue that failure to recognize the particular social conditions has diminished the concept (Ibid). Versions of the lived reality, of "belonging to the world", have been uncovered and highlighted in order to signify the rich potential of the concept to address not only methodological issues of understanding our global age, but the existence and nature of solidarities with a universal moral vision (Nussbaum 1997, Calhoun 2003, Inglis, 2012). The potential for multiplicities here embodies the very definition of a messy reality and appears consistent with Mann's perception of global change; an interweaving and interfolding of ideology and social and material conditions. With the phenomenon of World Schools firmly in mind it could be pragmatically stated that a vision of global citizenship will be developed in a specific locations and within the material resources of the new global elite; who are already considered to be hyper-mobile and untethered. As Nussbaum's "radically universalistic approach to cosmopolitanism" (in

Calhoun, 2003:538) illustrates, the strict freedom from local cultures and norms, including ethnic and national solidarities, takes the business of transcending locality to an extreme and certainly, presents the antithesis to this work. Considering the act of freedom from local belongings the moral commitment lies instead with the humanity of the world. As such, Calhoun offers an iteration of cosmopolitanism, highlighting the possibility for acknowledgement of belongings alongside a universal solidarity. In this version, a cosmopolitan could exist with multiple belongings within an overall identity as global citizen. Held (1995) and others offer variations of multiple citizenships, but most importantly for this project, there exist various permutations of the lived reality of cosmopolitanism.

Skrbis and Woodward (2007:773) suggest that cosmopolitan statements and expressions can be found "within the particularist and local just as they can between the particularists and universalists". They also suggest, cosmopolitan expressions can be found in varying places and across class fractions (Ibid). While I agree to an extent that it has no one social location, it is worth noting that the scholarship on cosmopolitanism, even within sociology, falls into two large categories; those promoting or looking for an idealistic, universal form of cosmopolitanism and those who believe they have "found" it, in various forms and places. This research recognises but differs from these works in the consideration of universality, which in this case is cosmopolitanism, "can only be charged and enacted in the sticky materiality of practical encounters" (Tsing, 2004:5). "As a form of cultural production, then, a wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air it goes nowhere" (Ibid). That is, it becomes real through these elite instantiations and, as I propose in this chapter, better understood through a generative use of Bourdieu's conceptual tools,

This means that any understandings of global dimensions within this will occur in ways that mute the hyper-mobility of globalisation (Sassen,2002)

by emphasizing the role of relational practices and production in social space. I'm suggesting that some of the theoretical complications and conceptual muddiness around cosmopolitanism scholarship could be muted through investigation of embedded and situated cases, such as the ones in my project. So, an important step is taking cosmopolitanism, knowing its abstractions but understanding who, where, when and how it is being made in actual, substantive and contemporary ways as part of class positioning and practices. As we take a more grounded and pragmatic approach to understanding cosmopolitanism here I will explore the ways in which there are potential fractures and discord between elite instantiations and popular cosmopolitan musings around "liberal global unity" (Calhoun, 2002:876).

For instance, studies too often assume the nature of cosmopolitanism. Too readily, in existing scholarship, the nature of cosmopolitan capital is assumed; examples of facets related to open-mindedness, experience of diversity and an embodied ease. While some of these aspects may feature in the habitus of young people in the world school, they will be recognised rather than assumed or sought. And in turn, these existing works heavily represent a western view of cosmopolitanism, Calhoun suggests, "…the cosmopolitan elite culture is a product of Western dominance and the kinds of intellectual orientations is has produced" (2003:xx). This research will be exploring rather than assuming normative forms. Yet this review must include recognition and overview of the "cosmopolitan promise", a large section of literature dealing largely with the historical lineage, moral philosophies and appeal of a cosmopolitan narrative. The calls for attention are greater than any literature focusing on contemporary instantiations, which is what this project will do. Promoting cosmopolitan thought it is commonly considered to offer a way of thinking, to bring "unity amid difference" (Brennan, in Calhoun, 2002:874) It's interesting that a great deal of academic literature sees the potential for cosmopolitanism arising from, or needed because of global injustices and inequality. Discussion been had

about how globalization provides the conditions of possibility for developing cosmopolitan "dispositions" but it does not guarantee it (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). Yet there is also hope in the cosmopolitan ideal, hope that we can do better, be better, transcend some of the cultural and social divides that broadly represent inequalities and conflict. There are scholarly arguments related to those who show extension of ties and interactions across borders through what they call social globalisation. The argument continues that the nature of our now, global world, "generates more cosmopolitan orientations" (Zhou, 2016: 156).

From the literature reviewed thus far, many of the idealised notions of world citizen could be equally drawn from the brochures of world schools. Perhaps in the same vein as Kant's "realist rather than utopian" (Kant, 1963:119 in Inglis, 2012:8) version of cosmopolitanism, there are generalised attempts made to apply cosmopolitanism to the empirical world. As described by Inglis,

> *"Kant's advocacy of "world citizenship" is a restrictive one, as it does not involve any putative world-state, but rather extends only as far as "universal hospitality": people are to be free to travel and trade where they wish, and must not be treated arbitrarily by the host state"*
>
> (2012:8).

In this sense I agree that cosmopolitanism can be driven by ideals as well as shaped by social conditions. And, throughout my exploration of world schools, the lineage and intent of cosmopolitan narratives will be considered, as they pertain to matters of legitimisation, distinction and class-making. Engagement with diversity (belongings, localities, cosmopolitanisms) will feature as another such aspect; an element somewhat central to matters of contemporary meritocracy and indeed,

claimed of the global elite itself as a grouping. As I picture the development of cosmopolitanism in World Schools I can imagine an orientation that is eager to recognize and co-exist with varied formulations of diversity and so, consideration of this will be an interesting aspect of class-making and elite (re)production. Indeed an appreciation of diversity may be a driving ideal of a global citizen who wishes to thrive in a global age, as noted in the school mission statements. Yet, the actual lived experience of that celebration is an area of interest. And, it is through these formulations of who they are and who they are in relation to others, that will bring substance to the boundaries and distinctions of class-making. If pluralistic notions of globalisation are to be authentically considered and explored there needs to be potential for plural versions of that which is global; pluralities in elite formulations and production of cosmopolitanism. Returning then to Bourdieu's conceptual tools, which were intended "by and for empirical work" (Bourdieu in Wacquant, 1989:50) I agree with Lin that use of such tools "demands our sensitivity to cultural specificity, as well as a firm anchor to data" (2013:832).

Institutional Legitimacy and Field of Power

The suggestion then of plural or diverse formulations of elite cosmopolitanism becomes interesting and explorable when considering Bourdieu's field, in which the relational nature of class-positioning is undertaken, the social space in which capital and cosmopolitanism takes on meaning. It is here that the purpose of two generative sites of elite cosmopolitanism, found through world schools and the elites that populate them, becomes meaningful. And it is through this conceptual tool that this research is able to authentically explore the production of and meaning given to elite cosmopolitanism. Does elite cosmopolitanism find value in the same social spaces? Is there one singular global field that defines the structure of social settings, habitus, capital and so on? Do we too quickly

invoke Bourdieu's notions of capital without sufficient regard for the field in which they gain meaning? I agree that Bourdieu's notion of capital is too quickly invoked when discussing cosmopolitanism. This leads to a squashing of exploration of both its nature and production (Igarashi & Saito, 2014:223)

Institutions continue to play a significant role in the (re)production of privilege (Khan 2016, Cousin et al, 2018).I am mindful of important and illustrative of the kinds of translation and construction, the kinds of situated and located ways in which elites make, and make sense of, and make valuable, the resources and opportunities they have; to construct their version of a valuable global, cosmopolitan capital.

The phenomenon of World Schools is new. The relationship between elite reproduction and schooling is not. Education has been well documented as a key strategy for class positioning. School is a central principle of class formation and maintenance (Hunter, 1988). Looking at world schools then, is undertaken here to look at elite (re)production. What this often means is association of merit and status associated to an institution providing legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1996) or otherwise within a given system. As Khan points out, "Rather than inheriting titles, today's elites often navigate institutions that help credential them" (Khan, 2012:371). In this work I explore and recognise the ways the school and families orient themselves institutionally. I agree studies are needed to better understand, "whether and how "new" groups are taking the place of more established elite groups within local, national or international fields of power, and whether new fields of power are emerging within which new processes of elite formation are being developed." (Maxwell, 2015:17). I draw upon Bourdieu's concept of field to help with this exploration.

Taking into account the varied geographic and cultural locations of world schools and the global elites that populate them, questions emerge about the very nature of elite class and their positioning in “global” social space. Using a Bourdieuian definition of class as determined by those “who occupy similar or neighbouring positions” (1989:17) questions arise about the structuring of social space and the field of power in which these elites operate.

World Schools are a central piece of apparatus; socialization sites for new cosmopolitan elite, vital sites for the genesis of cultural capital. And, instrumental in securing institutional capital and access to elite HE. As with other areas, definitional issues persist and there are elements of unhelpful overlap, in the real world rather than scholarship, where notions of “elite” and “merit” are synonymous. Indeed, this reality, on which many universities and long-established schools and boarding schools thrive, needs investigation and clarification as to the “complex web of relations” (Khan, 2016:6) in which elites and notions of elite schools are paired. Use of the term “elite schools” in research then is perhaps problematic because of suggestions of better education and if not better, as many would argue, it indicates exclusivity, academic achievement, and most likely a necessary and superficial commitment to meritocracy. So it is within and around these myths and characteristics of exclusive, fee-paying schooling that the work of elite families, dynasties and exclusionary class practices are situated. What is missing, largely, in these studies of international education, are matters of motivations around how and why families use schools as they do, and how that forms part of the elite cosmopolitanism and web of relations. Exceptions to this focus would be in Weeink’s (2007) work in the Netherlands and Waters (2005) insights on the strategic mobilities of families between Hong Kong and Canada.

The newness of these world schools is significant and situates them in contrast to the elite schools in which Bourdieu based his work in France. These fledgling institutions are largely a strategic gamble for the elite families who use them, in these early years. And, it is during these early years that my research took place. In reference to institutional legitimacy then, I am aware of the ways that the world schools are almost co-orienting both themselves and the students within their particular contexts and in-line with parents; neither fully secure and tentatively finding their way.

I return to Bourdieu's conceptual tools here, to state an obvious point, a recognition that the study of world schools and the elites they are designed for is not something that can be understood in isolation. To speak plainly, it's not just an academic exercise to try and understand what they do and how they do it. But instead, they offer an opportunity to gain insight into the motivations and ways in which these new institutions, backed by these powerful and wealthy families are all-in, invested if you will, in the advantageous positioning of their students/children in the most elite higher education institutions in the world. It is within this landscape that I chart not just the motivations and intentions of elite cosmopolitanism but also the institutional pathways and relationships these world schools pursue in order to secure college and university acceptances for their students. The ways in which they seek to gain legitimacy and define cosmopolitanism for their benefit. Differently put, this project explores the strategic institutional positioning of the world schools within a global educational market.

It is a landscape already heavily shaped by class fractions. Social stratification by class is evident through consideration of admissions to elite and selective higher education in the United States yet this aspect is often considered within narratives of meritocracy. Despite claims of increasing meritocracy through reforms to admissions processes, those from low

socio-economic positions are no more likely to gain admission to elite higher education than they were in the 1950's (Karabel, 2005: 547).

It is here that existing scholarship in elite education and higher education offers some known features from the work of Gaztamibide-Fernandez,2010 Hoon 2011, Courtois, 2018, Bourdieu 1996, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Until recently the ethnographic literature was heavily dominated with American Day and Boarding school accounts (Maxwell et al, 2018, Khan 2010, Cookson and Persell, 1985). I take from these situated accounts, the contextualised and well-established pathways between elite schools and higher education. I found it particularly illuminating when Jerome Karabel showed that older, established boarding schools in the USA, once seen as the bedrock of access to the "big three" (Ivy league) had now dropped in terms of the percentage accessing from them. He says, Groton, Exeter and St.Paul's ,"…as recently as 1954 sent roughly two-thirds of their graduates to Harvard, Yale or Princeton." And now, "the proportion of their graduates there by 2000 dropped to 22,14 and 10% respectively" (Karabel, 2005:547). He calculated that from statistics reported in the Handbook of Private Schools (Porter Sarent, 1995, 2001) "Between 1998 and 2001, 94 of the 100 schools nationwide (US) that sent the highest percentage of graduates to Harvard, Yale and Princeton were private institutions.(Yaqub, 2002) For those kinds of families, much like the French nobility in Bourdieu's studies, educational institutions make up the fabric of those elite families; woven in time and again until they just become part of the furniture. However, there appears to be slippage in the hold the old elite schools used to have on access to elite US higher education.

Habitus and Cosmopolitan Capital

It is important to recognise not only the institutional relationships developed between world schools and global higher education but the ways in which

these young cosmopolitan students are presented and "sold" to these institutions in order to gain access; a combination of "who they are" and what their schooling has involved; a combination perhaps of institutional cosmopolitan capital and embodied capital. This means, for the schools, the families and young people creating and promoting the cosmopolitan education and themselves as the products and creators of it. Weenink believes cosmopolitanism "is a source of social power and can be understood as a form of social and cultural capital: cosmopolitan capital" (2008:1092). Placing a particular emphasis on cosmopolitanism as "an expression of agency." There is much literature on elite renewal / replacement, with the assertion that historically such renewal "has always been so."

> *"Elites are almost by definition the object of contestation and challenge, and despite the deserved or enforced perogatives they have they can never be secure in their possession of them."*
>
> (Abbink & Salverda,2013:7)

And indeed there are many ethnographies and insider accounts of elite worlds, networks and day-to-day living. Yet the "reproduction of class privilege cannot be taken for granted – but is always provisional and contested, even among those who are privately educated" (Maxwell and Aggleton, 2014:800). I recognise and so do these families, that they are never secure. This undoubtedly beings to re-emphasize the precarious nature of what these families and schools are trying to achieve. At this point in my research it's important to emphaisze that precarity is lived and embraced by the teachers, parents and young people in the schools. Theoretically it is that precarity that offers the opportunity to not simply apply Bourdieu's conceptual tools, but to gain insight into the negotiation of habitus as these young people and families enter into and partner with the world schools. In contrast to Bourdieu's Grandes Ecoles, where much was

ingrained and “nothing less than automatic”(1996:187); the home habitus and school culture were not immediately aligned in world schools.

In his considerations of education and class systems, Bourdieu helps to draw attention to the making and remaking of social structures. Although in his terms he suggests the, “machinery of production” (and reproduction) operate and are articulated by, are defined by and identified through practical mediators (1978:197). Schools then are viewed here as sites of transformation and legitimization of primarily economic capital into other forms of value or power relative to their respective contexts and what is considered valuable in each place. Is it possible that Bourdieu shows the socialization processes of the upper classes as unproblematic? I agree with Maxwell and Maxwell (1995) when they suggest in fact, social reproduction requires effort and is not just smooth. And so, it becomes perhaps most important to ask, how are students’ social characteristics, such as the structure of their inherited capital, actually transmuted into academic properties?” (Bourdieu, 1996:161). What role does the parents’ habitus play in the (re)production of privilege in world schools?

During these first few years of the world schools and in some cases, the first few graduating classes, there was a unique opportunity to be part of the institutions formative years; to witness the negotiation of that which Bourdieu found well-established and valued, “…a great importance (in the schools) to less directly academic properties, such as particular ways of behaving, carrying oneself, and speaking, or culture generale…” (Ibid).

It is in this way, and particularly with two generative sites in mind, this research explores the production of cosmopolitan capital, the symbolic power that constitutes the young people’s ways of being, their dispositions, knowledge; ultimately their embodiment of cosmopolitanism. That is, through explicit negotiations but also that which is visible it will be essential

to grasp their “embodied social structure” (Bourdieu, 1984:467), the production of their habitus as they are being and becoming global elites.

We tend to consider elites as powerful, rather than as seeking power; the latter aspect being a feature of thesis. The parents of the world schools were new to private education, another aspect that may be surprising. That is, the parents themselves had not attended an elite or private, fee-paying education. In new economic positions, these parents put their children into these schools because they were financially able to do so and, because they saw it as the way to best achieve their cosmopolitan aims and aspirations. This research then is able to capture and investigate a precious moment in time, a period when they were heavily invested, working and strategizing but without knowledge of the end result; authentic and contemporaneous insight to the workings of the new global elite.

Drawing from and mindful of the theoretical positions discussed this far, this research then is able to consider multiple, intersecting layers of production and instantiations of elite cosmopolitanism. First, the making and production of the parents themselves, with insight to their home habitus, their aspirations and explicit class-making strategies, including their situatedness and their choice of world school; these cosmopolitan aspirations set the tone for not only the world school but for the development and shaping of the young people in the field; this is the first conceptual layer where I will ground the global elite. Secondly, I consider the institutional layer of cosmopolitan production in the world schools. This considers the role of the school, the potential access and routes to legitimacy it offers, the competitive leveraging of which it plays a part and its development of day-to-day culture that aims to consecrate. Here there will be an accumulation from the first “parent” layer, and the expectations, the nature of and the production of cosmopolitan capital as embodied and institutional capital will increasingly take on form and weight. It is here that

the “products” of the world schools and elite families will be evidenced and will be made visible. Finally, in this third analytical layer I will continue the “pinning down” of gloablisation by exploring the negotiation and production of embodied cosmopolitan capital, through the day-to-day worlds of the young people of the world schools.

The exploration of world schools then returns to the original aim in this chapter; to provide insight into the formation and (re)production of the global elite; through identifying, locating and authentically exploring elite instantiations of cosmopolitanism.

Summary

Significantly then, this research begins by taking three important theoretical approaches that builds upon existing scholarship in this area. First of all, the identification and definition of global elites in my research is theoretical. While I recognise the work done by scholars to objectively define a 1 per cent and a 0.1 per cent based on wealth and income, the elite families I identify through world schools are symbolic of the global elite. Such a position allows for analysis of the social and cultural processes of elite class (re)production. Secondly, I locate and investigate the (re)production of elites through the world schools. This means a contemporaneous exploration of elite’s lived choices and strategies, in contrast to a focus solely on the outcomes of schooling, occupational titles or tax returns. Through this focus on processes, cultural production and embodiment of elite cosmopolitanism, rather than simply educational outcomes, this research will provide insight to the nature of being and becoming part of the global cosmopolitan elite. Lastly, and in connection to the second point, by focusing on the cosmopolitan education in world schools and framing cosmopolitanism as a cultural dimension of globalisation, this research

authentically explores the pluralities of our globalising world, the production of elite cosmopolitanism in two generative sites.

The proposition – that the production and negotiation of cosmopolitanism as normative and embodied discourses, reflects the values and cultural embeddedness of global elites – is the central argument of this thesis.

3. Research Design & Methodology

The following chapter provides an account of the research design and ethnographic methods used in this study of elite cosmopolitanism, through new global elites and their world schools. I present global ethnography (Burawoy, 2001) as a means to understanding the production of elite cosmopolitanism. Global ethnography reasserts the strengths of rich, empirically driven and contextualised "thick description" (Geertz, 1974) while requiring a conceptual design that explicitly calls for analysis of such detail, in global terms. I further enhance the global ethnography model by drawing on Anna Tsing's proposition of identifying "globe making projects" (2000). And, by drawing upon Andrew Abbott (2016) and Craig Calhoun's calls for a cosmopolitan or "world sociology" (2015). The combination of these perspectives results in an embrace of the multiplicity of production of "globe-making projects" such as world schools. And, it is through the call of Abbott and Calhoun that I take seriously the responsibility of sociology to produce knowledge of our globalising world that is representative of, or at the very least not limited to simply Western-centric sites of study. As such, I justify the research of two World Schools for this research; one in New York and the other Beijing. These two cases form a pairing, inspired by Clifford Geertz and much like Tsing's work, where they offer a contrasting analysis each-on-the-other, a format I call a contrast-ethnography. Following this design framing I draw out the ethnographic methods employed in this study.

Beginning with a World School

This research project "began" with knowledge of the Manhattan World School. It's brash and ambitious projects of "being global" and intentions to expand and dominate global education (reputationally if not economically) with a Harvard-created curriculum and a Flagship campus in NYC,

inherently begged the question, Will this translate and travel? Do people want an NYC version of the global? The school made great emphasis on its view towards China (PRC) through; it's choice of Mandarin immersion as one of the prominent choices for parents and, the plan to make it's "Second Campus" in Beijing. The gaze of the school, shareholders, parents and the USA was seemingly "going East" as if in response to global competition and in ways that prompted parents to believe their children would be prepared to face the "challenges of our changing world." At the same time, I knew of friends and old colleagues who were engaged in similar ("global" and international education ventures) in other parts of the world. As a researcher and former teacher, I couldn't help but wonder how the locations would inform and shape the educational ventures, let alone the children, teachers and parents. And, taking my guide from the Manhattan World School I looked "East", to see if there was a case emerging on its own terms, in that context. It was the gaze of Manhattan World School then that directed the initial focus on China/Asia. I considered South Korea; which had recently undertaken reforms to increase local participation in international schools. One was of interest, as a non-nationally funded and non-British/Canadian satellite school for ex-pats. However, this school was quite established and was about to adopt an American curriculum, which made it less interesting and relevant to me. Dubai in the UAE also offered a few options of new and emerging world schools (e.g. GEMS), catering for the Arab World; these were of interest and are still an area in which there is little/no ethnographic research. Indeed, I had discounted China with disappointment when I learned that international schooling there was for expatriate students only, with legal limitations preventing local (non-foreign passport holders) from attending. However, the "find" of a unique school in Beijing through a former colleague, led me to the Beijing World School – a new internationally-oriented institution, uniquely founded by a Chinese national (in a country where national-state education is the norm) and catering for local Chinese families from the ages of 3-18. This school was

interested in exploring the “best of East and West in education” and the creation of “cosmopolitan education.” Their gaze and their imagining of the global world appeared from the outside as almost the mirror-image of the Manhattan World School. Having two cases that seemingly overlapped in their “gaze” appeared to be a suitable foundation from which to begin to explore and make sense of the dominant theories of the time; the “global forces”, “global connections” and “global imaginations.” These schools claimed to be wanting and dealing with the same things, on their own terms. I wanted to have at least a dialogue, contrast or conversation between cases from which I could begin to justify my own discussions and theorising.

Drawing from the work undertaken in Chapter Two, I present World Schools as an emerging form of new, elite education. The definition of World Schools then, as they stand in this thesis draws from these two cases and therefore, existing criterion of elite schools and international schools to comprise a) economically elite families b) Selective admissions c) A conscious and promoted agenda for cosmopolitan/global/international education d) Is a newly founded institution with Global-orientation/Cosmopolitan education as its key distinction. This draws selectively from the definition of elite schooling (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2009) and also from Bunnell’s (2019) differentiations in the field of international education.

Research Design: Global Ethnography as Reaffirming “Thick Description”

World schools, as places of interest sparked my research. These newly forming institutions provide compelling places for investigation of elite class (re)production and the production of elite cosmopolitanism. In this project then, the places, or at least the type of institutions, very much shaped the research. And upon reflection, it was this institutional focus, largely driven

by place that allowed the initial intersection of place and purpose, so highly valued in ethnographic research (Wolcott, 2008:38) to be considered. The use of ethnography is a well-established approach for those seeking to understand elites, their institutions and class practices (Bourdieu 1993, Kenway et al, Cookson & Persell 1985, Khan 2011, Maxwell & Maxwell, 1995, Tarc & Tarc 2014, Kenway & Fahey 2014, Song 2013). However, as explored in the previous chapter, the elites and schools in question are globally-produced and a globally-oriented phenomenon, something that requires consideration in design and methodology.

> *"Surely, "global ethnography" is an oxymoron? How can the global be ethnographic? How can ethnography contribute to the understanding of globalisation?... Global ethnography…speaks, first and foremost, to those left behind on the ground. It shows that time-space compression or time-space distanciation are not as universal as the cosmopolites would claim. It shows globalisation to be a very uneven process and, most important, an artifact manufactured and received in the local."*
>
> (Burawoy, 2001: 147-8)

Consideration of global ethnography sharpens attention to ethnography as an interpretive act involving thick, layered and contextualized descriptions, considering the production and interpretation of what is global in the local. I start therefore by stating the obvious, that "ethnography is more complicated than collecting data" (Agar, 1996:51) or the work of describing, it is the framing and purpose of the study on which the data shines light, that is of particular interest here. According to Hammersley, the precise ways in which ethnography challenges the researcher and evolves is still a matter of contention (2006). However, I suggest that identifying suitable cases, as "globe making projects" (Tsing, 2000:335) is a significant aspect of theoretical and methodological design in order to achieve, "a critical

distance and an intimate engagement" (Ibid:351) required for a global ethnography. Contrary to views of global elites as hyper-mobile and unknowable I suggest that it is possible to know them through their family choices, through the locations chosen to raise their children and the schools in which they enrol them; all very located affairs and suitable for ethnographic work.

A situated, ethnographic approach was therefore an appropriate choice to achieve a contextualized understanding of the social and cultural worlds of the people or places being studied.

> "The underlying purpose of ethnographic research …is to describe what the people in some particular place or status ordinarily do, and the meanings they ascribe to the doing, under ordinary or particular circumstances, presenting that description in a manner that draws attention to regularities that implicate cultural process." (Wolcott, 2008:73)

Rationale & Choice of Cases

Methodology for a Cosmopolitan Sociology

This project does not limit itself to just one case or site of study. Since, "Ethnography offers an authoritative mandate to study in units of one, the single case studied holistically" (Wolcott, 2008:93) this could perhaps been considered problematic. Yet, drawing from Anna Tsing, I follow her lead in contrasting two "globe-making projects" specifically in order to analyse the conflations of our globalizing world. Put plainly, as someone who lived and worked in New York for several years, a view of the world from Manhattan is not universal. And for my research, I had no wish to present it as such.

This world school was, in what I would call New-York-Style, packaging and presenting itself as *the* world school and it was perhaps my personal and professional discomfort and intrigue that wanted to temper or at least contextualise that type of universalization. In contrast, Anna Tsing offers the suggested tool of "globe-making projects" in opposition to a focus on global imagery and rhetoric, where, "We lose touch with the material and institutional components through which powerful and central sites are constructed, from which convincing claims about units and scales can be made" (2000:330). Considering her research Tsing defends a design employing two cases. She argues, "Were we to limit ourselves to one of these visions as a description of the new global landscape, we would miss the pleasures and dangers of (this) multiplicity." (2000:336). I agree. In this way, and with an ethnographic approach, the role of place and a focus on the work becomes central in the making and the production of our globalizing world.

The use of more than one cultural lens in this project reflects my sociological approach and my interpretation, in this work, of a cosmopolitan sociology. Analytical potential of contrasting two cases, such as world schools, is also supported by Craig Calhoun's definition of a "reflective world sociology" (2015:18) whereby my research is intended to be of the sort that is "trying to get inside another setting" (Ibid:121) with the aim of a new and better understanding of our globalizing world. I operationalize this through my ethnography and through the analytical contrast of the two sites and ultimately, through the organization of data where the reader of this ethnography experiences a view from two locations in the substantive "data" chapters. In this way, ethnography acts as a design, an epistemological approach and an organizational tool for analysis and production of a text. The intent for any reader then is to deepen reflections on the nature of elite cosmopolitanism where the contrast of one site to the other, in turn, contributes to a central narrative. So, while each location had

its own ethnography; in terms of hermeneutical process and authentic exploration, the analysis of cosmopolitanism, as a global concept, was forged through each case in isolation and then further through discussion and contrast with the other; a process that mirrored Anna Tsing's interest, as mentioned above, in "critical distance and intimate engagement" (2000:351).

I term this work contrast-ethnography; interested in forms of global production that draws its central narrative from the contrasting of two sites, two cases of global elites. I pursued this approach through a cosmopolitan, or world, sociology by drawing upon the situated nature of the two world schools and use them, as a way to reflect upon each location's production of elite cosmopolitanism. Differently put, the purpose of such exploration is an interest, not only the locatedness of each site and the role it plays in the phenomenon of world schools but, in the exploration of pluralities made visible through the contrast between two versions of global cultural production; the potential for two versions of elite cosmopolitanism, the potential for two elite worldviews. It's important to acknowledge, of course, there was potential, albeit small to my mind, from the outset that two cases would provide overlapping and largely similar instantiations of elite cosmopolitanism. That itself, would have been an interesting finding and would have resulted in a quite differently organized final product, but this was not the case. Rather, the strong influence of locality and temporality have been explored and as could be imagined, they returned unique instantiations of global production. In pursuing this approach, it is my grea*test intention that I achieve "…a world sociology that knows differences as opposed to a global sociology where it's just a big sauce." (Hess, in Calhoun 2014).*

This pairing of two schools, one in New York and the other Beijing, can also be viewed as a response to the state of the academic field, at the outset of

my research. In 2014, as I began my fieldwork, Jane Kenway and colleagues published from their multi-sited ethnographic work on "elite schools in globalising circumstances." This was welcome, since it affirmed the state of the growing landscape of elite and globalising education. It shone light on the varied instances of colonial-heritage schooling, based on the British (English) model. And, theorised that these seven elite schools (Barbados, Singapore, Australia, South-Africa, Hong Kong and England and, India) were creating transnational capital and producing globally-mobile young people. Despite this "cracking-open" of multi-sited and transnational schooling research, there was still little to no insight on the areas of the world that I felt actually *were* the most powerful (with the exception of India and perhaps Singapore in Kenway's study) and most likely to hold the wealthy and powerful elites for world schools. For me, the study of elites means the study of power and the economic justification at the outset meant that American and China were strong candidates. By 2016, Kenway and colleagues suggested elite international schools were choreographers of elite class formation. Yet economic stories of elite wealth confirmed the PRC, beyond Hong Kong, was prominent and little to no research existed on new (not government run or colonial/English schooling) in China. I considered then that China was glaringly absent from the literature on the development of elites and education. Therefore, in relation to the state of the field at the time; interested in a growing sector of schooling and interested in understanding how elites were being formed within globalising circumstances, it seemed a strong choice to have cases of world schools located in two places that had not yet been studied.

<u>What is the "one"?:</u>

This design and methodology described so far draws on many of the central characteristics of ethnographic work. Yet it is important to clarify my intention for a contrast-ethnography and in so doing, recognise and

respond to the derisive ways in which comparative work is viewed amongst ethnographers. Geertz refers to Santayana's "famous dictum" that "one compares only when one is unable to get to the heart of the matter" (Geertz, 1983:233 in Wolcott, 2008:92). Thankfully, since Clifford Geertz was an early influence for me, I can confirm that the contrast-ethnography in this research is not comparative in the sense that Geertz so heavily dismisses. This is a subtle but essential distinction, particularly when Wolcott confirms a central feature and strength of ethnography as the study of "one."

> "To my way of thinking, the ideal of unit of study for any ethnographic enquiry is one of something, whether it be one village, one key event, one institution…or under some circumstances, one individual… In a day when large sample sizes remain the vogue, and computer capabilities entice us to substitute breadth for depth, ethnography offers an authoritative mandate to study in units of one, the single case- studied holistically."
>
> (Wolcott, 2008:93)

I agree with this advice, and Wolcott's suggestion, "to do less more thoroughly" (Ibid). One of my supervisors, Dr Liliana Riga gave a novice group of doctoral students similar advice for planning any research; to aim for a "small" study with "big implications." In that spirit, the contrast-ethnography of two schools is indeed one ethnography; a small study with "big" implications where the cases can be theorized as two types of the same kind of "globe making project" that orients this contrast-ethnography.

Field Sites: Two World Schools

My early interest in this paired arrangement was guided by Geertz, having read *Islam Observed* (1971). His innately cross-cultural, albeit comparative,

use of ethnography informed my search for a second “contrasting” site, leading to the choice of Beijing; a newly formed world school, not connected with the New York organization in any way but rather, an institution founded by a private Chinese citizen. The world school in Beijing was equally interested in creating cosmopolitan education for a select choice of families in the city. Uniquely, this school was founded by a Chinese national. Although not heavily advertised, the private school had a special exemption allowing them to teach Chinese nationals, not just international expatriate students. This special license was a particularly interesting feature of this field site and, until 2015, the Beijing World School was the only known non-local, internationally-oriented school with such permission. This meant it drew in a particular group of wealthy and global minded Chinese families, interested in having their child pursue a cosmopolitan education while remaining resident in China and, for a significant period of the school’s early years this led to a “balanced enrolment” of 50 per cent local families and 50 per cent expatriate/international families. The located nature of these families within China is mentioned here to distinguish from those Chinese families who chose to send their children abroad for an international boarding school experience. Or, distinct also from those Chinese families who had accessed traditional international schools in Beijing by way of a foreign passport. The families at Beijing World School had the option to send children away also but chose not to do so.

In pursuit of a second field site I also investigated GEMS schools in the Middle East, South East Asia and specifically explored access to a school in Dubai and Seoul. However, the route of access to Beijing was strongest, the contrast of USA to China compelling and ultimately, this site was pursued.

In this process it became apparent that there was a de facto global gaze from one location to the other; MWS in New York were vocal about their second site being in China and Beijing in particular. The second language programme at the school prioritised Mandarin. This gaze towards China was confirmed when I spent time at the school, with faculty exchanges and visits to China as a top priority, to see what could be learned from their educational approach. Parents were particularly interested in their children being "aware" of China with a conviction that such knowledge would be competitively advantageous to them in the future. Similarly, there was an explicit gaze from Beijing World School to America, Canada and the UK; the English speaking and university-laden parts of the West. Not only therefore, are the two cases in this research located within the two largest economies in the world, they are symbolic of the uneven nature of the global world, where some places, institutions and people hold greater interest, or power, than others. And, through this pairing of Manhattan World School and Beijing World School, I suggest these cases represent a global gaze, of interest, from one side of the world to the other. West to East and vice versa. As I sought to explore class (re)production and the role of institutions and world schools, this gaze supported my pursuit of a global contrast-ethnography.

There is no suggestion that I see these spaces as representative of broad generalizable characteristics and culture. But rather, I see these two locations as embodying aspects of their historical, economic and cultural contexts. From the inception of the project I held affinity with Sassen's suggestion that, we can "consider the global as partly structured inside the national" (2010:3) and that such accounts would be consistent with diminishing the "first waves of enthusiasm about globalization" (Tsing, 2000:354). Following this intent I was able to contextualise the cultural production in each place as being situated within and responses to their national contexts; at times this was explicitly clear and other times, more

visible through reflection, analysis and contrast from one site to another; a matter of analysis I will speak to soon. Suffice to say, that intentions here lay with the innately cross-cultural perspective most often attributed to ethnography which, " allows the observer to make problematic what might otherwise be taken for granted" (Wolcott, 2008:89).

Access & Pragmatics

My fieldwork was conducted in four phases, with two periods (a visit and a return visit) in both cases, New York and Beijing. I undertook fieldwork for a combined total of seven and a half months, split evenly across both sites. This allowed for an initial three months (12 week) period in the first half of 2014; January to March in Beijing and April to June in New York respectively. This was followed by a return visit to New York for three weeks in Autumn 2015 and Beijing for three weeks in Spring 2016. Periods of fieldwork were as lengthy as could be managed in relation to resources and dictated largely by professional restrictions by way of permitted leave from my full-time employment and limitations of three-month period restrictions on the visas most easily obtainable for each location.

Access and "Studying Up"

The elites under examination in Beijing and New York were, of course, selected by the admissions procedures, geographical location and fee structures of the World Schools. As such, the schools determined who was in my study and it was up to me to figure out who they were and how to theorise them. This happened in a series of stages and at times, with looping and reconsiderations made. This process was complicated by the narratives present within and projected by the schools and the families themselves. Notions of global, transnational, cosmopolitan, and

international were set to the side for a very long time and certainly did not play a part during the early stages of my work.

In the beginning then, were the schools. Two important factors exist here that provide a basic starting point that allowed me to conceptualise the families as economic elites. The fee structures of the World Schools. In Manhattan, the annual fees were equivalent to the top tier private established and elite schools (Dalton, Trinity, Fieldstone, etc). At approximately US$50,000 per year plus application/enrolment fees, uniform, trips, and the general expenses in supporting a child/adult to participate in the social life of the school not included here, this is at the top-end of private school fees in the United States during this period. The Census Bureau in 2014 confirmed this annual fee to be approximately equivalent to the median household income of US$53,657. In Beijing, the fee-structure was equivalent in the sense that it measured itself against "comparator" schools; the top-tier International Schools in Beijing, serving expat students. It's location in the centre of Beijing's Business District commanded a premium, as did the special license and unique position of the school. At one Board of Trustees meeting, it was noted the fees were the "Second highest" in Beijing, which was regarded as a signifier of quality and distinction. These fees were approximately $45,000 per year, during the period 2014-2016. The considerations of average or median salary in Beijing or China more widely, against which to base a comparison becomes less meaningful. However, I was led to believe that in a similar way, the annual fees for the Beijing World School would in the majority of cases be larger than a middle class annual income, in an urban setting. So, my families were economically elite.

It was the nature of these schools and my contact with families that allowed me to class them as newly-moneyed elites. In both cases, the established elite schools were out-of-reach for these families. They had the money to

pay for the World School but lacked the political, cultural or social contacts to place their child within an established school. This of course is a broad generalisation, since some of them philosophically claimed and appeared to want a different path. In other cases, it was unclear as to whether they would have chosen a new World School if they had an alternative. When it came down to it, it didn't matter. They had chosen it and didn't have access to the established elite routes. Their biographies and shared information from parents and children filled in the picture and indeed, these were families who had become super-rich within the last generation; their rise and rise during global capitalism was a narrative that emerged in my fieldwork. Did this perhaps make them global elites I wondered? Forged within and orienting their children's lives in a global context? I tried this label and conceptualisation for quite some time. But, certainly, these were not the old, established elites in their contexts. They were acting in new ways, positioning their children in specific ways and seemingly, setting them apart in ways that suggested a global-orientation. This research then is peppered with the empirical observation that these elites are newly-moneyed and globally-oriented. This latter term brings in its own challenges and tensions, namely proof of concept beyond school choice. Yet, it is a useful marker against which to set these parents and their aspirations. I landed, however on a different label, that I believe is fitting.

In my theorisation and analysis of ethnographic data, the chosen conceptual framework of cosmopolitanism played a large role in ultimately labelling these elites, in a way that "feels right" and also allows for debate and discussion to arise around the plural formulations of cosmopolitanism. I do not suggest this label as definitive, but rather as a "best fit" model for these families at this time, based on their aspirations, strategic school choice and active reformulation and production of cosmopolitan forms of distinction. I use the term, "cosmopolitan elite" without suggestion of a singular tribe or entity, but as a provocation for discussion around the

different formulations that are emerging and may continue to do so. For me, it straddles the ground between “local elites” and “global elites.” The families of the world school were not continuously mobile, but rooted – while I would dearly care to argue for a rooted global elite, it appears beyond the bounds of this work. And to use “local elite” seems to be disingenuous to who these families were, in their locations and national fields of power. They were not the most or traditional elites. In Beijing this space was reserved, at the time, for political elites. And in New York, this was as debatable as any of the terms mentioned so far. Therefore, safe ground and authentic representation would suggest a “setting apart” from the local elites, which was the aim for these families.

Ultimately then, I use this term not to suggest or colonise the term of “cosmopolitan elite” as a grand, emerging class of people. Rather, it is a necessary tool used here to represent not only how I found them during my research, but to represent their aims, aspirations and the terms through which they sought to distinguish themselves and their offspring as worthy and legitimate elites; they did so through production of cosmopolitan capital and drew from their own, plural, cosmopolitan habitus.

Although I didn’t theorise these families as elite until during the research, it was clear from the outset, when I first became aware of the world schools, that these were examples of “studying up” (Aguiar, 2016) – exclusive spaces and not necessarily open to strangers. This is a significant point to make. Access to these spaces was privileged and is a unique strength of my work. The most recent example of an insider account was from Shamus Khan at St Paul’s Academy in America (2011). Khan secured access to this prestigious school, where he was an insider to that context, a former student, and undertook paid employment to regain access to the school. As he explains at the beginning of his now published account, at the point of writing the school expressed concerns and sought to block publication. This

type of clash; the need for secrecy, privacy and control of institutional narrative is not strange or uncommon from highly visible and well-known, reputation-keeping institutions. After several years of legal discussions, Khan was able to publish a redacted version of his work. This raises some important issues for the study of elites and, for this research specifically. This work is not a reveal-all, tell-all type of expose, the likes of which were attempted several times during my fieldwork in New York; several by the New York Times and another by a Chelsea-based documentary maker. My work is not of that sort. Yet, there is something unique about the access I had to these particular schools, during their formative early years during which they (the school, teachers, leadership, parents, young people) wrestled with "start-up" matters of burn-out, mission creation, day-to-day culture, relationships, qualifications, learning and school reputation. Reflecting now on the opportunities given to me to be part of these schools during these periods, I am grateful for the insights they provided of being and becoming global elites.

> *"As researchers we can no longer avoid studying up since we must seize the opportunity to expose how and by what means elites entrench themselves in positions of power and secure this by legitimizing their ideas and practices."*
>
> Aguiar, 2016:19

During my research the status of these schools was at an especially precarious and precious moment; reputations were being constructed. I say this to give context to the types of sensitivities that existed. Those sensitivities play a part in orienting to the nature of studying up in this these cases and, to connect this positioning and interest in reputation as part of the ethnography and the data; understanding these people and places is a matter of knowing what scares them, unsettles them, motivates them. For example, at Manhattan World School, the New York Times had undertaken

several flattering stories prior to its opening. The paper was invited to return during the school's first year, but many felt "burned" by the resulting article, "Is This the Best Education Money Can Buy?" (May, 2013). The article highlighted unflattering questions raised by the school's parents. Most notably concerns about the types of food served (were there enough "worldly" snacks?) and the suitability of the local neighbourhood residents after*, "at least one mother fretted that her child had seen the upper outlines of a homeless man's backside en route to a playground*." Parents did not respond positively to being outed in such ways in the Times. Media output afterwards became an entrenched affair with blogs, articles, videos and other social media formats branded and controlled by a dedicated in-house school team. Different sensitivities existed in Beijing. One morning I was introduced to the marketing director quite by accident. They had not been aware of my visit until that moment and commented, "*So you'll be publishing in a journal or something like that? Oh, that's fine, no-one here will read that."* In Beijing, I gained greater access in terms of administrative, business and leadership operations. I attended Board Meeting with founder of school and co-opted members business. The session discussed the business of the school, admissions, attrition, expansion plans and so on. The meeting was translated from Mandarin, for school leadership (English speaking). Bilingual, at times, the Board would directly address me in English to ask questions or to clarify intent, *"We want you here so you can see complete transparency, how we work*…" They asked my opinion on fees. An issue arose around the "rent" paid for land usage and was quickly dealt with saying, *"the cost of doing business, not up for discussion…"* and we moved on. Matters of internet and VPN usage were the only other area explicitly raised as potentially difficult; where the precarity and impact of access to the internet being "switched off" without notice was raised. Everything considered and recognising that no such business-level access was possible in New York, I reflect on the remarkable openness and trust afforded to me. In both places, it was remarked upon more than once that

visitors were not a common feature and certainly, not for lengthy stays. In New York the students remarked that it felt like Times Square with the tours and visitors being brought through, as if on conveyor belts, *"but no-one stays for as long as you or, just hangs out."* Several New York staff members initially had their guard raised to my appearance. After a matter of days and once word-spread from other colleagues, they were content that I was not a reporter or, looking to sensationalise their lives or their professional lives. The enterprise and precarity of opening a new school, with such a high profile meant teachers, and young people too, had a great deal to prove; to families, to investors, to themselves and New York. This sense of being "watched" is an important element of my access to the school, as well as a feature in my data.

Beijing was by far the most low-key and secretive in terms of names of families. Not even teachers would betray the specifics of a families' wealth or fame. And with little ability to Google them, I therefore had no access to such information; drawing a picture from young people and the parents themselves. Access to the "absent parents" who worked around China and beyond was outside the scope of my work. However, in such situations it was interesting to hear from children why their attendance at school in Beijing was important. During my first visit to Beijing I developed good access across the school, from early years (age four) to high school (age seventeen) but didn't find as many appropriate or natural introductions to parents. During my return visit, as the composition of the school shifted to an overwhelming majority of Chinese nationals and the opening of the Early Childhood Centre, parental contact was almost exclusively the focus of my second visit, in natural and welcoming ways. For New York, the balance was the other way around; during my first visit, parents were still hovering, in the school building frequently and unusually so, for the high schoolers, these parents were attending events, showcases and college preparation sessions. The parent café was bursting with life and the natural

interactions, introductions and opportunities to engage were plentiful. On my return visit to NYC, as I will explore, my return to the high school had a feeling of "job done." For them, college applications were in, parents all knew each other and were well-established in their networks and didn't need to be in the school building to facilitate those connections in the same way. This is just one of the ways in which looking back at an ethnography the pathway can seem neat and clean, with "equal" forms of access across these two places. Of course, directionality matters when you view something and seek to understand it; this is also a theme in my work.

I present this detail of my position and access in both sites, not to drown in detail but to give a sense of the workings of the places I studied. And, to give a sense of the levels to which I had quite remarkable access at critical and formative moments of experimentation, strategizing and institution-building and class-building enterprises. The tensions that arose from who these people were and what they were trying to do, during that period of time, was a special moment of engagement and enterprise amongst them; families, parents, teachers, students. I want to make clear that, much like my ethnography, this process for them was not smooth; if anything, quite the opposite. For anyone who has been part of a start-up (business or school or otherwise) there are great investments of time, energy, resources and credibility and legitimacy mixed into these spaces and places; there are tensions and discord as mission statements turn to reality and the tentative nature of how everything "works" or should work speaks to the new composition of people and purpose inside the newly created World Schools. This is the type of environment and formative time period in which my ethnography took place. What is particularly helpful for my research is that the ease, the routines and the culture of the places (hierarchies, etc.) hadn't yet fully been established and were, I would argue more than in any well-established elite school, very much in the process of being determined and negotiated.

Interviews and Participant Observations

	New York	**Beijing**
Fieldwork Length	3.5 months	3.5 months
Student Interviews	31	28
Faculty Interviews	23	24
Parent Interviews	13	17
Media Created	494 Photos/Videos	1208 Photos/Videos

The initial approach I took at the World Schools was to talk to everyone possible and to recognise the constituent groups in each place; the cleaners, janitorial staff, catering staff, security, parents, students, teachers. In some ways this was less fruitful in Beijing due to my limited Mandarin but even the most limited of interactions helped to clarify the environment's etiquette. The approach of staying in common spaces or rooms before and beyond the regular teaching day, during lunches and breaks, created opportunities to engage with the routinely hidden, or less-visible, members of the school community.

My participant observations spanned the early years to high school in Beijing and were more heavily situated in the upper years in New York. Schools; whether in the early years or high school, are about people learning and socialising day-to-day. In the early years that looks like kids narrating everything they do and making contemporaneous connections with other parts of their lives. So, to play "bakery" with them in the kindergarten is to learn about what they like to eat, what they do at the weekends and all the restaurants they have memory of eating in. Some four year olds have a remarkable clarity and purpose for conversations that convey their sense of how things should be done and the rules for role play;

for example, "*No. You broke the rules, you're in jail right now."* Of course, what they do is as important as what they say. Looking at friendship groupings, patterns of association, who sits with whom at lunch and so on are an essential part of the participant observation in school settings. For middle and high school kids, they will tell you what worries them, they will show you what matters to them during lunches and breaks; by either doing it (ping pong with friends, Minecraft on laptop or dancing to K-Pop) or telling you about it. I found the tweens and teens to be highly verbal, some shyer than others but each with their own stories and interests. There was an instinctive, authentic and responsive approach in how I established familiarity and a basis for conversations with these young people. They were most often reflecting, on a daily basis, the stresses and pressures of school and home. And, I was someone who wasn't judging or grading them, which, I found, they welcomed.

By engaging then, with individuals I was able to cumulatively build an idea of common patterns and, most certainly during my first round of fieldwork; their reflections on the mismatches, complexities and overwhelming nature of the expectations being placed on them by school and family. Then there was the stuff they don't really tell you but over time, their interests and priorities shine through; low-attendance at sports events, high attendance at music recitals, avoiding certain streets around the school, no-one interested in a valentine's dance, an overwhelming number of kids and parents attending a Saturday debate competition, an over-subscribed College Admissions talk, an under-attended College Showcase. Being toured around the school by the young people themselves and watching the change in their demeanour and tone showed excitement and drudgery at different moments. I watched who interacted with whom; how security, janitors, cleaners, kitchen staff, teachers, parents and young people engaged with each other; helping me consider how were different people valued in that space and why.

I agree, "…the term "socialisation" seems best suited for describing how people have to act, the "know how" of the range of behaviour within a particular group." (Wolcott, 2008:99) I saw different moments of presentation and performance for audiences within each school. From this, I came to know when young people were "switching on" for presentations or events and when they were "just themselves."

As new institutions of one year and eight years old respectively, at the commencement of fieldwork I had no professional association or experience with either of the schools in New York or Beijing prior to fieldwork or since. I have not been employed by either institution or adjacent body. These were completely new spaces to me. Negotiation of access was straightforward. My personal-professional network aided my introduction and access to both sites. For the New York site, the Head of Upper School (Secondary School) was a former boss, for whom I'd worked in a University laboratory school in Manhattan. His position in this new school venture was undoubtedly the reason I secured access. His name opened doors and by his permission, I was invited to stay at the school for my research. New York was not a new environment for me, neither was the educational contexts of private schooling in Manhattan nor the college and Ivy League landscape. For Beijing, the country, the people and the context was entirely new to me. I was connected to the Head of School for the first time, via email introduction through a mutual good friend and former colleague. My professional contacts then, in education, ensured the process of negotiating access to both schools was possible. This was based on extensive, focused communications via email and in one instance unashamedly co-opting a family holiday to "casually drop in" during the inaugural year of the New York school. I was conscious of presenting myself as flexible, mobile, "just in the neighbourhood." I reflect on this now

as my way of embodying perhaps the notions of hyper-mobility associated to the global elite, which I examined earlier.

Ethnography in Elite Spaces: Intentions for "Seeing"

Both highly visible and intensely private, it could be argued that elite schools are not best understood through just their publication materials, internal or external media but rather, through a situated and ethnographic approach. To engage with elite schooling I chose to step away from interest or judgment in these schools as educational model.[3] From being a teacher, early in my professional life, I understood the social goings-on of a school day may be structured by, but have little to do with, formal curriculum content. Embracing then the notion that schools are highly social and generative spaces, I was aware of and more concerned with understanding the "hidden curriculum" (Jackson, 1968) and socializing processes therein to better know the cultural practices of each place, as is the elusive goal of ethnography (Wolcott, 2008:95). Methodologically oriented in this way I understood ethnography as an approach and also a set of methods; to involve lengthy meaningful contact, participant observation, open-ended interviews and an aim to better understand the perspectives of those in that place (Hammersley, 2006:4). However, as Wolcott suggests, "..ethnography is, and always will be, something of a wild card…you never know what you are getting or what (researchers) will come up with…" (2008:95). That captures both the excitement and challenge of this research. Therefore, the question must be, if I didn't know how it was going to work out, how did I operate and orient my ethnographic process?

[3] In effect, to applaud curriculum would be to offer support for appropriation of other's work, as curriculum models are increasingly packaged and available for use internationally, for example, "Singapore math", "IB curriculum", "Harkness model". I refer to some of the formal aspects of the curriculum however, data generated around and involving "formal" moments of teaching was never noted in an evaluative way.

At the early stages of my project my understanding of ethnography was as a largely descriptive enterprise, related to a contextualized understanding of the social and cultural worlds of the people or places being studied. Indeed, "the first payoff from qualitative research lies in its potential for richly descriptive accounts of elites' lifeworlds, values and the meanings they attribute to practices" (Cousin et al, 2018). Embracing the notion that class and cultures are relational and negotiated, an orienting feature then was a focus on cultural practices and production. This focus on patterns of behaviour and actions guided my initial fieldwork. It was important in these spaces to acknowledge, no-one just ends up at a private school; there are class motivations, financial choices made and invariably an admissions process that has been undertaken, with varying degrees or academic or social challenges. I wasn't sure what form these challenges would take in the schools, but was oriented to look for the intentions, motivations, aspirations, processes and practices being negotiated amongst the behaviours and actions. So, it wasn't a matter of proving or explaining why class (re)production exists in these places but instead to show how, in different ways and in spaces the ways of being elite were calculated, negotiated, invoked, rearticulated and (re)produced.

I agree with Allaine Cerwonka (2007) that it is impossible to think that our conceptual knowledge doesn't come with us to the field. However, "…the hermeneutics of ethnography, however, involves a reading of social practices through theoretical concepts without simply reducing the practices to a mere "illustration" of the theory" (Ibid: 16). My ethnographic work was interpretive in the sense that,

> *"To capture and convey the cultural orientation of a group in a well-formed statement about a people's "worldview" or eidos is the*

epitome of what ethnography is about – at least for the interpretively inclined ethnographer"

(Wolcott, 2008:98)

Orienting questions that guided my initial day to day observations and interactions were in many ways, standard ethnographic exploration: What are the concepts, beliefs, principles of action and organization that could be attributed successfully to the members of that group? (Wolcott, 2008:82) Simply put, Who is here? Why are they here? What do they do and want? All asked and recorded in relationship to each site, that authentic exploration quicky took on form. And if I fast forward to the end period of my fieldwork, after being inducted to and living within these spaces, my aim was to be able to know, guess or predict the shape of what was happening or intended; to feel a grasp or command over expectations and ways of operating there. All of which, might point to "going native" in a space, but this is not something I'm claiming, rather I carved a space for myself within each of these schools while retaining my positionality as a researcher, as I will soon describe, alongside matters of access.

There are several roles that an ethnographer plays throughout their research. The expectations that are particularly ethnographic involve the multiplicity of "shifting positions of the ethnographer as "fieldworker" – "analyst" – "writer" (Borgnakke, 1996:243-273). This is also expressed as a hermeneutic process (Blaikie, 2010:120), and I appreciate Geertz's expression of this particularly as, "seeing, understanding and then communicating" (Thomson, 2018:70). During the fieldwork and seeing portion of my research, these primary expectations were sought through an authentic exploration of class work and class practices.

I recognize that class can be something, “encoded in people’s sense of self-worth and their attitudes to an awareness of others – in how they carry themselves as individuals” (Savage, 2000:107). However, I also wish to draw attention to the being and becoming moments of class practices; the times where families are in transition periods, aiming to extend or reinforce their cultural capital. Rather than being considered as a permanent or fixed entity, cultural capital is (re)produced (deliberately actioned and created, in fits and starts and in concert with institutions such as schools). So while in the field, I was aware of the newly opened status of the schools, the lack of engrained school culture/rules and by being there amongst families new to the school, I recognised the clashing of home and school cultures as a disequilibrium. What this means is that I was aware of not dealing with class as an inevitability, but something that is made and remade, and was being (re)made by these people, under certain conditions and at certain times. The seeing and understanding portions of fieldwork fluctuated then, as I drew on my innate, now explicit, theories of class (re)production and the workings of the newly created private world schools.

I recognise in schools particularly the multiple expectations placed on the young people; “The term “socialisation” seems best suited for describing how people *have to act*, the “know how” of the range of behaviour acceptable within a particular group” (Wolcott, 2008:99). And, all the while, these day-to-day expectations, performances and reflections from young people was something I aimed to understand relationally, that,

> *“social divisions are important cleavages in society that affect us all. Social divisions are not just about society at a national or global level, they are about what separates one individual from the next.”* (Payne, 2013:12)

Of course, coming to understanding of socialisation, interactions and positioning of those in both world schools relied upon the ethnographic skills of observation, participation and building relationships in order to interview and engage. These essential elements of trust and relationships will now be discussed.

Doing Ethnography & "Being There": Relationships, Trust and Co-constructing Data

As a methodological imperative of ethnography "being there" helped me to unpick the extent to which these families were not simply in these spaces too, but the ways they were rooted there and products of there. That integration of people to place was such an important part of my early exploration. This seemed, to me, to give an interesting contrast to the very purpose and reasons they were assumed to have chosen the world schools; a cosmopolitan education, an expansive view of the global, an interest in the global. Resolving their embeddedness in place with the sense of freedom and mobility inherent in cosmopolitanism, was a central part of my work.

Having identified compelling cases and committed to an ethnographic process and methods, the alignment to ethnography and its rich tradition brought comfort more than practical advice. Following a resolve to dig, be grounded and "be there" the initial periods of fieldwork very quickly required a few orienting points in order to prevent it from becoming "maddeningly ambiguous" (Wolcott, 1990:48). Participant observation acknowledges that it is rare to remain uninvolved or attempt to be invisible within a community you access as a researcher. Nor, was this ever my aim. This is particularly true over extended periods commonly involved with ethnographic work. Being situated within schools in particular I saw it as undesirable to attempt to watch from the sidelines or remain silent at the back of a room. While

observations were helpful at varying periods and in different types of spaces, I was also interested to have those spaces and events interpreted with, by and through the participants. Following the suggestion of Geertz (1973:23) to embrace a “highly participative” approach I considered this to be both a methodological enhancement and necessity within an educational setting. My professional standing as a teacher was perhaps the most useful tools for access though; since it was the teachers and parents and young people I needed to connect with. Establishing and developing these relationships was an essential part of the ethnographic process.

In order to orient myself and to achieve the responsiveness and flexibility that came to characterize my ethnography, I initially mapped out the social spaces within the schools, discerning where different groupings of adults and students would congregate. I literally located spaces and names as the first step to integration and fluidity in my interactions. Virgine Magnat argues, “that ethnography is a process akin to apprenticeship whereby “researching” is an embodied, emplaced learning process where one is immersed in the local to achieve new ways of knowing.” (Magnat in Aguiar & Schneider, 2016: 21). Embodiment then can be seen as a method where, “To achieve embodiment, one must be willing to let go, to disorient oneself and even lose a sense of control to truly begin to learn in a path towards empathy.” (Aguiar & Schneider, 2016:21) In this way, Virgine Magnat challenges notions of studying up/down and I suggest that in this way, I was aiming to diminish any such notions day-to-day.

Recognising hierarchies and relational day-to-day was in fact, the bread and butter of my research. This is something I can relate to within an ethnographic method, since there is a need to close any distance or divisions between researcher and participants, to negotiate a way to be of use or value to each other. That was a challenge of course. I’m monolingual and so in Beijing I made use of this limitation and had young people help

me when needed. It's worth saying that all the schooling and most socialisation was conducted in English. I was a thirty-something, and still am, a white, red-headed female and that is not an inconspicuous feature in either a Beijing or a New York school. So, I did the best I could to find a way to give myself a non-strangeness. After introductions and an overview of my research I would turn to the kids for advice, "what classes should I take?" "Where should I hang out?" By letting them direct me and, by seeking their insights to daily tasks and looking to learn more about their lives and worldview I aimed to change and shift positionalities according to the focus at the time. In the younger grades I was akin to a teacher. In the high school, a person in jeans who hung out and typed a lot. And, for the most part, where better to ask folks what's going on than a place where everyone else is asking, "what's going on? Where should I be right now?" In context, when the students were working to an A-F day schedule (A rotating 6 day timetable) that made sure no two Mondays were ever the same, then, it helped me to fit in. A lot of the time no-one really knew where they were meant to be and so, I fit in on those terms. What I gained from my time in the space was a kinship of sorts that was affirmed at the end of term when one of the high-schoolers said, "Come on, celebrate with us, you've survived this with us!" I lived these periods of time with these people; I attended high school with these kids and did community weekend projects with others. I listened to teachers and supported them with marking while they spoke of the challenges of being part of a start-up school; to which I could relate.

Ethical Issues & Limitations

"Access" and Consent: An Ongoing Matter

The young people, teachers and parents in both schools were aware that I was drawing a picture of them in this place. Knowing I would narrate the

final product, the ethnography of these spaces, for me the co-construction of data was an essential part of the knowledge creation during fieldwork. Specific to ethnography then is the generation of data in person, in context. What became clearer throughout my fieldwork was the nature of the aspirations and strategies involved in class-making. I became embedded, with them, in the educational landscapes in which they were situating themselves and, the pressures on the young people themselves, as the products and outcomes of the social mobility and success of their parents. This sense of expectation and stress was heavily evident and at times, I was positioned as a non-teacher buddy while some kids cried or took time out to decompress from the pressures and disjunctures of the school experiences. It was intense, and in different ways in different places; dress code expectations were a particular disjuncture for females in New York. Being able to talk about those kinds of things and return to conversations day over day allowed a cumulative responsibility and consent to emerge. A great deal of this ethnography was about being part of a space where the young people were grappling with and trying to understand, meet or negotiate the terms under which they were working and being pressured. Establishing relationships and joining in with the two distinct social worlds of Beijing World School and Manhattan World School was a significant aspect of the research. Given their participation, matters of consent were important to me.

> *"The terms negotiating entry (Marshall and Rossman, 1989) or gaining access (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992; Glesne and Peshkin, 1992) suggest that this is a single event that, once achieved, requires no further thought; those terms downplay the continual negotiation and renegotiation of your relationship with those you study. Clearly the process is much more complex than this, and rarely involves any approximation to total access. Nor is such access usually necessary for a successful study; what you want is a*

relationship that enables you to ethically learn the things you need to learn in order to validly answer your research questions."

Maxwell, 1996:66

My presentation of self was important in gaining access, not just initially but in the everyday "over and over again" way that is required when becoming integrated in a place and being known by people in that space. For my research to progress and be successful in these spaces I had to decide and be able to project quickly and concisely, who I was and why I was there; to condense my validation and credentials into kind of elevator pitch and yet do so in a natural and engaging way; no mean feat. The pace and nature of these schools ensured that initial meetings were akin to speed-dating where you had about 30 seconds to a minute of someone's time and, assuming these encounters went smoothly, people were more inclined to offer more of their time and attention subsequently. As explained above, I found that in order to "be there" I had a significant job of social warm-up to achieve, as an essential catalyst for the core methods I hoped to employ.

I was often made aware of how unusual my position was, as an extended "visitor" that was not a staff member. Yet, through that I established a sense of trust between myself, the administration and teachers at the school. I tried, where possible to double-up the ways in which I could be a helpful body; an audience for student presentations, substitute teaching a class, escorting field-trips, coaching after school soccer, and talking to kids about their homework/writing and university plans. This felt like quid pro quo but was my way of giving myself to the space and what needed to happen there. I never critiqued or observed lessons with a view to educational or pedagogical feedback and teachers knew that was not the focus of my research. However, given my professional experiences, there were many occasions where conversations between teachers would naturally occur

following a lesson and I saw these as moments of relationship building. As such, these moments were all part of the ethnography although the pedagogy of individual lessons or teachers were not the delineated or singular focus.

> *"Knowledge of the other is not just a product of our theoretical thought and research activity; it is a consequence of critical experiences, relationships, choices, and events both in the field and in the quotidian world of our professional and family lives…it takes its validity not from our detachment and objectivity but from the very possibility of our mutuality, the existence of the relationship itself."*

Michael Jackson (1989:34-35) in Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997:136)
For me, there was a cumulative process where rapport and intimacy operated on a few levels; with young children I was a playmate, class assistant, teacher, participant, learner and friendly ear or homework helper. With teachers I was a colleague, an observer, a professional sounding board and friend. For parents I found rapport and intimacy was about finding a shared purpose or drive; when they felt they could help me, inform me, meet a need; that was a relationship they respected and they engaged with that; they were happy to assume the role of authoritative figure and to impart insight or perspective they felt I should have. While there were occasions I had pre-defined questions, a large part of my work involved, "listening for the story" and taking direction from interviewees, responding to their voice and focus (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997:120) At those moments, I experienced the co-construction and generation of data.

Largely, there was an interest in almost immediate feedback, wanted from across a range of participants. Parents, teachers and students were conscious then that I was going to be writing about and presenting a view of them; "*Are you going to tell people what it's really like here?"* asked a young

person at soccer training. And on my second day in New York, *"How are your findings coming along?"* For some of the high school kids in NYC they were put more at ease when I recognised the stress and struggles they had; they felt seen and heard and this was in contrast to the image they felt they had to portray as, "at ease" and innately brilliant.

My relationships with parents were forged through casual run-ins and subsequent meet ups. Parents would revel at being treated as the experts and knowledgeable other; and this worked best when it was prefaced by me with some shared insight to the struggles, strategies, aims at play in the given context. This wasn't a difficult ask of people because "*studying what is going on here*" drew focus to that in which they were already heavily invested and focused on. And, talking about their children, themselves and their "presentation of self" was very much a repeat of what I often heard as the content of conversation between parents themselves, getting to know each other better, making networks and scoping out opportunities. Again, embracing the organic and authentic nature of the ethnographic process in each space, I responded to opportunities (such as parents walking by) when I was able, I suggested follow ups if it seemed natural and accepted snowballing recommendations that quite often helped to expand my connections.

For parents, I often took the first meeting as an introduction and would ask if they would like to be interviewed as some point. This left it open for them to come back to me, which for the majority of the time, they did. The associations I made and the basic social skills of active listening and responding during interviews, made this an enjoyable and fruitful aspect of the ethnography, in ways that did not feel as if I was studying-up on a daily basis. On reflection, I take this as a positive aspect.

"The nurturing of rapport in the interview setting by developing

closeness and intimacy with the interviewees themselves in order to remove barriers and boundaries between the researchers and researched, and people of different class."

(Aguiar, 2016:13)

Fieldnotes as the Cardinal Text: Making the Description an Ethnography

"You will never go wrong building, and building upon, a solid foundation of descriptive work."

(Wolcott, 2008:221)

In both contexts, there was opportunity and acceptability of having my laptop on me, open and being used at almost all times of day. Teachers and students often walked around the school grounds with their laptops and so I was no different in that regard. This worked really well for me because I touch type rapidly; fast enough to catch detail and pose questions to myself in text form, for consideration later. Fieldnotes therefore were a central feature of this work. In classrooms, lunchrooms, breaks and libraries, it was not unusual to see someone working at a laptop and this worked for me. "*Okay if I keep notes for myself?"* was a standard question I asked anyone to whom I thought it necessary or if in class, polite. If teachers asked kids to close laptops and listen, I'd lower my screen too, as a sign of respect.

In the early stages I found myself writing and reviewing fieldnotes as a way to make sense of what had been happening that day. These fieldnotes focused on introductions, my choices, names of people I'd met, names and details of people who had been mentioned. To keep myself right and in an act that took the effort of a teacher with a new class in the first week of school, I'd write, draw and make maps of people and their names/associations so I could do the smooth and seemingly effortless

recognition when I crossed paths the next day. Being there and being the new person there, aiming to fit in and be involved, integrated required an exhausting social jigsaw of names and faces where everyone else only has to remember one name, but you have many more to grapple with. So with the effort of having started at a new job but aware that I had a limited time ahead, I found success and encouragement in the ways that people would respond to being remembered and then, would snowball and introduce me to other people or to their class as a result.

But the writing of fieldnotes was a central conceptual aspect of this research, not just procedural. In order to capture and record the "authentic complexity" (Borgnakke, 2018:46) my fieldnotes were recorded (typed, handwritten and audio recorded) as a continuous sequence, forming a "cardinal text" (Ibid) for my work. As indicated in the table above, this included use of photographs and short videos, for my reference of spaces, signage, artwork and the like. Fieldnotes for me were therefore multimedia, including photographs, brochures, texts, audio and video clips. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed, with corresponding notes in my cardinal text accompanying each interview.

It is from this cardinal text that I have been able to reconstruct and reflect on the process of my research. On reflection of the core aims of ethnographic work I have asked of myself if and if so, how I was able to get at the life worlds and intricacies of these elites. Since it is "Intimate, long-term acquaintance with a group of people ought to enrich an account, not be regarded as a threat to it." (Wolcott, 2008:99) From fieldnotes, I recognise that I employed a range of strategies. One week, I didn't refuse a single invitation; I went where I was asked, recommended and invited. At other times, I'd sit in the same place for as many occasions and periods as was possible; I'd work and write, noticing the space and its different uses. From this I realised I was doing okay when one of the

teachers in the school said, *"Wow, you're everywhere…"* after finding me in what they regarded to be disparate and random places around the school. At other times, I'd pick a spot and aim to be consistently there. Kids would use the same tables and benches and so we'd share space and either get talking or not. I was given my own office in Beijing and sometimes I'd work in there and kids would ask to come in for a quiet place to work too. I'd sit in the café and people would decide if they had time to talk with me. I got a lot of invites that way and it gave folks a chance to feel like they'd chosen to spend time with me. If kids recommended a class, I'd take that to the teacher and ask if it was okay if I sat in. Every time, having come from a kids' recommendation that the class was "good" the teachers were delighted to have me join. I joined the Beginner Spanish class; that was stressful but the kids enjoyed seeing me struggle and I let them laugh at me. We did homework together. They chastised me when I switched classes and let me know how disappointed they were in me for not sticking with it. In truth, once my fieldnotes were heavily featuring my Spanish vocabulary exercises, I couldn't actually use my brain space to learn Spanish and do the ethnography at the same time. It was too difficult. This matters for the cardinal text that is the foundation of my work because, there were times where I had to fully give my brain space to just doing whatever was the activity or relationship at hand and then, reflect soon afterwards; in the coffee shop, in the study hall and so on. if I wasn't observing and typing, observing and writing, I was doing and then writing directly after. Since the fieldnote collection was the starting point for my analysis and interpretation of data, it is worth noting the procedures that compiled it.

Writing Ethnography

Movement from the cardinal text of my fieldnotes to a completed ethnographic text was, as Allaine Cerwonka suggests, a process where

"…analytic insights…grow out of a hermeneutic process, that continually and self-consciously moves between theory and empirical, ethnographic detail" (2007:16). Drawing influence from traditional ethnographic scholars such as Malinowski and Geertz, I took support from their approaches, resolute in their stance that ideas will gradually emerge from the evidence and data in the fieldnotes. For me, this was a gradual process, informed further by the analytical contrast and conversation between the two cases. It began towards the end of my first round of fieldwork, shaped my intensions and focus for a second round, and continued thereafter. And it was in pursuit of what Geertz calls "thick description" (1973) that I was able to productively engage with my fieldnotes to begin the "understanding" part of ethnography, interpreting and building a sense of how each small part of data could contribute to a picture of the whole.

The writing itself provided a route for interpretation and analysis. This included the reading and note-making on my field notes, the reading and categorization of fieldnotes and, most importantly, the daily interpretations and analytical journal which formed a commentary on and my first written attempts at categorizing, organizing and theorizing my data. The writing process required a similar level of embodiment as the fieldwork, in the sense that free-writing had to come before organization or structure could be imposed or, in most of my work, realized and drawn-out. This process began with each ethnographic fieldsite being treated as a distinct text. In this way, there were several layers and rounds of "tacking between" (Cerwonka, 2007:15) theory and empirical data to undertake an interpretive analysis both in New York and Beijing, allowing concepts to emerge, suggestive of theory. As Cerwonka describes, "The tacking in ethnographic analysis is more a matter of moving in our interpretive analysis between theory and empirical social facts in a dialectic that often reshapes our theoretical ideas as well as our view of the empirical data." (2007:15) Sometimes this resulted in pieces of written text, narratives of a significant

scene or series of encounters. And, it was through the production of these written scenes that two things happened, I was able to assume the role of narrator in regards to these spaces and as a result, I began to engage in the contrast work between the two sites.

Some factors had to be considered while analysing and writing towards the final ethnographic text. First of all, the aim for writing – the need for an ethnographic narrative – had to be resolved with the reality of not only one, but two diverse and complex sites. Geertz suggests that readers were not to be "overcome by sheer abundance" and nor could ethnographer expect to be believed simply because of the "extensiveness of their descriptions" (Geertz, 1988:4) Writing as a process of analysis and refinement was somewhat overshadowed therefore by the sheer expectation of condensing, synthesizing and producing a rich, but not overly extensive, readable product. As described above, I attempted to chop my way into such long grass by illuminating themes, ideas, surprises and scenes for particular attention and writing treatment. Through this repeated writing and collection of scenes I found a process of refinement. The second persistent factor that required attention during the writing process was the matter of presentation and representation, an aspect of ethical responsibility I took seriously. Gille and ORiain helped me recognized the overall purpose of an ethnographer as "interrogator not chronicler" (2000). This enabled me to resolve matters around my own position as interpreter and narrator of the fieldnotes and, in the end, to purposefully include and represent the range of actors present within the fieldwork.

Summary

This chapter has provided an account of the ethnographic methods that were employed in this research. It outlined the choices of cases, world schools in Beijing and New York and clarified this design in three ways; the definition of this research as a global ethnography, the theorization of cases

as “globe-making projects” and thirdly, justified the use of contrast-ethnography as a manner consistent with a world or cosmopolitan sociology. I then examined and reflected upon the interpretive nature of my research, with insight to the methods and process of fieldwork, including consideration of co-construction of data, matters of access to elite spaces and the lived reality of “studying up.” This chapter concluded with insight to the three portions of ethnographic work, as relayed by Geertz, “seeing, understanding, communicating” with a focus on the extended role of writing in the analysis, interpretation and presentation of an ethnography.

It is the presentation now to which I turn. A central challenge of this work was consideration of how best to present the global, contrast-ethnography to a reader. What follows, are three substantive “data” chapters, each with a layer of analysis that engages with, explores and interprets the production of elite cosmopolitanism. As a matter of class-making and (re)production – through familial and parental strategies, through institutional associations and strategies and through embodiment amongst the young people themselves. The first two substantive chapters focus on the elite parents and the production of their cosmopolitan aspirations.

4.“Giving My Child the World” New Elites in Beijing: Production of Cosmopolitan Aspirations

The elite parents are the focus of these first two substantive chapters. These parents found themselves in new positions of prosperity, able to provide private education and eager to position their child(ren) advantageously within a globalizing world. It is their cosmopolitan aspirations that set the tone for World Schools and encapsulate what it means to be a worthy and powerful global elite. It is through their aspirations I explore the meanings, motivations for, and ways in which, the parents are mobilizing their economic capital to live in particular places, in materially-privileged ways and send their children to world schools. My data captures a moment in time where parents' life ambitions and work have refocused onto their children, with an increased emphasis on legitimizing their own and their child's elite status. Simply put, these elite parents wish to give their children “the world” and are in a financial position to enact their ambitions. Yet, what is the nature and substance of elite cosmopolitan aspirations? To what do the elite parents aspire and why? With this in mind, I locate these elites and consider their cosmopolitan aspirations as a product of and produced within particular times, places and social spaces.

This chapter shows that amongst two formations of global elites, there is a shared aspiration for “freedom.” However, through understanding embodied structures of legitimacy, of what constitutes a worthy and meritous cosmopolitan elite in each context, this chapter shows the elites in Beijing and those in New York produce contrasting agentic characteristics in relation to the type of freedom they imagine and pursue. In turn then, this chapter is the first of three substantive “data” chapters, laying the foundations for understanding the provincialization of elite cosmopolitanism; This chapter locates and explores the production of elite cosmopolitanism through cosmopolitan aspirations, two contrasting formulations of what

global elites consider to be aspirational, worthy and powerful in their global world(s).

This chapter explores these elite aspirations as a matter of class practices in a globalizing world where cultural production is understood as part of securing one's social position (Bourdieu, 1984, 1993). I draw upon the relationship between Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus to pursue a Bourdieusian style of generative sociology, interested in *"… the manifold logics of power (which) cannot limit itself to drawing an objectivist topology of distributions of capital*" (Bourdieu, 1996:xvi). In other words, the elite status of these parents and how they got there, matters. How they see themselves, their children and their position in the world is just as significant as their bank balance and ability to pay school fees; joining and being in these schools took effort, despite any assertions to the contrary and, enrolment in particular was a task that required presentation, performance and strategic thinking, rather than luck or accident. Their embodiment and enactments of these cosmopolitan aspirations are recognised then as the, *"…the social genesis and implementation of the categories of thoughts and action through which the participants in the various social worlds under investigation come to perceive and actualize (or not) the potentialities they harbour"* (Bourdieu, 1996:xvi).

This chapter explores the parent groupings and, in Bourdieu's terms, their position-taking and position-making in social space. It is this combined consideration of field and of habitus, as embodied social structures, that allows me to build the narrative(s) of what it means to be cosmopolitan, powerful and worthy in a globalizing world, retaining a focus on the relational making and remaking of elite legitimacy and as they call it, "freedom." The combination of field and habitus offers a pertinent scaffold for understanding the efforts of elite (re)production since it offers a route to understand the desired social trajectories within these elite families;

> *"given that habitus is…linked to a position (in social space)...it always tends to express, through schemata that are its embodied form, both the space of the different or opposed positions constitutive of social space (for example, top/bottom) and a practical stance toward this space (something like, "I'm at the top or the bottom and I'd better stay here").* (Bourdieu, 1996:2)

The construction of this chapter involved situating parents and tracing their social worlds by way of their socio-historical journeys and their resulting, embodied social structures. This includes consideration of enacted and projected expectations for themselves and their children, implied by their commitment to the world school and their day-to-day living in particular locations and time periods. It is the relationship between habitus and field, the *"illusio, the investments in the game"* (Ibid:3) that is of particular assistance in this chapter and in understanding the freedoms to which new global elites aspire,

> *"…because social strategies are never determined unilaterally by the objective constraints of the structure any more than they are by the subjective intentions of the agent. Rather, practice is engendered in the mutual solicitation of position and disposition, in the now-harmonious, now-discordant encounter between "social structures and mental structures," history "objectified" as fields and history "embodied" in the form of this socially patterned matrix of preferences and propensities that constitute habitus"* (Ibid).

The field of power is, of course, a “space of invisible relations” (Bourdieu, 1996). Yet through my ethnographic narratives in this chapter I begin the work of this research to purposefully stitch together the materiality of elite lives with the production of their global social worlds. And is so doing, I include some extended ethnographic “walks” through the school neighbourhoods and cities in order to provide context and contrast with the world schools. As such, the two halves of this chapter provide tangible, sensory and geographically situated accounts of the production of cosmopolitan aspirations, first considering Beijing and then New York, where I show the cityscapes and lives within them as equally formative in the production of elite cosmopolitanism in each case.



Photograph 2: The Temple of Heaven, Beijing, with CBD on the low horizon (right). April 2016.

China contains nearly sixty ethnic groups, yet the more common perceptions of the country include symbols such as the Great Wall, famously unsuccessful at limiting invasion but with an intent and scale that suggests insularity and a desire for protection. Beijing doesn't immediately spring to mind when thinking of cosmopolitanism. Most recently isolated from contemporary Western influences until the mid-nineteen seventies, the People's Republic of China maintains its own firewall and internet restrictions, a contemporary form of insularity and control. These aspects bely the engagement, integration and influence of China in our globalizing world. The production of (in)visible cosmopolitan aspirations happens here. Within Beijing a group of elite parents are invested in finding and making a new kind of status; internationally informed and nationally rooted. Here in Beijing, I show the roots and development of not only a World School, with an interest in providing cosmopolitan education, but this new group of elite Chinese parents, with cosmopolitan aspirations for themselves and their children; what I show here as the development of a Global China Mind. It is here, in the political capital Beijing, that we find the roots of and motivations for the contemporary cosmopolitan aspirations of the new global elite, aspirations that long for freedom, borne from experiences of control and opportunity.

Made In China, Made By China

Standing beside the Temple of Heaven on a clear day in early Spring 2016, the towers of the Central Business District were visible on the horizon, close enough to see yet distant enough to dampen the height and contrasting international architecture. Demanding more immediate attention, the imperial altar dominated with ornately decorated wood and colourful glazed tiles. The unique elevation of the site allowed a compelling three-hundred-and-sixty-degree view of Beijing. The surrounding hectares

of parkland pushed back the modern city; seemingly flat and expansive[4]. At this UNESCO heritage site school groups visited to appreciate and understand ancient customs. Tourists clambered for a once in a lifetime photograph, myself included. For others, the complex was a place of daily business or recreation, a nice environment to trade traditional crafts or spend time with friends. The elderly social groupings looked happy where they were. They sat and played, talked and stretched. Whilst appreciating the beauty of the ancient site, the statuesque and architectural concentration of the CBD to the east suggested an alternative location of modern power. Beyond the glazed blue tiles of the Temple's rooftops the city's high-rise silhouette spiked dramatically at just that one point. More than twice the height of any other structure in Beijing, the business district's towers were beacons for those interested in the newest five-star hotels, serviced apartments, branded shopping and commercial opportunities. That is where the Beijing World School and a number of its families were located. Long-time residents would show me the ways ancient heritage sites had been refurbished and made suitable for visiting tourists. As part of the fabric and development of the city as a whole, such parks and destinations were not simply sanitized and vacated awaiting visitors but rather, embraced daily by local residents and woven into their routines. Yet, in other parts of the city, development had rendered places unrecognizable creating a whole new cityscape; the Central Business District (CBD) was one such example.

When work began on the China World Trade Centre (CWTC) in 1985 many of the Beijing World School parents were in their teens or twenties. Some of the youngest parents were just children themselves. At that time the CBD

[4] There are, of course, many tall modern buildings, apartments and hotels, in Beijing. The complex I stayed at was itself sixteen floors tall, as were many of the apartment buildings in the area. However, the CBD towers I refer to were the tallest structures in the city, with seventy to eighty floors in the tallest, as of 2014. Others were under construction at the time and were designed to exceed the existing heights of nearby towers. The vastness of space between buildings and the available sites of elevation in the city offered a "flattening" sense to the city especially when compared to the super-tall towers in the CBD.

was an area disparagingly characterized by developers as a *"…dusty industrial quarter…where the factory walls bore giant, though fading, red characters exhorting the workers to study Chairman Mao Thought."*[5] It was closer to the 1990's when international style towers appeared in the form of China World Trade Towers and the Japanese designed Jing-Guang Centre. The exterior of the latter building used standard skyscraper materials but had a shaping all of its own. By 2014, displaying a complete exterior of pixelated silver mirrors and the footprint of an isosceles trapezoid, Jing-Guang's longest front edge curved outwards like the proud chest of a short, elderly relative; a grandparent now surrounded by younger and taller generations. Perhaps more remarkable in its original time and place, the fifty-storey tower was the tallest building in mainland China for almost twenty-years, signaling an epicenter of change in Beijing during that reign. Reflecting upon itself as a catalyst for change, its nearby contemporary, China World (as the Trade Centre called itself) proudly claimed to be an icon and symbol of change that, *"…defines the city in the international imagination."*[6] Unique in their ocular design, the original cluster of World Trade buildings were rebranded Guómào (國貿world trade) when the subway station was established. When I visited, the area's previous name Dabeiyao (大北窑 vast northern furnace) was no longer used except on the route maps of the cheap local buses. Strategically placed in the eye line of embassy districts, China World further claimed to have improved this central eastern part of the city, turning it into, *"...,the place where China meets the world."*[7] Perhaps understanding this motto as an invitation, Starbucks made the China World complex home to its first ever store in the People's Republic in the late nineties.

[5] http://www.cwtc.com/en/about.html (Accessed January 2016) Official website has since been updated to accommodate new construction and overall development of the suite of buildings at China World. All mention of Dabeiyao or reflections on early construction are now absent from the site.
[6] As in footnote two.
[7] As in footnote two.

Transformations in the landscape and make up of Beijing weren't simply stories I inherited from people I met. I experienced them myself within and across my two visits and within the first twenty-four hours of arriving in bitter cold January in 2014. Eager to scope out and understand a new place, on my first afternoon I took pictures and watched the stutter and flow of diverse vehicles at a nearby intersection in the business district; shiny SUV's and chugging motor-trikes piled high with boxed goods. I saw heavy wires bundled up at telegraph posts, each capably taking the strain of an inordinate number of cables, with excess rolled up presumably awaiting future connections. Lost in the immediate detail, the foreground took all of my attention until night fell. With the fresh blue sky of the next morning, I was introduced to a whole new cityscape, suddenly there, with depth and a skyline hidden until that moment, in deep grey and brown smog. Across the months I was there, the same disappearance and re-emergence of landmarks became a noticeable but less remarkable occurrence. During the New Year break and during a state visit by the Obamas, the factories were supposedly closed and the blue sky shone, free of smog. Pollution remained a constant and looming feature of time and place, reminding me that the city had not always been like this. A great deal of people lived and worked here, making it what it was, including the factories and cars presumed to contribute to the pollution.[8] Restrictions were supposedly placed on cars whereby odd and even license plates were alternatingly restricted on the ring roads. I heard that for those who could afford it, they simply had two cars to avoid inconvenience. Taxi fares had apparently just been raised for the first time in a decade. I saw shiny custom-skinned cars drive next to delivery cycles and young families of three huddled on mopeds. Overcoming basic shared language, a taxi-driver and I once gawped and laughed together at a custom pink and glittered Mercedes honking its way through the traffic; a sign of new money. Things had

[8] Around 20 million people were registered as living in Beijing for 2013 official figures, which accounts only for those with household registration, hukou.

changed and were changing, daily, in front of our eyes and with some of the evidence in our lungs and nostrils.



Visual 3 & 4: View from my window on first and second day in Beijing. January 2014.

As I sought to describe and make sense of the Business District, I found myself trawling my mathematical knowledge of shapes; how odd some of the skyscrapers looked to me at first, with decorative additions and assortments combined in ways I had never seen before in large scale architecture. Then, by 2016, as the newest world trade towers emerged, how innovative and fresh the bamboo-shaped tower appeared. It was as if an awkward growth spurt, visible through the varied and eclectic buildings, had come good. It was in this context of change, symbolized by the CBD, that the world school parents had their formative years, during an extraordinary period of economic growth, with their experiences during that period becoming crucial in the development of their cosmopolitan outlook and aspirations. Beijing itself was a dynamic and rapidly changing space

before, during and after my visits. Nearly forty years after it became law, the limitation of the one-child policy was relaxed in 2015. Yet I found that in practice, there were already many exceptions and families with multiple siblings, happy and able to pay the fine for having more than one child. In a city where many had evolved from bicycles to BMWs but where neither dominated, I found Beijing and the world school parents at a moment in time where the structures of government control were being experimentally pushed.



Visual 5: Busy Intersection, Beijing



Visual 6: Electric Wires, Beijing



Visual 7: Vehicles in Beijing.

Parents of Beijing World School were, mostly if not wholly, educated in China. They were products of the national education system. Yet this was the very system from which they wished their children to be freed. Their choice of Beijing World School therefore signifies an important aspect of their cosmopolitan aspirations. The parents were moving their children from a system in which they themselves had been successful, and which supported many if not all of them, to take up highly competitive places at Chinese universities. It is the motivations and meanings associated to their rejection of the national-local schooling system which characterizes their aspirations and provide insight into what these parents value.From parents' own stories of their school experiences I found some of the substantive reasons for their choosing the world school. Stories reflected harsh, strictness and control. While an odd kind or unkind teacher was identified from years passed, it was the control of the system and the expectations of compliance that featured as a main concern; resolutely not a matter of personal interactions so much as the systemic and narrow expectations for "good students." Parents especially lamented that their areas of study at university were chosen for them; an aspect that was mentioned amongst almost all parents I spoke to. Yet, I found most parents preferred to pivot between crediting their experiences as purposeful and rejecting them as

unhelpful forms of control; and it is this negotiated stance that characterizes the Beijing cosmopolitan aspirations.

Having coffee with a world school parent one Friday night in the CBD, the father recalled with detail and pride, the opportunities made available to him while growing up in Beijing "thirty or forty years ago." Ming was chosen by his teacher for free music lessons, giving him skills he credited with enabling his "creative thought" and allowing him to be "different." He beamed proudly and laughed as his remembered his time at Peking University,

> "I set up my own band, I was a rock star. So, I'm a little bit different from other students. In the 1990's we wrote songs, played rock (he laughs)."

A millionaire, with at least two properties in Beijing, Ming was keen to tell me about his experiences, while his seven-year-old son Jin, spent time with his English tutor at the table opposite. Ming had worked abroad while the CBD developed rapidly. His story, while unique in style and humour contained similar themes to many world school parents I met. Growing up, Ming went to what was then, Number Two Middle School, associated to Beijing Normal University. He recalled it as an international, experimental laboratory school with classmates from Japan, UK and the United States. Such schools were present in Beijing from the mid nineteen seventies, accepting foreign students into certain classes within prestigious public schools. Ming remembered such students staying only for a few weeks or months and sitting at the back of the class. But he credited them with giving him "*some international sense."* Sharing classrooms with these students, his consecration through academic and musical in the bamboo flute were all credited as the main influences for his choice to work overseas and eventually self-fund his MBA study in the UK. Ming reflected, *"I said, oh, I*

have some foreigners in the classroom with me. I thought, one day I can go abroad and become foreign student like them." Showing signs that he was an exceptional student Ming told me how he hosted and performed for delegations of visitors during his time in Middle School. Other parents had similar stories of academic success and study at University. The opportunities were prestigious markers in their lives, aspects of which they were proud. Many told me of experiences working or studying abroad with some of these opportunities sponsored by or in close association to the government.

Living through a period of remarkable political and economic change, these parents not only witnessed but were part of China's modern global outreach. For the parents who has managed to go abroad, I came to understand these parents' experiences as soft ambassadorial roles, achieved through their given domains of study at university and in overseas postings, earned by their success in the local education system. Ming was among the first to study in the Unviersity's newly created East Asian Department following the Sino-Vietnamese conflict of the late nineteen seventies and eighties. Ella, the mother of a four year old, had studied Egyptoglogy including a year of studying abroad as part of what she described as a cultural exchange with students in Luxor during a diplomatically pertinent period. Amongst parents then, I found a mixture of state-sponsored international experience and for younger parents, family-funded education taking them to Australia or the UK for higher education after a tertiary education in China. The local education system had enabled Ella to move to Beijing from her "far away" home village, fulfilling her parents dream for her when she did so. Those opportunities for social and literal mobility, made available to them through education, made them pioneers in their families, forging new social status including relationships and partnerships overseas while representing their country. The

experiences of these parents were woven amongst the globalizing story of China, before the world school in Beijing was developed.

I suggest it was those academic and employment experiences that assisted parent's movement in social space during that period of their lives, with an accumulation of academic and cultural capital achieved through and as a result of their success in the education system. The result, living through China's modern "opening up" to the world in the late nineteen seventies and the subsequent decades, created significant educational and employment opportunities for these world school parents, assisting their social mobility. It is perhaps unsurprising that such experiences should fuel their correlation between that which was international and their notions of freedom; in the sense of increased and privileged life choices. After years spent abroad, working or studying, they gained employment and, as opportunities arose during a period of particularly strong economic growth, they accumulated wealth, invested and bought property, in ways that exceeded even the broader swell of a modern middle class across the country. As an economic elite, the parents were made in China and by China.

Set Apart: Not the Very Local

Stories of success and prosperity then became difficult to align with the choice to remove their children from a public system that had arguably worked so well for them and instead, place them in an experimental world school. Certainly the everyday experience of their child(ren) was a factor in choosing the school; they did not want their child controlled as they felt they had been. Yet, given their level of wealth and freedom to travel, they could have pursued a boarding education for their child abroad, perhaps ensuring a different schooling culture if that had been the only consideration. However, it was not. Not only was a long-distance relationship with their child(ren) unappealing, but a national, home context, was considered an

essential part of the cosmopolitan aspirations. This aspect and its parameters also came from parents' experiences and position.

Parents' wealth had been made possible through the reduced economic and social controls in Beijing and across China more broadly. The ability to purchase property, travel freely and start business(es) during this period of national growth were some of the exact opportunities and freedoms parents were keen to secure for their children. It was amongst this negotiation and surveying of options that the benefits of being rooted in China became evident. In fact, the world school parents had found that in their absence(s), China had offered even greater opportunities for their peers remaining "at home." As Ming and I sat one Friday night, we shared stories of Scotland, my home and his favourite place outside of China, home to the university where he completed his MBA. Ming's attendance at university and overseas assignment shortly afterwards were prominent achievements in his life, but as he let his coffee grow cold, he crystalised the views of many world school parents.

> "*China changed very fast, too fast. People that received international education, then got degrees from UK and international, when we got back we felt embarrassed. I spend most of my time after university in South East Asia and Middle East. I worked for the company and did tender bidding (mid-90s – 2003). When I came back, you know…you know who is the richest man in China? Alibaba founder, Jack Ma? The most, richest guys in China, most of them are* ***not*** *international students. some of them…you know Baidu (search engine), Li Yanhong (he) wasmy classmate. He went to United States. Less people like him, who have international education get rich. Less like him. The most richest guys, most of them are local, very local, very local…. They know the market, they know what Chinese people are thinking. They know the*

market, they control the resources, you know?"

Ming moved forward in his seat and leaned across the table.

"…And this is what I want to discuss with you. Now the most successful are very local but in the future, the near future, maybe the most successful people will be, should be, the international folk."

Ming met with me on more than a few occasions, with follow-up emails and reciprocal invites, expressing an interest in reconnecting once I had completed my study; more information and particularly research, was something he and other parents welcomed. Across all my parent interactions I was welcomed and engaged in authentic discussions and debates. What I suggest from Ming's story is indicative of a common characteristic guiding all the parents I met; a reflection on their status, the value of their cosmopolitan capital and their resolute preparedness for continued change in what would prove valuable for their children in future. This pragmatic stance came from their own recent experiences. The parents of the Beijing World School were part of China's new economic elite, but not the "very local" or the established political elite, as hinted at by Ming. The parents had experienced and benefited from the growth of China's economy in the prior decades. With only a few exceptions, most had been educated in the Chinese school system. Their academic capital was visible in their respect and thirst for analysis, critique and discussion. The vast majority of these Beijing parents had found success in the local public system, securing positions to study at University. Equally, many parents studied abroad, or had wanted to, and many had worked outside of China or for international companies in the PRC.

One mother during a flexible-work-day, took time after a teacher meeting to talk with me in the lobby of the school. She had moved back from the

United States after working there for ten years. The world school was where many of her friends sent their children. That had been her central reason for choosing the school; it wasn't perfect, but as she told me, *"nothing in life is perfect."* Nell had been the envy of her friends, working abroad, securing US citizenship and having two children, both with American passports. But there were drawbacks,

> *"My friends don't understand. They don't understand why I don't moveback (to the USA). They think the grass is greener there, but I've been there, it's not. You know? And when I came back, I'd missed ten years of inordinate growth…and now, none of my friends have to work. But I do."*

Nell's reflections didn't suggest bitterness, but in her matter-of-factness, shared how they were responding to the situation as a family.

> *"My husband is working on a start-up (business) and so, this is Where we need to be right now…I have no plans to go back to the States just now."*

Oscillating then between perceptions of lost and found opportunities, the stories and successes of parents were quite often explicit and a topic of conversation with me and each other. They were successful products of a schooling system that had offered them both opportunities and status, yet they rejected that system for their children. The result of China's economic growth had allowed the "very local" and those without academic capital to reach a similar or greater economic level as the parents I met. These tangible factors of economic opportunity tussled with their innate sensibilities. Many, if not all, parents told me China had "changed too fast" which I came to understand as a euphemism for a shift in the relations of power, changed from a period in time where they experienced meritocractic

opportunities. Parents' success through the traditional education system should have secured them coveted positions in social space, setting them apart in advantageous ways. Yet, those accomplishments, gained during a period of unpredicted economic growth and freedom, did not necessarily retain their consecrating advantages. From their perspective, they were now positioned alongside, yet still in contrast to the very local, those who worked solely in China and perhaps did not go to university at all. I suggest this unlikely pairing of groups form part of what Bourdieu would term, the "gaming space" (1996:264). Created as part of the *"…field of power struggles among the holders of different forms of power…a gaming space in which those…possessing enough specific capital to be able to occupy the dominant positions within their respective fields confront each other using strategies aimed at preserving or transforming these relations of power" (Ibid*). In such a short period of time, this potential anomaly in the domestic field of power was foremost in the parents' minds; it led them to question and reassert the academic and cosmopolitan aspects they considered valuable, both for themselves and for their children. Academic capital, that which they possessed, remained important to them. Yet their experiences also ensured they remained mindful of further potential changes to the field itself. In that way, I suggest their conceptualizations of freedom were borne of their personal success and their positioning in social space but, their aspirations were driven by that position, relative to those that remained "fully local" and economicaly successful.

The world school parents were faced with a dilemma particular to their cosmopolitan elite status, where they were reflexive of their own habitus, reasoning with and trying to predict and plan for the forms of cultural capital and the relations of power that would apply to their child(ren). With every parent I met, there was little expectation of status quo. Decisions were debated, discussed and ever ready for adaptation. Amongst this I found reflexive parents, worried they had been constrained by their upbringing, to be "successful rather than happy"; the products of structures and choices

outside of their control; “good students” that now wanted more choice for their children.

Through their experiences and reflexivity I began to understand what drew parents to the world school. Their cosmopolitan aspirations were a result of their lived experiences and success. The outcome of such experience then appeared to suggest they wanted the privileges of *their* international experiences and the grounded knowledge of the local; an elite aspiration I call, a global China mind. The interest in international education and experience was alluring for two particular reasons; first of all, it was a gamble that those with international experience would be the “next powerful group” in China which, arguably, meant economic prosperity and freedoms of privilege. But secondly and perhaps more clearly articulated by parents, a global China mind was something they admired and to which they aspired, because of the inter-cultural and embodied privilege they believed could change and improve their child. As noted by Ming,

> *“When I went abroad, people were interested in my background. Where I was born, how I grew up and what I can bring, new cultural thinking to them. You know, I speak Vietnamese, I speak English and Chinese. Each language I learn actually I can learn culture and smart things from their culture. International education can make you smarter because you can have a wider mind, open your eyes to wider mind, look at the world, you can become more friendly, you can become more…when you hurt from the culture shock you can recover yourself in very short periods of time…you can understand the difference…(he laughs)…you can get yourself over very fast because you know…it is different…forgive those different things…you understand (he laughs)…this is my experience! (he laughs) So I want Jin to be me first but then go beyond me! (he laughs again).”*

These aspirations were borne from the conditions and control they experienced. For them, the outcomes and experiences of international work and study symbolized a type of freedom, which they valued, but for which the corresponding value in social space was not yet assured. Although I argued with many that they were perhaps the “very successful” I found, as is the way with the uber-wealthy, their view was skewed “upwards” and as a result, their capital (whether economic or academic) and position in social space was never considered to be at its pinnacle but rather, subservient to a greater or more well-endowed other. I make this observation to clarify the nature and directions of their aspirations. What the parents wanted and that to which they aspired was a position (in the field of power) that was not yet fully established. I found that the parents were therefore mindful and explicitly aware of the potential benefits to be gained from yet another shift or alteration. It is in this context that I suggest their cosmopolitan aspirations were driven “by China” in the sense that they were produced within and because of a sense of what they hoped would next become valued in that context. The positioning of their children in the world school, was therefore a gamble, something they undertook on an experimental basis, enacting a sense of freedom.

The Beijing cosmopolitanism is both prospective in nature and, the result of their intellectual and pragmatic stance. As I will now show, the Beijing World School is the only non-local school choice open to them and one that is designed to lead to overseas English-speaking higher education. Freedom materializes then through their aspirations as a matter of choice, made real through enrolment at the world school. And, it materializes as, a way of being that, although is not a position that offers the most status or security, the parents experiences of social mobility entwined with life in Beijing leads them to see the world school and international higher

education as a valuable and potentially in future, a valued position to take, for their child's future in China.

Cosmopolitan Aspirations are Driven By China

Beijing World School

When the world school opened in 2005 with around ninety students, Beijing was the focus of the nation, preparing to host the Olympic Games. At that time Shuangjing district in which the school was nestled, was already central to the city hugging a south-east section of the third ring road. But it was poised to become a lot more connected and with each passing year, more central. The Olympics opening ceremony in 2008 coincided with a quadrupling of subway lines and stations, including a direct monorail from the airport to the centre for the first time. Shuangjing become home to a precious subway stop, just one dot away from the China World Trade Centre. The form of mass public transit introduced automatic ticket machines, replacing ticket collectors, and tourist friendly pinyin signage at all stations. By the time I first arrived in 2014, the city had been tourist friendly for some years. Speaking little Mandarin was no barrier to my moving around or accessing the capital. The familiarity of the subway map and the low fares meant I could avoid taxis until my Mandarin was more robust. The blue number ten line had been extended to form a complete loop around the central city zone just a year before I arrived, solidifying Shuangjing's position. It was this circular feature alongside Beijing's system of concentric ring roads that allowed me to build a bird's eye view of where I was and grasp the power of the location. A seventh ring-road of approximately six hundred miles circumference was under construction during both my visits, so large it would connect Tianjin and Hebei provinces far outside Beijing's boundaries to both east and west. The aim was to

offset the tremendously busy sixth ring road, itself a hundred miles all-round and starting about twenty miles out from the city centre. Expats I met would translate how long they'd been in the city by way of the construction and changes therein. People recalled their memories of the fourth ring road opening, then the fifth and so on. It all conveyed a sense of robust and rapid growth and to my mind, a strengthening and further emphasis on where we were located; a bulls-eye target in which TianAnMen and the Forbidden City formed the old town, the golden centre and the World School and the CBD enveloping it in red, represented modern business.



Visual 8. Facing East towards Beijing World School with CBD towers, North East corner

Beijing World School was founded by Mr Wu and his business partners, with government permission to cater for local Chinese passport holders and expat families; a Chinese private school offering a cosmopolitan education. Uniquely founded by a Chinese citizen, a research institute was formed alongside to promote and share aspects of practice with local schools, a way to contribute to and benefit the wider educational community. Yet the school was experimental and unique, until late 2014, for its permission to teach (local) Chinese passport holders. In practice, this removed the local students from the mandatory and standardized core curriculum taught

across Chinese schools.[9] For nearly ten years then, the school was widely publicized in international school circles and advertised to expat families, quietly growing with only word-of-mouth recommendations as the main source of local publicity for Beijing families. The school's student population was deliberately "balanced" for the first eight to ten years, with fifty-percent local Chinese students and fifty-percent international students. In the years leading up to the extension of the special license to other schools in Beijing, the balanced enrolment was altered to accommodate the vast waiting list of local students and the diminishing number of sponsored expatriated families living and working in Beijing. The period of my visits between 2014 and 2016 captured this particular moment of increased local students, leading to a comfortable majority of Chinese families at the Beijing World School.

Mr Wu, the founder of the school, was an example of the very local, catering for and benefiting from those wanting an international standard of living in Shuangjing. Astutely and at Mr Wu's suggestion his business partnership carved out land for the school while developing the Shuangjing area and constructing, among other things, two large apartment complexes in the early noughties, "International Apartments" and "Chateaux Apartments."[10] The school campus sat alongside numerous other business holdings on the long street, including Golden Heights, an elderly care home, not yet at full capacity. An international standard then, could be found in the immediate and surrounding areas and private institutions.

For those with Chinese passports Beijing World School (BWS) represented a rare educational choice amongst a lifetime of seeming controls. This

[9] During a return visit in 2016 government monitoring and accountability for the World School and other International schools in Beijing had increased, almost as a response to the increased number of local Chinese students able to enroll in international schools. An interview with the curriculum manager at the World School was arranged for me during this visit, where the integration of the Chinese core curriculum was articulated and presented as having, "always been there".
[10] Together they housed around 1400-1600 residents.

appealed to those parents whose education, level and focus of study had been chosen for them. The world school offered a unique chance for Chinese nationals to remove their children from the mainstream education system. As previously hinted, I initially found parents' sense of freedom materialized through this rejection of control, characterised by the schooling system. As a central motivator then, it was because parents did not feel suitably able to control the process or outcomes of their child's education in public local schools that they chose BWS. The nature of their cosmopolitan aspirations emerged as a, "freedom to…"; to make the choice of a world school and cosmopolitan education for their child(ren). Their aspirations were not a limited to just school choice as a finite or singular event. Instead, cosmopolitan aspirations emerged as a commitment to a way of being and to cultural capacities that were, as parents saw it, in contrast to the local ways of being; to "have your own mind." This was made clear to me when I joined an "Advanced English" parent class at the school one afternoon, which resulted in an impromptu focus group of mothers, keen to talk to each other and me about their parenting dilemmas and choices. The vibrant chat amongst the group solidified around their reasons for rejecting local schools,

> *"It's the problem of getting into the strict school, you don't have your own thinking, you're doing what others tell you to do. But when you are on your own…wow, suddenly you don't know what to do…you're losing your mind, you don't know what to do. So, that's why I want to tell my son, there are so many different ways of living, not just one way, one method, there are so many different ways…*
>
> *Life is like a long term, not a short-term race. You can choose many things, as long as you like it."*

In the early morning, a walk around the Shuangjing neighbourhood brought to life some of the features of control and routine the world school parents were rejecting. Inside the Lianjia property shop employees lined up for their morning briefing; a matter of routine. On more than one occasion this involved a physical routine of coordinated movements and actions. As Spring arrived, the snap into warmer weather brought some of the morning rituals outside. A beautician's parlour with employees all in matching pink tunics, hopped and moved together, following a leader at the front of the group; the women smiled and laughed as they performed. It was difficult to know if they were laughing with or at each other. Ingrained since school and practiced daily since then, these types of physical drills and synchronized group activities were not to be found at the Beijing World School. While other schools in the area had their children in matching tracksuits, arranged in grid formations, moving in unison and sequence in the school grounds at the start of every day, the parents at the world school were happy to set their children apart from such customs.



Visual 9 & 10. Beauty Parlor Workers doing synchronized exercises and Lianjia Workers undertaking their morning group briefing; standing while supervisor gives morning message.

Yet it was the impromptu focus group which encapsulated for me the aspects of embodied freedom, to which parents aspired. To my mind, they already had it. On that afternoon I had introduced myself to the group and,

as I had done before, invited anyone to contact me if they were interested in meeting and wished to be interviewed. Several mothers connected with me on WeChat, buzzing into my phone immediately and others came over to me, in the room, to check my diary availability. A warm welcome then turned into an impromptu, unplanned focus group, decided and organized by the mothers. There were so many interested, why not? And, why not right then? Before I could think much to respond, they moved tables and chairs, placing their handbags behind them as they created space for everyone who wished to join. I couldn't help but wonder what I'd gotten myself into. My fieldnotes for that day warmly referred to the afternoon as "the ambush." While the mothers spoke to me vehemently about the forms of control they experienced and their fears of "losing your own mind" the women exuded critical thinking, analysis and the very passion and clarity of thought they argued was not possible to achieve through the local school system. As I grew more comfortable in the group, I felt able to mirror the challenges and debate they were offering to each other. Weren't they wonderful examples of being able to think for themselves? If they had been products of the school system, surely it couldn't be so bad? I expected to be shot down but they accepted my point somewhat. Their way of being wasn't a direct outcome and certainly not the aim of the schools they attended. Rather, they regretted that they had not been "more free" earlier in their lives. They regretted that other aspects such as memorization were prioritized over thinking or enjoyment of learning. It was this sadness, regret and experience that culminated in the passion for their child's experiences; not to have to fit the mould of a good or dutiful student.

Recognising these parents as the drivers of their child's education and as the providers of a "home" habitus for the young people in the world school, I have shown that the cosmopolitan aspirations for freedom in the Beijing parents were "borne of and driven by China". By this I mean, the aspirations were the product of the very schooling conditions the parents now rejected

and products of the socio- political conditions which supported parents' economic successes. Positioned as academically and economically elite, although "not the very local" these parents and their aspirations were products of and agents within a shifting field of power, with the pace and scale of socio-economic change as a factor considered, planned and hoped for. It is worth reflecting then upon the position-making and position-taking that is so much a part of the Beijing elite cosmopolitanism. Because what they are doing is, in many ways, ahead of the conditions in which their aspirations will assume value. The liminal nature of their cosmopolitan aspirations is a central feature in Beijing. That is to say, they are an experimental, innovating group of parents.

While rejection of control characterizes a part of the parents' aspirations, it is their subsequent embrace and re-invigoration of cultural roots that further defines the parameters of being meritous elite. What this entails precisely will feature in the coming chapters. Here, it is significant to note that in Beijing the cosmopolitan aspirations represented parents' rejection of routine experiences and expectations of symbolic conformity such as those found through the local-national schooling system. I suggest that in many ways assuming such a position was made easier because of the parents' own academic successes, as products of that system. It was their corresponding position in social space, due to their academic and economic capital, that allowed them to further aspire towards and imagine their children's role, as a new kind of elite, in China. What their type of meritous new elite constitutes will of course be explored throughout the entirety of this thesis, but for the part of parental aspirations, this chapter will now culminate with a countering, or at least, a framing of the boundaries and contextualization of the freedoms to which parents aspired. It is worth clarifying that although the educational trajectory of young people at BWS would have them move to the English-speaking-West for university, the aspirations parents held superseded higher education. Whether

immediately “home” after university or taking longer to return, these locations in and of themselves didn’t really matter, because the aspirations parents held were driven by national pride and cultural roots. To state the obvious, wherever their children were, parents told me they would be “Chinese citizen not global citizen” and the cosmopolitan aspirations served to reinvigorate what that meant for them.

China Root, China Mind

In a pragmatic way, the aspirations of the elite parents in Beijing constituted a freedom of choice. Embedded within cultural expectations and traditions, the cosmopolitan positioning of these elites developed originally as a matter of personal experiences and being “set apart” through study, travel and employment. This was developed further as their economic position and opportunities grew in China during a particularly strong period of economic growth, reaffirming both the power of being in China as well as the advantages of having “their own mind” or, in other terms, an advantageous set of skills and experiences that made them well placed to engage with the international opportunities and businesses coming to China. What we see in this group of parents, is the forging of an experimental and evolving set of aspirations that values freedom and the enactment of those ideas in and through the Beijing World School and beyond. Having shown the origins, nature and development of these aspirations for freedom, This final section of the chapter will deal with the actions, practices and ways of being amongst this group of parents; the dispositions and habits I call their Global China Mind. Unlike the New York ethnography that will follow, the Beijing aspirations were not smooth or simplistic. And I make this point to emphasize the liminality of their position. Instead, the cosmopolitan aspirations represented an active compromise and the danger of “loosing” a cultural root. Such an interest sets the boundaries, priorities and counter intuitive meanings associated to the

practice of choosing a world school. It also helps to contain somewhat, the nature and substance of the Global China Mind. Time spent with these parents allowed me to understand their nature, in person.

In Beijing, I was welcomed by parents and engaged in substantive exchanges; often we dove into conversations I would have only expected after a great deal more small-talk. But there was a purpose, an interest in picking my brain. Simply put, amongst parents I found a way-of-being rather than a set of resolute ideals. They had a pragmatic and analytical approach to their thoughts and choices. During the afternoon of the "ambush" group discussion, the parents shared their reasoning with each other as they contrasted and compared experiences. Within this context, the group of mothers pushed back on any notions that a world school education was an easy or unproblematic route to take. The choice of BWS came with concerns, voiced clearly by one mother who said, "I'm afraid he will be an ABC…" to which the whole group of mothers all slowly nodded in agreement. Another mother offered her understanding and agreement, almost whispering under her breath, "mmm, something inbetween…." I had to ask for clarification, breaking my way into the chatter that had been ignited between them. The original speaker answered me,

> *"I don't want him to be ABC. I have no regards for ABC, American born Chinese, no culture. Not western, not eastern. How do you say, in the middle? On the fence..."*

ABC was the acronym for American born Chinese. BBC was the acronym for British born Chinese and "banana?" "…skin is yellow, looks like China…" started one mother. "But inside!" yelled the mothers, "…but inside they are white!…American!" Another mother appeared to reign in the group, as she explained to me and muted the claims of others,

"This is not a good word. This means as Chinese you have lost some culture…born in America, Britain, you not study in Chinese at all. I think for these people…I know lots of friends, also study Chinese in Britain and America…"

She held out her hand as if urging the group to consider not all ABC or BBC were the same. The mothers nodded in acceptance of her respect for her friends. But their fears were clear and these were to set the tone for their aspirations as well as the home habitus with which the elite families engaged in the cosmopolitan education at BWS. Over time, the frequency of parent conversations and their interest to engage me in discussions of "real China" as they saw it, gave me a sense of their concerns and their embodied analysis. Through their generous critique, I came to better understand the aspects of China's growth they saw as undesirable or in need of improvement. It was these ways-of-being, these analytical approaches that illustrated more broadly the parents' China Mind; the ways they thought about, engaged with and shared their knowledge.

Mimi, a mother, returning from a domestic trip, gifted me a book, to help me "…understand the real China." The gift took me by surprise, but looked interesting and, thankfully, was written in English.

"I saw this and thought of you. In here, it tells you about the people who steal children (child trafficking) and body parts (organ transplants) all the stuff I was telling you about…"
Her face remained serious.

"This is important to know. This is the dark side of China…this will explain to you why we don't give to charity, many of them are fake. We can't trust them."

As I read the book that weekend, I could only wonder about those particular events, researched and presented in the book. Yet it clarified for me that amongst parents who were heavily concerned with ensuring a strong cultural root in the children, what was equally important was an informed critique of all that China involved and contained. I found it difficult to imagine myself giving a visitor to Scotland a book about the Highland Clearances or perhaps a report on the latest drug and criminal enterprises and, the gift left me wondering why that was the case? Keen then to contextualise China beyond the world school bubble or perhaps to have cured naiveté of China more-broadly, this gift of a book was the gift of information the mother thought I should have. And I took her gift as a duty-served, although not perhaps in the way she imagined. There, in the pages and pictures of the gifted book, was one of the most treasured things; information and researched perspectives, however brutal and raw.

The Early Childhood Campus (ECC) & The Neighbourhood

The conversations and interviews were exchanges in both directions; for me and them. By exploring the locatedness of these elites, their lifestyles and practices I suggest the (in)visible aspirations of the Beijing parents involved a broader rejection of control and an embodied, active pursuit of freedom. As I move now through the school neighbourhood and the world school's early childhood campus, I wish to "locate" those aspirations in what I suggest is a liminal field of power. Through this final section I suggest these parents were part of an emerging and experimental group, forging together a space in which to pursue and enact their forms of freedom, their ways of being, at the world school. These parents were not the norm and their choice of school and approach was risky, in my opinion, but undoubtedly not-the-norm. The cosmopolitan aspirations of parents were not a sure thing, the field of power in which they would assume a high value was not yet in place. What was becoming apparent in Beijing during my

research was the ways in which cosmopolitan aspirations were an avenue for redefining and enhancing their “China root” a necessary aspect and something I saw and experienced within parents’ habitus and way of being. Just as parents had found benefit from study and working abroad, they wished for that outlook and experience also for their children. In this way, the ethnography I undertook in Beijing was as much a work in progress, alongside them, as they looked to redefine merit, a Global China Mind, drawing on what they saw as cultural strengths and certain acceptable manifestations of home culture. I will show here the neighbourhood of the school and day-to-day life just outside the schools gates, the translation of an international style of living occurred in fits and starts, often with translations and rarely without modification. So too were the aspirations of parents lived and reflected upon, with each parent interested in adjusting, translating and modifying to what they believed was best.

Housing many of the school’s teachers, I was told Shuangjing was, “…like the sixth expat haven…” in Beijing, with the others surrounding embassies or much further out by Shunyi, at the airport. An expat shop, April Gourmet was conveniently on the corner, having opened a few years earlier. This allowed nearby residents to buy international brands of groceries, dairy and assortments of fresh vegetables and meats, pre-butchered and packaged by cut. From expat connections and lunches I met foreigners, like me, based in China and employed by various companies, building food chains or assisting in health and safety aspects. I heard first-hand accounts of the fledgling milk industry that made me rethink my latte habit. I had dinner with bankers, tasked with encouraging young Chinese to use credit; apparently a tough cultural shift but one that was “slowly catching on.” At the market or gigantic three-story Carrefour supermarket close by, whole chickens, pig trotters and live seafood were the mainstay; fish I couldn’t identify and turtles netted but still trying to crawl. I ate a lot of rice. No-one on the three floors of Carrefour spoke English, nor French. On one particular visit, the

language barrier led to a lot of bowing and hand-signals as I attempted to purchase a vegetable steamer. No one in the busy store, customer or worker was able to help; purchasing the steamer and a pomelo took three hours, including the line to pay. For a significantly higher, but still affordable price, April Gourmet offered international brands, short lines and a cashier who was prepared to deal with poor or no Mandarin language; a boutique shopping experience in comparison to the alternative.

The pace of change in infrastructure was mighty. A building next to the school was demolished during my first week in the city, becoming a large, shiny and popular car showroom; the four intertwined rings of the Audi logo glowed at night, next to the signage of the world school. By contrast, just a street away, the fish and clothing market had little visual clues to mark its location, leaving patrons to rely on local knowledge and agility in order to squeeze past the large group of men who watched and played mahjong out front. The Audi garage built next to the school bounced at weekends with families looking at and trying different models. I couldn't recall ever seeing so many people nor seeing a festival vibe at a car sales forecourt, with balloons and music like a genuine party. With security on the gate the Audi party wasn't intended to catch footfall such as myself. Instead, the partygoers seemed to mostly drive there, with a lengthy queue of cars waiting to get in and presumably, shop for another car. Shop fronts along the main street indicated they were beauticians, hairdressers, tobacco sales, property shops, alcohol sales and pet groomers. Lianjia property shop was open from 9am and still open after 10pm. Employees in smart suits stood diligently on the pavements with flyers of property information, ready to hand them out but always ignoring or reaching behind me to attend to someone else; they knew that foreigners like me were not their target market. At other times, I was happy to be handed fliers for restaurants, it gave me a sense of belonging there and being part of it. Sourcing food became an ethnographic tool. Socialising through food, too; in restaurants,

cafes, dumpling shacks, expat balls, birthday parties, breakfast street food, luxury hotels, New Year parties, temple fairs, tea markets and ceremonies I experienced pieces and snippets of different elements of daily life in Beijing. I came to understand the area as expat friendly but by no means designed for us. We were able to shelter and live comfortably within the bubble made possible by the locals who really lived here, those who wished a Beijing life, but one with an international standard.

I was told many times, the Early Childhood Campus in Shuangjing, was a LEED certified building.[11] The environmental features were said to make best use of air filtration systems, allowing for smog-free classrooms and an indoor play area. Not only aesthetically beautiful, the state-of-the-art design was so captivating it made the original school campus (built in the noughties) look quite dated in comparison. Having visited the construction site during my 2014 visit, it was rewarding to see the completed center in 2016. I listened to the reflections and gentle bruises the staff had endured during the building's opening and I smiled inside to think of the ways the parents had approached this exciting new part of the school.

It was quite something. Slate flooring in the entrance courtyard; indoors but with a potted tree and a double height atrium and ceiling to floor windows straight ahead that gave a sense of the outdoors. The double set of doors operated to keep the undesirable Beijing smog out of the building. To the left of the entrance was the suite of leadership offices, where I hugged and said hello to familiar faces but in new plush surroundings. I was told,

> *"You wouldn't believe what it took to get this place open!. We were ready in time for the start of the school year, but parents wouldn't believe us. They thought we'd rushed it."*

[11] LEED stands for Leaderhip in Energy and Environmental Design, an internationally recognised rating system/award for environmentally-friendly and sustainable building practice.

…they kept their kids away till they were happy everything was done right…

…We had parents coming in with their own detectors and Instruments (water and air quality) because they didn't trust the builders, they wanted to be sure everything was right."

The opening of the ECC, as recalled to me, was an example of the ways in which these parents were active and unafraid, perhaps entitled and materially empowered too. From this story, my experiences across the school and other incidents retold to me from different angles, I was able to identify a culture clash between teachers and parents. While parents were sometimes received by teachers as brash, demanding, unyielding and picky, I interpreted these characteristics in a different light. For teachers who were excited about the opening of a new section of the school, the "nit-picking" around paint, "new glue" smells and air quality came as a disappointment and almost a distraction from the preparation they had undertaken for a successful start to the school year. But it wasn't personal. These parents had simply had too many experiences of poor workmanship, corrupt systems of leadership in construction projects and were unwilling to take official reassurances of building quality and completion. And, in such a situation, the best course of action was to organize as a parent group and conduct their own tests; a pragmatic solution. Another issue was shared by teachers, still disappointed from the sluggish and uncelebratory start of the school year.

"I mean, they (parents) just don't come to us when something is wrong. It's something we're working so hard on, to try and get them to come and talk to us, rather than

just taking to WeChat….(group chat on phones)

…like, last month, there was a problem with the water. It turned out the bottled water we were giving the kids was actually a really bad brand, a parent found reports about their quality being really bad. But like, rather than come to us they got together on WeChat and made it this big thing. So suddenly we have the whole parent body signing a petition to change the water. And like, it just didn't have to be that way…

…We want them to be able to come to us, just one on one but we're working on that…"

I commiserated with the teacher and empathized with the scale of the ganging-up, as they experienced it. It was not fun to be on the receiving end of such an approach and for the English speaking teachers, the en-masse approach taken by the parents was presumed to reflect poorly on their approachability and trustworthiness, a fracture in their relationship. But again, I saw it differently. The parents were into the detail and thorough. They did not want to nor did they ever really achieve consensus amongst themselves, but for a matter such as changing the water supplied to school; a matter impacting everyone, it would be important to take that discussion, debate and decision to everyone in the parent group. It would have been inappropriate to act alone. I could imagine that only then, once it had been fully debated would their decision be given to the school; with the respect and due process of it having been deliberated.

And so in these moments of noticing the dischord between the valued teachers and vibrant parents, I was aware of their motives being lost in translation. These were misunderstandings that reflected the very essence of these parents; to live was to think and analyse and to debate (food, air,

paint, water, anything…) was an enactment of their freedom. The focus of their analysis was not limited to water supply or building regulations but also fell upon each other, on their children's artwork and upon me, on more than one occasion. When not under particular scrutiny myself, for my "lack of language" or educational credentials (deemed sufficient), I came to be comfortable in my role as an additional point of view, welcomed to debates.

In the light of teachers stories, I reflected on my own "ambush" afternoon which was a raw, thorough and in patches, quite brutal experience. Yet, I felt valued and included. I was invited into similar parent conversations over my time in Beijing, to listen, to contribute and to share in the speculation and manoeuvring; what would be the best way forward for their children? How could they best place themselves to benefit from what China had to offer them? Invariably, these discussions involved some aspect of external education in the UK, USA or other English speaking areas. I wasn't a teacher grading their child and as a result, I was included in ways the teachers were not. I found parents' strategizing was informed by the "mistakes" of their own experiences and yet an intuition that international education would provide useful leverage and opportunities, in China, in future. Tuning into the local value conveyed on UK and US experience, these parents had first-hand knowledge of the tensions involved; they had lived them and as a result, their cosmopolitan aspirations were grounded, specific and by design, open to adaptation. There was never a conversation where I wasn't questioned, although probed would sometimes be a more accurate account. But an exchange always, of value at the time, some piece of knowledge or insight. And over time, this gave me the confidence, the experience of knowing what these parents valued and although I couldn't pre-determine what their decisions would be, I could be more sure of the approach they would take.

Summary: Cosmopolitan Aspirations in Beijing

This chapter has shown the origins and nature of elite cosmopolitanism in Beijing. Set apart through international study and employment, these parents were shown to be trailblazers and holders of a particular combination of academic and economic capital.

Understand the roots and origins of cosmopolitanism in Beijing as part of an elite tradition, most recently since 1978 with Deng Xiaoping's government-sponsored study abroad programme; the type of which, some world school parents engaged in. Such parents form part of 100,000 fellows studying overseas under Chinese government scholarship programs and approximately 1.3 million Chinese students sponsored by other resources (Xinyu, 2011) using figures until around the opening year of the World School.

By exploring the locatedness of these elites, their lifestyles and class practices I suggest the aspirations of the Beijing parents involved a "rejection of control" and pursuit of freedom, seen here through their reflexive negotiations of parenthood and school-choice. Taking habitus to mean, their "embodied structures that ceaselessly orient a person's perception and appreciation of a situation" (1996:228) this chapter has shown the "home" habitus of these parents, as a foundation for subsequent chapters, viewing it as a central influence that will come to bear on the lives and school experiences of the young people at the world school. the freedom they pursue for themselves and their children was not a distant or definitive event, nor was it necessarily limited to those familial boundaries. While outcomes for freedom could be realized through their child's higher education or employment status, I found their cosmopolitan aspirations were a product of, reflective of a cultural imperative.And, I suggest that while aspects of the global world offers avenues for freedom (substantively) those aspirations for freedom reveal a cultural reflexivity where their class

practices and school choice are produced and imagined within a national and cultural renewal. By that I mean, the cosmopolitan aspirations in Beijing suggest the development of what I call, a Global China Mind. Their elite habitus indicated the habits of choice and the routines of analysis, as expressions of freedom. It is within this framework I have shown their global China mind; their analytical way of being that was demonstrated in their engagements with me, with each other and with the school, on a daily basis. I suggest it is this Global China Mind that serves as the home habitus for the young people attending Beijing World School.

Taken on its own the exploration of habitus of these elite parents may seem rudimentary or perhaps even a little underwhelming. After all, I have indicated they are in a liminal position, in the midst of significant class work and with no reassurances that their particular structures of capital will indeed remain valued capital. But it is that very position and the experimental nature of what they are doing that makes them such an interesting case of elite cosmopolitanism. And certainly, as it will be contrasted to the certainty found in the New York elites, their analytical way-of-being becomes even more intriguing. Expert interviewer Marc Pachter suggests interviews after-the-fact are the most interesting because, “it’s amazing what people will say when they know how they story turns out.” Yet, it is for almost exactly the same reasons that I suggest an entirely opposite stance, evident in this research. That is, it is far more interesting and far more telling of someone’s motives and character, to be with them and understand how and why lives, “the story” develops as they do. In academic and local lay conversations it is known that, the phenomenon of engaging with international schools can be a route to circumvent local family “failures” in the education system (Waters, 2005, 2007, Findlay et al 2012). These elites had no real or verified knowledge of how their, or their children’s, lives would proceed. And, it is for this reason that this extended introduction has been necessary and helpful in understanding the nature,

roots and processes of elite cosmopolitanism. Recognising the origins of cosmopolitanism then, as habitus, it is important to clarify the cosmopolitanism of these elites constitutes more than an educational strategy. It is instead, in Beijing, the product of very specific academic experiences, employment and economic opportunities within a particular time period. These parents embody the pursuit of freedom, of choice and pragmatic maneuvering in any given circumstance, in almost every moment of their day, borne of their experiences and evolving each day. For me, the world they wished to give their children was demonstrated and embodied by them in the day-to-day – with teachers, with each other and through those moments and enactments of freedom.

So for now, it is the nature of their aspirations and the liminality of the field of power in which they pursue cosmopolitanism that makes Beijing elites of particular interest. And, it is possible this chapter has raised more questions than answers when considering who these elites are, who they wish their children to be and why? Certainly the roots and origins of their cosmopolitan orientation have been explored here. The questions as to which aspects of their cultural roots are appropriate or worthy, are matters for future chapters. But it is important to note, the matters of class positioning in school were imagined and pursued by parents within and as part of national and cultural renewal, not some form of international or foreign affair. Within their domestic context, the aspirations of these parents were risky and what I've shown is that they were in the midst of the difficult and tricky work of trying to define, create a meritous elite.

5.“Giving My Child the World” New Elites in New York: Production of Cosmopolitan Aspirations

New York: The New York Global



Visual 11. : Looking towards Times Square from Port Authority Bus Station on 42nd Street and 9th Avenue.

To understand the nature of elite cosmopolitanism in New York it is essential to first consider the values and priorities of the new elites who live there; or, as they call themselves, New Yorkers. It is the relationship between these New Yorkers and the place they call home that is the focus of this second half of the chapter. The cosmopolitan aspirations of parents, as a form of cultural production, are best expressed through their relationship with this location and the ways in which is symbolizes freedom. As was the case in Beijing, it is the relationship between these parents and their experiences in and towards place that form the origins and informs the nature of the cosmopolitan aspirations. I show the aspirations for, and strategic positioning of, children at Manhattan World School as heavily imagined, concentrated and bounded within the geography, social and cultural networks of America's East Coast; New York was their global and "the world" they wanted to give their children. By this, I mean that New York City symbolizes both personal aspirations and a universal sense of liberty and opportunity, making it a unique and central character within the construction of this version of elite cosmopolitanism. Unlike Beijing, the hierarchical nature of the field of power is clearly defined, largely static and unyielding in its format and, embedded within the habitus of the elite parents, whose aspirations are focused upon and contained within its boundaries. New York City symbolizes parents' aspirations for an exemptive form of freedom, a privileged and elite social world. The freedom these parents seek isn't abstract and universal, it has roots, it has a home and there is currency and power to be leveraged from being in and being elite and successful in New York City. This chapter argues that the cosmopolitan aspirations in New York are defined and bounded specifically by the powerful symbolic position of Manhattan as an economic and cultural capital in a globalizing world; their aspirations reflect a shared western cultural production of what is powerful and global, what I name here as the New York Global.

Cosmopolitan Aspirations are Symbolic of New York

New York, New York

New York City is both a character and commodity in our contemporary globalizing world. Like the pyramids of Giza or the colosseum of Rome, the New York City skyline is recognizable to those who have never visited. Visual knowledge of the city is so rudimentary that the geometry of the Brooklyn Bridge or Empire State Building is part of our familiar, everyday. Ikea sells us large world maps on canvas frames, or black and white images of New York structures to decorate our walls, each seemingly interchangeable as a symbol of the global world and, just part of the furniture. An ethnography of this city can almost begin then, at home through the images and messages projected to us. And projected also to the parents of the World School during their formative years; a group that were largely born and raised in locations other than New York and, whose careers and successes have run parallel to the contemporary rise and reign of New York City as the centre of our globalizing world. The question of how such a diverse group of parents, from “all-over” the United States and around the world came to live within a few square miles of each other for the opening of a school in Manhattan, becomes less of a puzzle. New York is the Rome of our time symbolizing the pinnacle of our globalizing world. It projects, attracts and pushes out in ways that serves its character as a place of success, for the successful and moneyed elite.

For the majority of us who do not live in New York, the city is just a television programme or framed picture away. In a fair number of Hollywood films, even Santa Claus appears to have a pied a terre, or linger disproportionately, around Manhattan. From the measure given through such popular media, people who matter are, apparently, there. The New

York we have come to know through western cinema, music and literature over the past fifty years has provided the city with a character, as well established as the landmarks. Throughout popular media, we have seen dreams and lives of purpose crafted in this city. Few stories begin with characters leaving New York and even fewer portray a richer or better life elsewhere; quite the opposite. Instead, protagonists seem magnetically drawn to the city in
search of ways to make their fortune or pursue their innate talent, most often finding ways to harness both. Often characters will have temporary love-interests but these are typically sacrificed and never dent or detract from navigating a career – the real reason for being in New York. During the same period as these Hollywood images, the regeneration of the city in real life terms since its near bankruptcy in the nineteen seventies, helped to weave together the fiction and fact of the city's prominence and symbolism.

The residual energy from the footfall of past immigrants features heavily in narratives about the city and its character, prioritizing diversity and creating an idealized cosmopolitan richness, something which the world school parents typified. Drawing on periods of mass immigration at the turn of the century New York became a central character in its nation's history, solidifying the pursuit of liberty and opportunity, if only through the temporary freedom it provided from persecution or famine. Cinematic features have shown immigrants' sea-faring journeys as they met the Statue of Liberty and welcomed the freedoms of America through the bustle, opportunities and hardship of life in New York. Upon closer inspection historians tells us these lives of freedom in the early 1900s were stories of survival and ethnic exclusion enacted in New York's slum neighbourhoods. And it is only in the past three to four decades, through the mass availability of photography and the types of re-photographic works of Camilo Vergara we can see the evolving nature of streets, public services, parks and neighbourhoods across New York as they gentrified

into the city we recognize today. As Vergara shows, these changes have involved a pushing out of long-term residents and businesses with each new wave of incomers; a far more specific and visual narrative of what opportunity, freedom and success looks like, an aspect that is less well represented in mainstream images and movies.

The story of New York is symbolically powerful, anchored in selective historical realities and projected alongside themes of national significance. It is important for an ethnography of the new elite, situated within New York, to recognize the selective, partial and yet swollen ways in which the city has come to be synonymous with themes of liberty and freedom; all of which inform the foundation of this ideal, New York model of the cosmopolitan elite. This chapter will explore the ways in which the New York Global, the aspirations of these elites in New York, are symbolic of the narrow parameters that determine one's survival, worth and belonging in Manhattan. I show, through ethnographic narratives the ways in which these parents embody and (re)produce the abstracted ideals of American freedom, rooted in a New York context. Symbolic of, shaped by and projected through New York City, the aspirations of these global elites are the equivalent of old wine in a new bottle. Just as the city is commercially selective, exclusive and exclusionary, the cosmopolitan narratives of the city are revived to offer these elite families an avenue towards belonging and becoming established. What is projected as a beacon of freedom, a place that belongs to everyone even if only through t-shirts, images, memories, favourite films or the like, is for these families a battleground, a sliverof land[12] with tightly controlled social structures and narrow definitions of what makes you worthy and powerful.

[12] Manhattan is approximately twenty-three square miles; thirteen miles long and two and a half miles wide.

“We See Ourselves Here”

As a rule, Manhattanites avoid midtown where possible; it is full of tourists and fairly crumby food. The pace of walking around Times Square is particularly crowded and erratic with too many people stopping to glare at steam funnels emerging from the ground or straining their neck to read billboards. Mostly, people there were trying to capture a cinematic experience in the flesh all-the-while shuffling, looking up and avoiding contraflow pedestrians. Even the most experienced New Yorker could lose their valuable north-south orientation amongst the kaleidoscope of colours and lights. During my first visit to Times Square in 1996, the rejuvenation of the area was underway. Broadway shows were plentiful and the TKTS booth was in its first iteration. As part of a broader crime and anti-social crackdown, prostitutes and pornographic movies were no longer visible in the main square, with only a few remaining on the outer limits of Seventh and Eighth Avenues. From that trip I have many photographs but none feature Times Square. I bought three CDs at the Virgin Megastore and ate bad Sbarro pizza. But unlike Central Park or the Empire State Building, the area didn’t feel safe enough or worthy of a photograph. At that time there was no tiered seating or pedestrianized sections, just the narrow sidewalks. Walking around with a camera on display was considered unsafe. This period was near the beginning of a tourist friendly approach, which included resurgence of theaters and show.

The elite New Yorkers who lived through the city’s vicissitude in the nineteen sixties and seventies had been avoiding Times Square for years and that simply continued, even when it’s character and commercial value was adapted and made family friendly. New Yorkers tended to care about the parks in their own neigbhourhoods and while the city cracked down on crime in the eighties, elite upper east and west siders formed the Central

Park Conservancy, to curate and improve it into an asset for the whole city[13] simultaneously improving their own views and property prices. By the summer of 2001 most of the counterfeit bags and watches previously available nearby were only available downtown; those midtown entrepreneurs had been squeezed out. Although for a reasonable one dollar, there was a guy who would sell you a photocopied A4 sheet of "the fifty best sex positions" right in front of the 42nd Street McDonalds. By 2014 he, and anyone like him, was gone. The pop-up tables on the street corners were mostly legitimate and displayed their vendor's licenses. A trip to Times Square meant slow and steady ducking and weaving between selfie-sticks. It seemed busier and brighter and cleaner. The heat and glare of signage compounded already sweltering summer days, making it feel as though their job was to cruelly magnify the heat radiating from the baked sidewalk. From above, below and all around, into that sudden concentration of warm bodies, we all came close and closer to each other as even more people poured off of tour buses and exited the subway, steadily filling the crowd. Having lived in the city for four year during the early noughties, I hosted many guests and knew a visit to New York didn't feel complete without going to Times Square; so necessary and yet, an odd choice. It was, after all, just a junction of roads, an intersection that was brightly lit. Yet with the alterations and controls imposed on this central plot of the city it had been deliberately repackaged as a commercial and cultural hub, removing niche and criminal enterprises in order to broaden its appeal and enable a jumble of mainstream commercial ventures to move in.

The result was the feeling, the sensory certainty that everything valuable and known in our modern world was here, through the mass of flashing images, logos and glowing typefaces. In the evening, when it was sometimes cooler, the glare of the advertisement boards seemed more

[13] http://www.centralparknyc.org/visit/park-history.html

purposeful and welcome than during the day, filling the space, creating a dazzling feast for the eyes. Stepping into that brightly lit arena was as real as stepping onto a Broadway stage itself and allowed me to become audience and performer, both at once and in a sanctioned, safe space; to look, smile and pose with the traffic buzz and heat of New York, if not the whole western commercial world concentrated around you. Although still claustrophobic at points, I welcomed the newly pedestrianized seating areas. They gave a deliberate space and permission to drink in the city. Where undesirables had been pushed out, there was now space for mainstream enterprises and seats for the adoring tourists; to enjoy and feel a part of it all.

It didn't occur to me during any of these visits that the details and life in Times Square would be part of this ethnography. In many ways, this instinct was right because the bubble of this triangular "square" seemed to involve so few actual New Yorkers going about their daily lives. What could possibly be learned from this tourist show space? Yet the roots of New York's elite cosmopolitanism can be traced there, in the relationship between the square and the city. The take-over and management of Times Square into a showpiece was emblematic of the ways New York City packaged and projected itself as *the* centre of a globalizing world. From those seats in the square, and although hemmed in by tall chunky buildings all-round, every landmark of New York was visible; shoulder-to-shoulder with the global brands, in the gift shops. The Statue of Liberty had become a commodity for tourists and a vital piece of New York romanticism and marketing. She was available as a pocket-sized keepsake or trophy for once-in-a-lifetime visitors. The dollar-green crown and torch were ubiquitous in midtown where they formed the city's camouflage alongside the egg-yellow taxis and Milton Glaser's I heart NY logos[14]. Transcending

language barriers and aiding the projection of the city, aspects of everyday life had become brands in their own right over previous the decade or so. NYC, NYPD and NYFD had been plastered on every known piece of clothing an inanimate object for miles around. The New York brand was lucrative. For $14.99 your dog could chew a plush, “I heart NY” bone or your newborn could wear an “I heart NY” babygrow. To wear or own one of these items allowed tourists a piece of the city and were valuable currency for gifting to loved ones. Of course, to wear or own one of these items almost guaranteed you did not live in Manhattan; they didn’t have to wear New York, they were New York.

Parents of the World School were, for the most part, born and raised outside of New York City. Yet this self-declared “diverse group”, hailing from across the United States and beyond, converged in Manhattan for their child’s world school education. Emphasizing diversity yet still able to narrowly define the particular type of parent, a member of the school leadership told me it was *“mostly people from the creative industries”* that chose the school, which was code for supermodels, directors, producers, actors and a wide range of entrepreneurs and self-employed. In the same way the city had taken itself from near bankruptcy and become a global commercial centre, the symbolism of success resonated with their own social mobility, meaning the accomplishment of being a New Yorker was as important to the parents as the economic and cultural prowess and concentrated employment opportunities the city contained. And the location of New York for them, their family and the world school was not accidental. The value of being in New York was a no-brainer. For the parents of Manhattan World School, New York was the place where their own ambitions were met and aspirations were set for their offspring. New York was the world they wanted to give their children. The economic freedom to which they aspired (so that, in their words, they didn’t have to think about

money) was an aspiration pursued and most likely to be achieved there, in New York City.

Consider then that amongst a "diverse" group of economically elite, international-immigrants and second generation immigrant Americans, living and working in New York was the pinnacle of their success. A success achieved within twenty-three square miles of land in the north western hemisphere on planet earth. Consider that their arrival and life in the city was not simply one of their greatest and proudest achievements but a symbol of their efficacy as valuable, hard-working and at the pinnacle of achievements in their field (whatever that may be). These parents didn't come to New York because it was ethnically diverse and had great parks. These parents came to New York because it was a powerful place to be and an affluent place for employment opportunities. But more than that, they came to New York because they belonged there; the cultural significance and industry, the commercially selective, exclusivity and exclusionary turnover of the city matched who they were and what they wanted. The city represented these aspects of exclusivity as part of the objective structures of its organization. I argue here and throughout the coming chapters, of the bounded, pre-established and stalwart characteristics that simultaneously make New York the centre of the global world and, result in the narrowness and provincialization of cosmopolitan aspirations. For it is these elite parents, who, embody the ethics and rules of New York. Using Bourdieu's terms, they appear "..in direct conformity with the objective structures of the organization because they are the product of the embodiment of these structures" (1996:3); they have been drinking the cool aid for years. Suffice to say, in contrast to the analytical and liminal position of the Beijing case, the cosmopolitan aspirations in New York were symbolic of, a buy-in to and alignment with the character of New York itself. As a gaming space then amongst, "…a field of forces structurally determined by the state of relations of power among forms of

power, or different forms of capital" (Bourdieu, 1996:264) where relations of power are seemingly in continuous re-negotiation by newcomers to the city; seemingly "new", "fresh-blood" and with a supposed unique contribution to make. But perhaps in Bourdieu's words, "similar to old houses who charm is a result of the countless changes made to them over time by their successive occupants, who, in their alterations, are compelled to conform to the constraints bequeathed by the choices of the former occupants" (Bourdieu, 1996:228). It is in this context, this resonating chamber that I situate the elite parents of the world school. And, more importantly, it is where they situate themselves and their cosmopolitan aspirations.

The parents of Manhattan World School (MWS) identified with the symbolic power of New York; a sign of their having "made it." When the world school parents came to New York, it was not by boat. Their stories and journeys varied but their move symbolized social mobility, status and above all success. They emulated the stories of immigrants before them and tropes of the American dream, with parents speaking of their own parents as having "…arrived in America with $10 in their pocket." But it was their journey to New York that was an embodied part of their habitus, because it made them a certain type of person in comparison to nothing less than, the rest of the world. This sounds grand, but If we consider that,

> *"Habitus is thus at the basis of strategies of reproduction that tend to maintain separations, distances, and relations of order(ing), hence concurring in practice (although not consciously or deliberately) in reproducing the entire system of differences constitutive of the social order." (Bourdieu, 1996:3)*

Brad, a German-American high schooler recalled applying to the world school just one week before opening day. Studying at MWS meant holding himself back and re-sitting a year of high school as the eldest kid, but overall he thought “it would be worth it.” Upon acceptance Brad and his father rushed from Europe to New York. During an exciting but tiring month or so, he found himself living out of a suitcase and commuting from the hotel each day.

> *“…And so I was also looking at other options and so one week before the school started I applied. One day before school started I arrived in New York and so for the first few weeks of school I went to school from the hotel. And that was quite exhausting. We came here with nothing. I mean we have family who live here but we came with nothing. We had no apartment, we had no furniture, nothing. So, the first things we had at home were a huge TV and only a bed. A huge TV for soccer games and sports. And the rest of our apartment was empty. Then we got internet access, which I needed for school work. So basically I sat on a cardboard box and I did my homework because we didn’t have a table. And so it was quite a fun experience with my dad because both of us, we’re not good with our hands, we’re not craftsman. We had to put all the things up by ourselves. Usually that’s my mum’s thing to do all that. But us two boys we had to do it all. So it was a huge challenge but we managed to do it.” (He’s smiling, he’s proud of this story)*

Such instances of family relocation for the sole purpose of attending MWS were not uncommon. After having children accepted to the school a rare

townhouse and loft property was snapped up by one family moving to the area, delighted to have "*cut a deal in fifteen minutes flat."* Seemingly slow by comparison, those coming from nearby states or the west coast were able to secure a second family home and move to the neighbourhood in just a matter of months. The supposed or actual speed and ease with which these families were able to move is perhaps not surprising but what was noticeable was the narratives of effort and struggle that, however trivial, were often attached to the stories. Moving to the city specifically for the school was common amongst those who "worked on both coasts" of the US and a valuable institutional strategy for their child, as I will come to explain.

Cosmopolitan Aspirations are Shaped by New York City

Key to the City

In the summer of 2010 I was honored to be presented with The Key to the City of New York. The ceremony was held in Times Square. The silver Medecco key was handed to me by a long-time friend and resident of the city. In turn, I too presented her with a key and accolade for services to the city. Then, with our blue mini-passports and keys, we moved away from the podium where, along with 25,000 other people that summer, we enjoyed a brief sense of power and intimacy in various locations around the city; our pre-cut keys allowed us to open special locks, operate a streetlight in Bryant Park and access the baptistry at the Cathedral of St. John the Devine, in my old neighbourhood. The scheme was a public art project, imagined by Paul Ramirez Jonas. The aim was to celebrate civic and public service undertaken by people everyday, but it encouraged people to visit lesser-known places and experience the city like a VIP. From the experience, and the motivations of those I met in-line, I suggest the project more keenly reflected the exclusivity on which the city thrived. In contrast to

the myths and narratives of welcoming migrants to America, New York City is home to a game where privileged access and embedded exclusivity are the only way to level up.

While the city may project images and dreams of freedom, the parents of the world school, both those who were longer-term residents and those who moved "for the school", knew that the freedom to which they aspired, required a significant entrenchment in the social networks and, more importantly, the institutions of New York. Private schools in the city are famously difficult to access, built on family legacy, networks built before birth, institutional affiliations gained from pre-school and so on. Although affluent and financially elite, the parents of the world school were not, in New York terms, established. So, they had to earn their freedom of the city. Largely, these families were new to the city and its institutions. They were elite then, but not the very local, established New Yorkers[15]. As such, these families did not have access to the established elite preparatory schools, nurseries or high schools; the kind which require generations of alumni or significant cultural capital.[16] So although these parents were financially elite, they faced the difficulties of being newcomers to Manhattan's hierarchy and established elite circles; where school places, museum board seats, some apartment buildings were typically affairs of legacy or close connections. This landscape was not a secret. Parents were still reeling from the success of having their child accepted the world school when I first met them in 2014. Two fathers reflected on it during lunch one day at the

[15] As always, there are one or perhaps two exceptions to this generalization. But, without naming the prominent individuals (linked to Hollywood and long-time New Yorkers) it is difficult to weave their place into the story of the newelites and the World School, since it is these families that create the majority and typify this ethnography. My sense is that in hushed moments, graduation appearances and fleeting sightings of these well-known, A-list celebrities, as well as the media and word-of-mouth confirmation "they" attended the school, these exceptions enhanced the innovative and "breakthrough" character the school was aiming to create. These celebrities added status and facest to the ideas projected by the school, challenging old, established elite examples of prep and secondary education; the established elites of New York.

[16] For further insight into the intensity of school and pre-school admissions see, https://www.nytimes.com/2002/11/15/nyregion/no-talking-out-of-preschool-favoritism-in-nursery-school-entrance-no-comment.html
https://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=123782&page=1

school. Gerald confirmed their fortunate situation, relaying stories about his colleague's difficulties securing a future school, one of whom had recently shared their use of a personalized school hunter for their children,

> *"…you know there's a guy in the city, he only takes thirty-five kids a year…after birth that's the first call. I mean, I assume they're exaggerating but maybe not. Hopefully they cut the umbilical cord first…"*

Such self-congratulation was warranted. Their access to a prominent, albeit new and unestablished, school was a feat. Manhattan World School made no secret of strategically meeting this fundamental need, offering an exclusive educational setting and the most likely route to an elite college thereafter. With this singular goal in the mind of the parents, it is important to reflect how, almost immediately, the character of the New York Global is narrowed this central feature of legitimacy; their need for institutional affiliation. And an important distinction emerges. To be clear, in the New York case, while the nature of their elite cosmopolitanism can be understood through their habitus and position-taking in New York, it was their motivations and their drive to secure access to a school for their children that required them to assume and assert an explicit cosmopolitan character.

So while the city appeared to offer and confirm the freedom parents' desired and embodied, in a swift jolt, it also limited, constrained and jeopardized it. In this way, I show how the cosmopolitan aspirations of the world school parents were driven by the objectivated structures New York. The freedom to which they aspired required institutional access and embeddedness within the local networks. The Manhattan World School was an opportunity, available for people like them.

The following sections will show the convergence of parent's aspirations with the creation of Manhattan World School. The alignment between the school and parent group was not accidental. MWS was a for-profit school, with a business model that recognized the need for more private school "seats" in Manhattan. Like a case of chicken and the egg, it is difficult to ascertain which really came first; the school or parents' self-presentation as diverse, entrepreneurial global citizens. Arguably, the school's position as "the" world school, the flagship campus for the whole world, was in resonance with New York City as much as with parents. In applying to the school then there was an amplification and projection of their merit for entry; a concentrated manifestation of cosmopolitan attributes. Parents agreed, "the world" was in flux and "everything" was changing. The perceptions were that global competition (for college, if nothing else) were at a peak. They agreed there was no better place for a world school.

Manhattan World School



Visual 12. Looking up towards the top floors of the World School,. "Flag" by Frank Benson, flies from the south-east corner of the World School[17]

[17] The American flag belongs to the building's owner and is considered an artwork. The flag has been digitally altered to make it appear as if the stars and stripes always have an in-the-wind motion. Further information on the school's art collection will feature in Chapter Five.

The Manhattan World School (MWS) was not a well-kept secret. In preparation for opening day the self-promotion and media engagement were at maximum; luncheons for prospective parents, cocktail presentations at The Harvard Club, brochures, interviews with the Wall Street Journal and New York Times. Unlike other elite New York schools, MWS courted applicants. The idea of a World School landed heavily into the city's schooling scene from around 2011, while the building was still a hard-hat zone and the ideas all on paper. Co-founder John Skittle, the articulate bow-tie wearing educational-media-entrepreneur, was at the head of it all keenly pitching the problems of existing traditional (ie.out-dated) models of education. The vision was, in his own words, *"a new school of thought."* Masterfully identifying the fears of Manhattan's newly elite parents the media strategy was considered and vociferously pursued. The overt message was definitive, if you believed those with a "global view" and a "highly developed sense of the broader world" would be the ones to prosper in the future, this school was for you and your offspring. The World School would be a worldwide, global school with its flagship campus, in Manhattan.

Where else would the global flagship be? Throughout this section, we start to see that when enacted the hyperbole surrounding claims of a changing world and the need for cosmopolitan education involves a privileged and selective entrenchment within the world of American elite education and the Chelsea neighbourhood in Manhattan.

There was no less than six heads of school at MWS, all but one in their mid-sixties to mid-seventies. They were heavy-weight professionals and former leaders of established elite schools. Those worth highlighting in the MWS promotional materials included Phillips Exeter Academy, Dalton, Hotchkiss, Dearfield. Their own academic qualifications were noted as Harvard, NYU and Yale, amongst others. They were former Fulbright Fellows and current board and committee members across various

settings. If for any reason their national and international reputations had not preceded them you would be left in little doubt as to their prominence after reading their curated biographies. Combined, they held over one hundred years of experience in school leadership roles, gathered since the early 1980's, omitting the roles or teaching experience considered too low-key to mention.

After familiarizing himself with the all-white seventy-something predominantly male line-up, Alex, the father of a teenage son remembers solemnly thinking, "*Yes…I'm going to take a risk with these people.*" For another father, Gerald, he needed further confirmation. He had read too many scripts and pitches in his time to be won over on paper alone. He needed the handshake, the eye contact and more importantly, a gut feeling. After meeting the Head of Upper School Dr. Gunn, Gerald was "sold". In Dr Gunn, Gerald found an experienced educator who had a quarter of a decade's leadership experience at the most respected private school in Manhattan and yet, he'd chosen to come to the Manhattan World School, "to build something new". Gerald had sized up Dr. Gunn in person, liked what he said and trusted him to "see it through." In particular, he liked Dr. Gunn's discerning nature. He was a man who "…takes no nonsense and doesn't suffer fools." So when Dr Gunn welcomed Gerald "as an equal", a valuable asset and pioneer, he felt a common ground was established. They could work together and Gerald would entrust his only son to the school. Another father, Sanjay, found it was the "ideas driving the school" delivered with charisma and insight that won him over. Impressed by the "amazing" presentation skills of John Skittle he attributed them almost entirely responsible for the enrollment of both his children.

> *"I mean he's an amazing speaker…when he (John) shared his vision about (Manhattan World School)…that's why, you know,*

I'm plunking the dollars I am for my kids' education. I mean, he's terrific."

As Sanjay and Gerald talk over lunch they were more than a little satisfied with their position, confident their kids were in good hands. The business-world benefits of the school made sense to them too. As a for-profit venture school fees would cover everything, no need for those additional annoying donations or "being hit up" for fundraising every year, this was a complete package and all upfront. Their certainty was a required stance and instinct that somewhat obscured their lack of options, with one mother telling me, *"I didn't look at any other school. We looked at no other school. We applied to no other school."* A similar instinct to "go all in" will continue to feature throughout the New York Global. But what is most significant about these ways-of-being is that they are not just performances, they lay the groundwork for the home habitus and the expectations for the young people of MWS. Amongst themselves and with me, parents would reinforce their entrepreneurial and innovative spirit by narrating their "journey" to choosing the school, just as they narrated their journey to the city, in ways that reflected back to them and the type of worthy character they were. Amongst a small group of three mothers, over coffee, I was told,

"…MWS, there is nothing like it here in New York. There are schools here that have been around for hundreds of years and they have a set way of doing things. And that's fine, there's nothing wrong with that. But, we were looking for a 21st century education. Something that could be, that had never been done before. And when I heard about it, I knew, I felt it, it was intuitive, right?

(She looks to another parent who is nodding and agrees)
"100%"

"I want them to be…I guess I go back to the mission…what do they say, "at ease beyond their borders"…for me, for them…as a parent I just want them to be happy…and to be at ease beyond their borders. I want them to be global citizens, to be bilingual. I want them to have humility to be humanitarians too, on some level. Not just to see themselves as…you know.. I want them to be globally aware. I mean…I guess some people want ivy league after this but you know I just want them to be happy. I want them to be amazing. And they ***will be*** *because they're starting* ***so*** *young."*

The global plan for the school was to develop at least ten further campuses in its first ten years; Beijing was top of the list as a second location after New York. Cities such as Sao Paolo and London were suggested to follow[18]. The global ambition of the school, the institutional expansion based on its New York flagship, manifests a central aspect of the cosmopolitan aspirations of these parents. For those who entered children into the high school, it was of no matter to them around when or even if the other campuses opened, their child didn't need them. What they needed was a school with a scope and reach and ambition large enough to make an impact on their college application; just as New York projected itself as the centre of the global world, they needed an institution that would equally project and dominate the field of global education. The field of power in which they positioned themselves was oriented by the elite colleges of

[18] Three campuses exist by 2021. The Beijing campus involved a great deal of investment in time and employment of staff to operate there, architectural plans and build the political support for establishing a school. This included staff visits between NYC and Beijing, marketing and lobbying. The progress to achieve the required permissions faltered around 2016, after several years of work and much publicity surrounding the Beijing location. Beijing was abandoned as a location. Sao Paolo became the second campus, opening in 2017. Shenzhen became the third location, with the innovating and technological set-up of the city considered "a better fit" for the world school. Shenzhen began as an early childhood center, which involved less permissions. The primary and secondary school are due to open in 2021, with those K-9 receiving the mandatory Chinese national curriculum.

America, as the next chapter will show. Yet it is this mixture of promotion and an unproblematic view of the world, symbolic of, driven by and projected through New York that manifests itself as both a perpetual insecurity and superiority. While projecting and promoting a global scope and future impact, these families alongside this school were hunkering down in the Chelsea neighbourhood. In this way, what emerges as a central characteristic of the New York Global is the interweaving of projected narratives for the city and the school (eg. centre of the world, powerful, diverse, innovative) with the embodied and material aspects of the new global elite. These parents know the field of power in which they are operating and understand that being at the top means projecting, promoting and behaving as such.

Simply put by one mother, a New York Times article in 2011 changed her life. At that stage their daughter was just one-year old. Both she and her husband "fell in love" with a school over breakfast. Convinced in that moment Manhattan World School was the one for her child she admits to walking by each day "before the school was even built" telling her toddler, "this is the school you are going to go to." Safely inside only a few years later, she and other parents affirm those early and enduring perceptions. More than self-congratulation, their shared experience offers perfect binding small talk in a newly gathered community.

> *"Why this school? I can tell you why this school. We read that New York Times article. It explained the curriculum and it explained it's going to be THE world school. It explained the immersion. I'm a multi-lingual parent…I'm Turkish-American, and for me I feel that Americans lack language skills…and you need to do it when you're young."*

"…We read it and said, this is it. This is the school my daughter is going to go to. This is the school we have to get in to, who do we know?"

Hunkering Down in Chelsea

In 2014 the New York City subway system recorded its highest daily ridership since 1949, approximately 5.6 million. In a city where the subway never sleeps, over 1.7 billion people used the underground transportation that year.[19] With a flat fare, the numbered and lettered routes were one of the most convenient, economical and popular choices to navigate Manhattan. The north to south of the island was easily served by several routes, while the east and west sides experienced a corseted, leaner coverage. The Green 4/5/6 line sliced the length of the city with its most easterly reach in Manhattan on Lexington Avenue. The Red 1/2 and Blue A/C/E took turns to accommodate the west side, leaning out as far as Broadway and below midtown only as far as 8th Avenue before swerving away from the Hudson and down into Greenwich Village. Using the subway to travel to the World School in Chelsea, in 2014, the closest station was 7th or 8th Avenue on either 23rd or 28th Street. From that point I had a walk of at least two long blocks[20]

[19] http://web.mta.info/mta/network.htm Accessed January 2015. Official Website of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).
[20] Hudson's Yard & Hudson's Guild

Hudson's Yard was in development when I visited but not open/advertising

The High Line -now New York's favourite park, was also incomplete/in progress during my research.



Visual 13. Looking south on 9th Avenue; hometime for Public School 33.

Walking west towards the Hudson River it was noticeably less frenetic than close by Penn Station of Time Square. The pavements of Chelsea felt slightly wider. Metal shopping trolleys were repurposed as the luggage of choice for both construction workers and homeless; some static, piled high with belongings, others stuttered along with building materials and piping. The city's fast pace was still visible in the flow of people emerging from the subway swerving as they navigated the trolleys. But the clothing was smart casual and contemporary, not business suits; a mix of Marc Jacobs latest hobo and messenger bags, not briefcases. To reach the school on tenth avenue involved a choice of four or five different streets, all of which passed through the red brick apartments of the Elliot-Fulton Housing Scheme. To a casual passer-by these twelve and twenty-one storey apartment buildings would be unremarkable, with air-conditioners assuming half the space in each window frame, typical of those found across the city. Only by choosing twenty-seventh street were they forced to consider the dominance of the housing project. Twenty-seventh street disappeared at ninth avenue, filled instead by a double block of housing and no through-road. The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) scheme disrupted the pattern of the city removing the street for a whole block. From above, the north and south limits of the housing project on twenty-fourth and twenty-eighth streets

appeared to balloon outwards, making the otherwise poker straight lines on the map curve distinctly in order to contain the buildings. The curvature of those two streets was a rare sight in the strict grid pattern of New York. The result was a bubble of public housing that forced you to either walk straight through on twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth street or to take the long, curved route around the outskirts, adding an infuriating couple of minutes onto a busy commute. Either way, it was difficult to pass through this area without acknowledging the residents.

Twenty-sixth street was one of the most direct routes to the World School. Starting at the subway on seventh avenue, this was the last opportunity on the west side to pick up a Starbucks. After that, it was cheap bodegas or independent boutique coffee houses of which both seem to do good trade. The Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre slept during the day, next to a low-rent taco restaurant and a busy McDonalds. The nearest public school had a playground with a bespoke climbing frame; two turrets between a bridge walkway which looked like the Empire State Building and Chrysler Building in bright silver and blue. Half-a-block from the school, a mural on an Elliot-Chelsea Housing building stood out from the blandness of the red brick. The ground corner of the building was covered in mosaic tiling in the style of a young child's drawing. Three life-sized women stood facing forward. One wore a graduation gown and cap, the other a veil and the third a head wrap. Surrounding them were the tiled word; "college graduate, wife, mother, lawyer, teacher." The mural continued around the corner of the building extending to a baseball player. Only on twenty-sixth street did the uniformity of the NYCHA doorways become apparent. With mesh and metal fencing, ramps and barriers, the doors were heavy with signage unlike other apartment buildings in surrounding Manhattan. "No Pets Allowed" stood out prominently alongside warnings of trespassing, numbers to call in an emergency and a hotline for complaints. At tenth avenue the heavy road traffic reappeared and well-groomed dogs bounced past with their owners.

Heavily loaded trucks and taxicabs shared the avenue with a range of dark SUVs. The sleek black cars with privacy–enhancing tinted windows were lined up and hovered on the west side of the road in front of the World School. Parents and children had been chauffeured to their destination. Emerging from an Uber or private car they had most likely taken twenty-third street and swept directly north up tenth avenue. Given traffic flow that route made most sense in the morning rush. But what had been gained in a comfortable morning commute had perhaps been lost in other ways.



Visual 14.: The Chelsea-Elliott New York Housing Scheme. A mosaic mural on the wall of an apartment block; women with their roles/profession in lettering, “College Graduate, Mother, Teacher…”

From the Upper East Side, Long Island and all over, the world school was perhaps worth the trek. On the surface, day-to-day access to the school was a smooth affair for parents and children, aided by white lanyards that

became the signature accessory in the neighbourhood. As the school developed, more parents could be seen on tenth avenue, on the High Line or streets nearby still casually wearing their ID; a sartorial must-have on the local catwalk. The parents' lanyard with white cord and photo ID likely cost a few dollars in materials and production. Yet, for the majority of world school parents that piece of cord with the school logo represented years of hard work and success; it signified access and belonging.



Visual 15: Sheltering from the rain, under the entrance canopy at Manhattan World School.

The New York Times escalated Darlene Waters from neighbourhood fixture to headline celebrity in one short article. Published on a Friday in late October 2015, readers were given the weekend to digest the insider account of hyper-gentrification in her childhood neighbourhood of Chelsea. The article's accompanying photograph showed long-time resident Darlene side-profile on her way to buy groceries, passing the colourful mural of Public School 33 at the end of her block. The sunshine emphasized her purple coat and justified the dark sunglasses and wrinkled expression found on many New York faces. The fall sunshine cast a long shadow behind her alluding to the article's somber headline, "In Chelsea, A Great Wealth Divide." Darlene was now the very public face of public housing in Chelsea

and illustration of a citywide concern for rapidly increasing income-inequality and survival. Presented as "islands within a sea of ever-expanding wealth"[21] Elliot and Fulton Houses (Public Housing Projects) within Chelsea offered The Times a compelling example of the relationship between low-income and high-income residents in New York City. The piece blended Darlene's personal pros and cons of her "now bright and inviting" neighbourhood with the most recent census and city figures, leading the article to declare "an economic canyon" around 25th Street. The broader fear of being moved, bought out or squeezed out was the driving theme. To heighten the sense of wealth claustrophobia the east and west sides of tenth avenue provided a stark visual and monetary contrast. On the west side of the avenue a $44,000 a-year fee-paying World School and on the East, Darlene's public housing and a 100 year old social support organization struggling to stay afloat, the Hudson's Guild. From online responses it could be argued the article hit a sweet spot of interest drawing around 360 comments over its initial weekend (approximately four times more than the paper's latest coffee article, "Is That Cappuccino You're Drinking Really a Cappuccino?"[22])

True Believers

The experience of chosing and being accepted to the world school signalled "mission accomplished" to many parents. Projecting their own lives and aspirations, parents I talked to would fluidly switch between discussing their career trajectories and their intuitive reasons for choosing the school, as if they were part of the same school of thought. Although parents would explain their choice of school as a perceived "match" with

[21] Navarro, M., 2015. In Chelsea, a Great Wealth Divide. The New York Times. 23 October. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/nyregion/in-chelsea-a-great-wealth-divide.html
[22] Ortved, J., 2015. Is That Cappuccino You're Drinking Really a Cappuccino?. 29 September. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/02/fashion/mens-style/is-that-cappuccino-youre-drinking-really-a-cappuccino.html?ribbonadidx=3&rref=style&module=Ribbon&version=context&region=Header&action=click&contentCollection=Style&pgtype=article

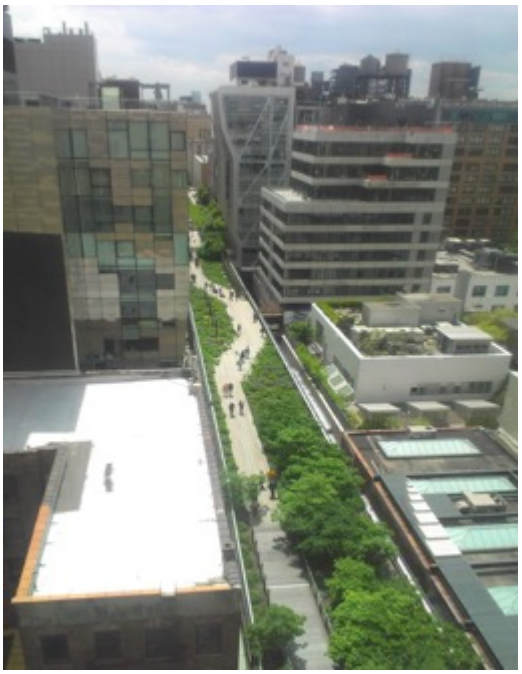
their child, the reasons given were more related to the ways in which these parents and their life trajectories and successes echoed with the school's aspirations and promises. Openly promoting themselves as self-made, parents speak of humble beginnings having come from middle-class working families, first or second-generation immigrants. Some, like Gerald, were the first in their family to attend college. And for many the start-up nature of the school struck a chord. Reflecting on the hard-hat tours taken before the school opened the mother of a nursery student, Bev, explained the sense of risk and innovation was simply a "good fit."

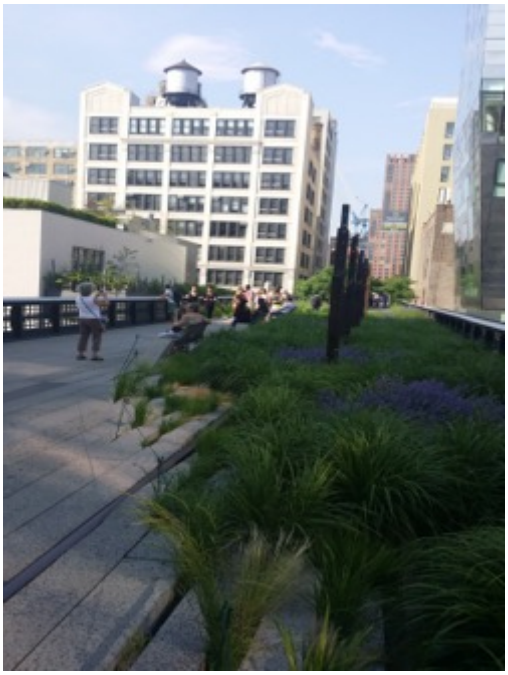
> *"We see ourselves here. It was so exciting. In many ways you could see the vibe in the (other) parents. There were people who would say it was interesting but they were not interested in being pioneers, at **all**. And then you'd find some people saying, "let me know how it goes". And then there are parents like **us**..."*

Not just with me, but amongst each other parents would affirm the ways in which they got onboard with the school. In the early days of the school, as parents were authentically networking and reaching out to each other to build relationships, their stories of moving to New York flowed into their "journey" to the school. There was a basic need for a suitably selective and connected school, but never once would that be mentioned. Instead, they were at the school because it was "a new school of thought" just like them and their lives.

Even with a long two-block walk from the nearest subway, travelling to Tenth Avenue and 26th Street in Chelsea could not be considered onerous. From the mid-noughties the neighbourhood was on the map for some significant transformations. The city's newest public park, The High Line, was given approval in 2004. Inspired by Paris' Promenade Plantee, The

High Line park was created from an abandoned elevated freight railroad running down the west side of the island. Google moved to Chelsea around 2006 and put down roots when it bought 111 Eighth Avenue in 2010. Even a nearby coffee vendor, with their brand of “Intelligentsia Coffee” offered a daily affirmation to those in the area, a morning congratulation for catching the wave of change. Arguably what Chelsea lacked in convenience for a school commute, during these first few years, it made up for in potential and cool. Due to funding and real estate issues in 2008, the school eventually defaulted to Chelsea. The location may not have been the first choice, but now fit like a globe and contributed to the narrative of innovation, adaptability and power. When catching the Chelsea wave, the school immediately identified at least one suitable neighbor; The High Line. The tentative opening of the urban parks’ first section in 2009 received great acclaim for its repurposing of a derelict space to public use. Opening of the second section of the park coincided with both the location and timing of MWS choice of building, around 2010-11. With the school building’s third floor conveniently aligned with the elevated High Line, the school keenly pursued a neighbourly agreement with the youngest and most promising of New York City’s Public Parks. Imagine…the windows in the school’s cafeteria designed to open up (garage door style) to allow students al fresco dining on New York’s latest and most desirable space? It is possible the allure of Chelsea’s greatest asset as a lunchroom also made the daily commute to school lighter to bear.





Visual 16. The High Line as seen from the upper floors of the World School. June 2014.

Visual 17: Looking north on the High Line, approaching the World School.

The former warehouse provided the World School an imposing concrete structure with around 215,000 square feet. Sitting adjacent to the High Line the school integrated itself as another symbol of the gentrification of the neighbourhood. Dormant and lacking in prominence for decades, the creative and historical significance of the warehouse was leveraged by the World School. The R.C. Williams warehouse was built in 1928 for the grocery company of the same name. The school's brochure didn't give that information. Rather, greater mention was made of the designer Cass Gilbert. And, for those unaware of the significant, the text continued to alert readers that Cass Gilbert was also the architect for the Unite States Supreme Court Building. Therefore, leasing this slumbering giant brought an unappreciated landmark to life and potentially offered some provenance to a new enterprise. Vastly different from the neoclassical Supreme Court, the warehouse could be more purposefully compared to Gilbert's other modern works; the Woolworth Building or the Brooklyn Army Terminal. The

warehouse was considered one of the pioneering industrial buildings for its use of reinforced concrete. No longer a storage dump for costumes and props of nearby theatre productions, the chunky concrete cube on Tenth Avenue had been "rehabilitated" by MWS as a beacon of promise and global-minded aspiration. The loading dock on the building's third floor was originally designed for maximum efficiency in the international shipping of cargo. The freight rails of the High Line assisted the shuttling of precious goods to the harbour at South Street, allowing them to travel the globe. And, almost too convenient to be true, High Line researchers suggested William's company was among the first to predict the potential of coffee as a popular American beverage, leading to the majority of the company's fortune. Retrospectively labelled as trendsetters, William's Royal Scarlet coffee brand and franchise may have been scarcely recognized but the idea fitted nicely into the story of the building. The school chose to revive the historical partnership between the building and the High Line. The metaphor of shipping out previous cargo on a global scale was not yet leveraged.

But it was the shipping-out and projection of what they were doing, as "the" global that constitutes a particular characteristic of the New York Global. Without a hint of contradiction the elite parents were rooting and embedding themselves within a selective, elite narrative of the city: the High Line park, the redevelopment of Chelsea, the warehouse building. This aspect is then, an extra section in this exploration of cosmopolitan aspirations; an aspect that wasn't evident in the Beijing case. To be clear then, in contrast to Beijing where the parents and school are operating in untested ways, positioning ahead of their existing field of power, the New York parents are focused on institutional legitimacy, recycling and repurposing well-established narratives in which to achieve their aims.

Recognising the power of a narrative, the school's mission was read out to prospective parents during information sessions. During the school's second year, some of these sessions took placed in the school building. The presentation staff were well-practiced and read with poise, taking just sixty seconds (every time I heard them) to calmly and clearly read out the paragraph; pausing for emphasis after each statement, maintaining eye contact across the audience, allowing the message to fill the space.

> *"We will graduate students who are accomplished in the academic Skills one would expect; at ease beyond their borders; truly fluent In a second language; good writers and speakers one and all; Confident because they excel in a particular passion; artists no matter their field; practical in the ways of the world; emotionally unafraid and physically fit; humble about their gifts and generous of spirit; Trustworthy; aware that their behavior makes a difference in our ecosystem; great leaders when they can be, good followers when they should be; on their way to well-chosen higher education; and, most importantly, architects of lives that transcend the ordinary."*



Visual 18. Sign for Intelligentsia Coffee, available from the High Line Hotel & Coffee Stand
Visual 19. Lit, viewing platform on the High Line park, providing a framed view of east bound traffic and a view of the Lower School entrance at the Manhattan World School.

For parents and high school students the journey to The World School may have relied somewhat on imagination and an ability to look beyond the immediate. Far from the construction site many saw when signing their tuition contract with MWS, the shine on the exterior concrete, the presence of crossing guards and discrete security team at the entrance signaled the school open for business and running smoothly in the Spring of 2014. Those heading for the World School could be identified at least a block away by the white and black lanyards casually resting on top of their jackets. Far from the supposed complaints about traffic congestion and upset in front of the school, the dark Escalades, Mercedes and BMWs filtering into the inside lane are orderly and far more composed than the taxis and trucks blaring their horns as they fly up the avenue. These people had no interest in drawing attention to themselves, whether walking or driving.. The route to school still seemed a novelty for some, visibly gawking around in a very un-New Yorker way, either too eager or too nervous. Others more familiar in their surroundings scanedn each direction for any changes, developments or oncoming traffic, all while maintaining brisk walking pace. Entering the lower school through the side entrance on 26th Street you were overlooked by the elevated High Line viewing platform. It had a framed area of tiered bleacher seating allowing an east-west vantage point. As a parent taking your child to the MWS lower school each morning it wouldn't be a far stretch to imagine an audience up there, sipping coffee and applauding you for being lucky enough, no, smart enough, to have secured a place.

In this chapter I have shown that the cosmopolitan aspirations of the new global elite in New York are not limited to their embodied state but take on a particularly puffy, outward-facing, projection of what they consider to be valuable, meritous and global. Their material wealth and curated privileges combine to harness existing and well-trodden cultural narratives of

innovation, immigration and agentic success; all of which constitute the "freedom" they seek and in many ways, already have. Yet, when mixed in with the individualization of worthiness and value, the projections and living of the stories become so fundamental to the day-to-day life and fixtures. What their aspirations lead to, as future chapters will develop is the fracture between their complete certainty and single-mindedness of approach and required destination, with their insecurities, an almost inevitable consequence of such a pursuit.

Summary: Cosmopolitan Aspirations

In Chapter Four and Five, I used Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, and field to structure my analysis of the data and the creation of an ethnographic narrative in each place. In turn this has allowed exploration of the origins and nature of cosmopolitan aspirations and the nature of elite cosmopolitanism in two contrasting cases. I have explored cosmopolitanism as practices, beliefs and actions of the new global elite showing how they are products of particular times and cultural locations. I have shown how these global elites came to hold cosmopolitan aspirations, how they see themselves and how they position themselves as part of class practices, understanding the origins and character of their social power and the ways they constitute themselves as powerful; their accompanying characteristics as, "their properties in their objective relations with other individuals and other groups" (Bourdieu, 1996:264) through considering the field(s) of power in which they operate. In these chapters this takes form in their worldviews and aspirations for freedom, their engagement with and negotiation of what they see as global and valuable. The (in)visible aspirations become visible, contextualised, and rooted. These substantive examples of elite cosmopolitanism are in contrast to the conceptual ideal of freedom from any specific place but rather, these versions show elites are made and remade within particular cultural rootings; in New York city this

means a narrowed, definitive and institutionally validated definition of what is meritous and in Beijing it means a liminal, culturally rooted but experimental way-of-being.

This chapter was about the aspirations of these new elites; what they want, why they want it and how they went about making things happen; which led them to the World Schools. The cosmopolitan education features and focuses their cosmopolitan aspirations then, but as I have shown, while their aspirations and interest in elite (re)production are focused by tending to their children, their aspirations and cosmopolitan orientation originated and had roots prior to having children.

There is reason here for discussion, about the nature of the global elite in both places. How, in NYC it has a tired rhetoric of fast pace change and imminence, but really, the elites operate in a way that is repetitive and "business as usual" but under a banner of entrepreneurial spunk and innovation. Whereas the pace and nature of change in Beijing means that they don't talk about cosmopolitanism as a "thing" or as a unifying force but instead demonstrate its usefulness and do the stuff of cosmopolitanism by trying, experimenting and showing genuine interest in learning from others; it is not abstract, but substantive. They need cosmopolitanism as a way for choice and freedom to be enacted, but this is supported heavily by an analytical way-of-being that is part of their negotiation and refinement of what it means to be the new Chinese elite. Freedom is a matter of choices and for now, the cosmopolitan global offers the space for choice.

6: "Putting Them in a Position to Win": The Development of Cosmopolitan Strategy in World Schools

> *"I mean, they're afraid, right? That's why they're here. They are afraid to let natural consequences occur…"*
>
> *(Teacher discussing World School parents)*

The focus of this chapter is cosmopolitan strategy; product of the relationships between world schools, teachers, parents and the social worlds and processes they negotiate. Presented here across two cases and in three parts, cosmopolitan strategy constitutes the pursuit of elite higher education destinations as a tangible outcome of cosmopolitan education; the social eco-systems of world schools as spaces shaping cosmopolitan dispositions; and, the cosmopolitan gaze produced in each case, representing the foci and boundaries of an elite global view. These aspects, taken together, represent the material and immaterial manifestations of elite cosmopolitanism negotiated at the institutional level. The inclusive ideals of a cosmopolitan education form one imperative within this strategy. The other emerges from parents' unwillingness to let "natural consequences" occur; to control, predict, plan and shape outcomes for their children, where the choice of a world school is considered to be, "Putting them in a position to win." Simply put, the imperative of inclusion from elite parents focuses on the legitimizing and consecrating aspects of an elite education. Theoretically then, this chapter relies on a Bourdieusian framework, implicitly drawing on the power of educational institutions to "impose recognition" (1986) and advance or secure measures of one's social class. As such, this chapter recognizes the use of education, broadly understood, to legitimize the social mobility and class positioning of these elite families in globalizing circumstances.

While the last chapter considered the embodied forms of cosmopolitanism, where the parental habitus becomes the “home” habitus for the young people of the world schools.

What is of interest is the cosmopolitan strategy resulting from the merging and clashing of the two imperatives of inclusion from school and family. It is within these details that an analysis of the relational nature of cosmopolitanism becomes possible; to uncover the assemblage of processes and influences that develop elite cosmopolitanism and the globalizing context(s) that make them valuable. These schools appear, at least from a distance, to be aiming for the same outcomes and employing similar techniques. The world schools are new institutions with boards and investors respectively; they have chosen and built “global” curriculum content; bought-in to prestigious and pedigreed educational brands; they have hired teachers and constructed a “diverse” student body by design. The buildings are new or renovated with spaces curated for learning. They have parent cafes, associations and family social events. The schools have marketing departments, in-house media creators, photographers, videographers and, dedicated college-liaison staff whom, during my research, were “selling” the school and students to elite and selective colleges across the US and English speaking countries. Yet, a cosmopolitan strategy in Beijing and New York are not the same. And, specifically, it is the consecrating activities in the world schools that combine to reveal contrasting global orientations and forms of cultural production as acts of class-making. Ethnographic scenes and vignettes exploring these aspects, will not form, as Bourdieu would perhaps suggest, *“journalistic style trivia”* (1996:292) but rather, will enable reflection on the contexts and *“relations of power”* (Ibid) in which cosmopolitan strategy is being developed. Such ethnographic understanding from these two cases provides insight to the directionality, so essential for understanding the field

of power and potential forms of capital. In this spirit I engage with a Bourdieusian analysis and recognize the opportunity to, *"…focus on strategies, but always in reference to the structural conditions under which they develop…"* (1996:121). These two cases offer enactments of cosmopolitan inclusion that fracture notions of a singular, global "field of power"; often assumed in discussions of cosmopolitan cultural capital and the development of cosmopolitanism more broadly. Rather, I show cosmopolitan strategy in these cases as it, *"hits the ground"* (Tsing, 2004) where two versions of the "same" phenomenon reveal distinct, albeit overlapped, relations of power.

In Beijing, their cosmopolitan strategy reveals inclusion as a lived negotiation with a predominantly western, cultural "other" and management of a global gaze that pivots upon China as the dominant base of social, cultural and economic influence. In New York, their cosmopolitan strategy shows an inclusion which is focused on negotiating oneself into pre-existing structures of power, locally and nationally dominated, using a global gaze to reinforce well-established domestic cultural norms. Most importantly then, when understood in context through ethnographic experience, inclusions become judgements of what is worthy and, it is the specificity of those inclusions, the choices made through their actions and not just their words, that show the cultural orientations, boundaries and character(s) of what it means to be, and to produce, a worthy global elite in the name of cosmopolitanism.

This chapter will present the ethnographic cases in two parts, showing the production of the cosmopolitan strategy in both Beijing and New York.

Part One: Beijing World School



Visual 20: The Early Chilhood Center, Beijing. Ginko Tree and community scene

Destinations That Count: Brands, Geography & Quality

The difficulty with a world school education in Beijing and choice of US or UK university thereafter was that it removed students from one of the most legitimizing processes in China; the public schooling system and the University Entrance Exams (UEE), known nationally as the gaokao examinations. Where Bourdieu saw, in the elite schooling system in France; "*the process of transformation accomplished at "elite schools," through the magical operations of separation and aggregation… to produce a consecrated elite that is not only distinct and separate, but also recognized by others as worthy of being so."* (1996:102); an education at Beijing World School, by contrast, sat in isolation from the embedded procedures and

processes of attrition and legitimization provided by national schooling system and examinations controlling entrance to Chinese universities. The cosmopolitan strategy in Beijing was therefore not solely an educational and institutional concern; while the university and college destinations of students were paramount, the strategy was a cultural commentary and orientation for life beyond those destinations.

Following its abandonment during the cultural revolution, the re-introduction of university entrance examinations in 1977 signaled opportunity and meritous selection from amongst the five million students to sit the exams; a process through which many of the world school parents were successful or, subsequently so. The admission rate to universities that year was 4.8%, a result which created an academic elite that culturally revived and embedded an academic ideal into schooling and child-raising in China,[23] still evident during the period of my research. As was suggested in the previous chapter, the choice of a world school and US/UK university experience did not represent some kind of wholescale cultural rejection of China; this desire for freedom therefore continued to permeate the cosmopolitan strategy. However amongst parent determination for a cosmopolitan education and their rejection of local school highlighted in the last chapter, parent critique never included the gaokao examinations process. From this I suggest there was, amongst world school parents, respect for the meritocractic ideals represented through the gaokao. Or, at the very least, an experiential bias that such a system had “worked” for them even though, they would strongly contend, that system was no longer aspirational for their children. This is not a claim I make lightly, but rather on reflection of my experiences with parents individually, in groups, in relation to teachers and the school, and their frequent and broad tendency to offer analysis or critique.

[23] The admission rate on the Gaokao has risen year-on-year, with the number of higher education institutions also rising dramatically.

Yet the Beijing parents were not idealists but pragmatic realists. Their focus was less concerned with fitting their child into the system they endured and rather, I suggest, on the redefinition of merit and value they wished to see enacted through their children's education; a new avenue for meritocracy. While parents rejected the control and power of the system which managed domestic university entrance, they recognized that characteristics of success within the gaokao process continued to determine perceptions of merit; such that, academic success and "ranking" against one's peer group was embedded in the aspirations of millions of families across China and, in the World School parents. In the production of the cosmopolitan strategy then, there was a continued rooting within the national Chinese context illustrated through such values and experiences. What is of consequence here, to understand the Beijing cosmopolitan strategy, is to consider the ways in which the world school consecrated its students but did not automatically guarantee legitimacy of the sort gained through success in the gaokao system.

Beijing World School provided a cosmopolitan education for young people aged two to eighteen, following the three curricular programmes of the International Baccalaureate (IB): the Primary (PYP), Middle (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP). In China, the IB was available since 1991. Catering for sixteen to eighteen-year-olds. Beijing number fifty-five High School had an IB diploma stream since the 1990's. At the time of my research, eighteen educational institutions in Beijing offered the IB programme with only five offering the full primary and secondary experience (PYP, MYP, DP)[24] and until 2014, only Beijing World School was licensed to offer the full programme to local nationals. The students pursuing higher education in the US or UK from such programmes could

[24] PYP is Primary Years Programme. MYP is Middle Years Programme. DP is Diploma Programme

perhaps be viewed in the same light as the 4.8% 1977 elite, particularly when compared to China's 5.5 million domestic university students[25] and more broadly, due to the growth of mandatory universal education, economic and social development in the PRC the even greater number of students undertaking the gaokao university exams reaching historically high levels of approximately ten million students[26]. Yet the question of legitimacy through a world school and US/UK higher education remained. A cosmopolitan education in Beijing should be understood then as existing within a liminal context, in which its value was yet-to-be-determined. And as we know from the previous chapter, it was there in China that the young people and families planned to live and work. Despite being heavily competitive and flawed, with urban-rural, migrant and ethnic inequalities persisting, the gaokao symbolized a cultural rite of passage and route for social mobility in China. As parents removed their children from what was a central legitimizing influence I show their need, through the world school and choice of university, to find ways to mitigate this situation and consider pragmatically how their children and their education would assume value, upon return to China.

University Fair at Beijing World School, Spring 2014

> *I was excited. I heard that US colleges were visiting Beijing World School. I assumed the event would produce parent attendance and good opportunities for introductions and conversation. Some expat parents came, but only one local parent. It was almost exclusively ex-pat students spending time at the stalls, talking to the college representatives. I found myself disappointed and curious as to why the event had not piqued more interest. I noted the universities*

[25] 350,000 students in US 106,530 in UK (456,500 versus 5.5 million) Explain there is already attrition from 10 million gaokao takers.

represented and for some, their location wasn't immediately apparent to me: University of Scranton (75% acceptance rate), University of Michigan-Flint (65% acceptance rate)[27]; University of Mount-Union, Ohio (77% acceptance rate) and a Florida University, possibly the only popular stand; the representative chatted readily and drew in several European students by talking about the university Quidditch Team and the full scholarship available for those with a 4.0 average GPA. These were "safety" fall back schools and even at that, there were few nibbles; the reps mostly maintained small-talk between themselves while still standing by their miniature stands and pull-up posters. The majority of high school kids had gone home to do homework; these universities were not of interest.

Increasingly popular in recent years, and in accordance with economic growth, newly affluent middle-class families in the People's Republic of China employed the technique of relocating children to a foreign education; for high-school or college. This practice was widely known amongst world school parents and has been academically documented (Waters 2005, Waters 2007). In such instances students were typically felt to be "failing" within or failed-by the domestic system. If they were likely to perform poorly or insufficiently on the gaokao a foreign education was considered the only feasible route for further study. In practice, the dramatic increase in China's higher education provision since the 1990's would mean students with average or low scores were in fact catered for in new, vocational institutions Typically, the reasoning for an overseas education was; if a child was not performing at the highest levels and able to compete for entry to a suitable university, entrance to a "lower-quality institution" was not sufficient and

could be a source of family embarrassment. And therein lay the problem for the Beijing cosmopolitan strategy; the opportunity for “less-academic” but wealthy students to be educated abroad fueled discussions of quality (suzhi) and rigour at the world school, to an almost fever pitch, depending upon which teacher or parent you spoke to. For it was the rigour and the rankings inherent within the Chinese education system and within the success of these parents’ own academic careers, that influenced the cosmopolitan strategy. Therefore their child’s education both in the world school and in the university thereafter, had to include the elements of academic achievement that were valued and recognized in their home country; rigour, ranking and “quality” were therefore essential aspects if the students were to be valued, worthy and respected upon their return.

Ivy League Welcome

I joined some mothers on a PTA outing one day in early summer 2016. A group of younger mothers had agreed to drive separately, allowing me to take their space in the school bus with the rest of the group; it was an over-subscribed outing with a waitlist but they made room for me. I was surrounded by women in their mid-forties to fifties, some of whom spoke only broken English (still better than my broken Mandarin) and two wore the sun hats with enlarged front brims that seemed popular with that particular age group; the often-floral baseball type caps were incredibly practical for keeping the sunshine from one’s face. Within moments of being on the bus I was gently interrogated for my cv by one mother, Daisy. With a few eyes and ears on me, I sat side-on with my legs into the aisle and spoke as briefly as I could, although understanding from experience, that these details were of interest during a first meeting. Jolted with excitement and realizing that the back of the bus wouldn’t have heard me, Daisy

pivoted and loudly yelled out to them, "Jen got her Master's from Columbia!" The bus spontaneously filled with a hearty round of applause. A few mothers leaned forward to get a better look at me. As the school bus sputtered us through the traffic at the intersection, barely out of sight of the school, I turned a pale shade of red, embarrassed at the sudden attention. Yet at the same time, I felt welcomed to the group. Then, it was Daisy's turn. She presented the studies of her two eldest sons as an investment. Her eldest studied in the US, the other in London. Her youngest, in ninth grade, was academically an unknown entity, "yet to be determined". The son in London had studied business, although that wasn't his first choice, it was easier to gain admission; then a master's in engineering and now he was looking to complete his doctorate in economics. Unsure of the job he would get, Daisy was visibly pleased at the accumulated fields of study and the additional work he had undertaken to skip from one to the other; "That's a nice picture, right? I'm a good investor!"

These initial scenes were chosen to deliberately disturb and assist re-examination of the apparent "*relations of power"* (Bourdieu, 1996:292) in which the cosmopolitan strategy at Beijing World School was produced. This section therefore juxtaposes the consecrating aspects of the world school and university destinations with the ongoing issue of legitimization, both negotiated in Chinese terms. The cosmopolitan strategy of China's new elite is a pursuit that appears to revolve around a cosmopolitan, largely western, education culminating at a US or UK college. However, these tangible educational experiences and the desire for an overseas university destination understood through recent scholarship are often red-herrings, simplified and mistakenly privileging western forms, too often presented without giving due consideration to the kinds of power these educational

experiences evoke and the situatedness of that power. I found the choice of a US college was therefore not indiscriminate but rather, based on indicators of merit and quality often applied to the processes of pursuing higher education in China albeit transferred, in kind, to their educational goals for the US or other English speaking countries; only the “top-tier” of institutions or prominent locations such as “London” were considered worthy, as these scenes have begun to illustrate.

What is most significant for the cosmopolitan strategy in Beijing is that the overseas college destinations are part of the cosmopolitan strategy but distinction or symbolic value is not unconditional simply because the college is British or American. It is important to recognize the families and young people are trying something outside of the mainstream and although they are engaging with the elite and selective western global institutions and IB curriculum, the value of that, in China, is liminal. Such an understanding helps to contextualise continued parent interest in discussions of “quality” and, the manifestation of concerns, often seen from the teachers perspective as contradictory or uncosmopolitan parental acts. What we see in the next section is how that plays out in the world school where the cosmopolitan strategy, product of two cultural imperatives, appears to put teachers and parents at crossed purposes with young people stuck in the middle, negotiating the day-to-day. I suggest interest in “big name” colleges indicates an accommodation and management within the strategy, to put their children in a “position to win.” Accommodation and interest in a well-known, foreign branded education provides more chance of such a qualification being highly regarded on return to China. To be clear then, engagement with and inclusion of higher education in the US was undertaken in advance of it being a legitimized entity and forms, just one aspect of the cosmopolitan strategy.

Cosmopolitan Education: Disturbing the Everyday

The cosmopolitan strategy at Beijing World School was innately associated to pursuit of an overseas college. To that end, the IB curriculum and the international teachers brought to the school provided a significant Western-centric imperative for cosmopolitan inclusion, including a common body of knowledge regarding "third-culture kids". When combined with the imperative of Chinese parents this led to an incongruous day-to-day experience for adults and young people. However, I suggest that it was *because* of this collision of imperatives that the valuable content of the cosmopolitan strategy was formed; producing more than the western curriculum alone could provide. This section therefore shows the cultural clashing and the everyday disturbances produced in the name of cosmopolitan education at Beijing World School.

Teachers often called themselves "believers" in the IB curriculum. They expressed a professional and personal mission in developing the knowledge, skills and capacities associated to the international curriculum. Those with children spoke of them in terms of being "IB kids"; a frequent occurrence where the overlap between professional content and personal aspirations became apparent.

> *The staff room was just around the corner from the pre-kindergarten class. I was visibly keen to fit in and made sure to check if there were specific seats or spots where the other teachers sat; there were none. It was a large but welcoming space, with room to fit more people should they arrive. I scanned the room with my ears trying to discriminate between the different accents; Spanish, Canadian, Australian, English… three or four different conversations being had at once, letting the sounds tangle*

together. Alex gave me a BWS coffee mug so I could use the coffee machine; only dried milk, no fresh milk here. There was a sign-up sheet for the Irish Ball taking place in mid-March, out in the embassy district at a nice hotel. "It's one of the fun ones" I was told, and so I signed up to make-up a table. I had a few months to find a ballgown. The chat amongst teachers switched between details of where they had spent the Winter break and plans for Chinese New Year holiday; swapping hotel recommendations and insights on car services and outings. For the lunar festival I was told, "Almost no-one stays…". "The place just clears out, so Beijing is really empty." Top picks seemed to be Fiji, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan; somewhere sunnier and warmer, with less smog. This was such a welcoming group. Yet, I sensed a form of isolation around the teachers here. Stuart confirmed this when he toured me around the school,"…we don't get many visitors…"

The cosmopolitan ideals from teachers most often favoured the exploration of diversity amongst the students; diversity of ideas and experiences. In the younger groups, this was more difficult at times, drawing on assumed cultural stereotypes or knowledge. For example, the "French kids" spoke French and the "Russian kids" Russian but, given their tender age of only four years old, they had lived more abroad than in France or Russia. A number of times, the range of countries represented, through children and their families, was mentioned explicitly as if self-explanatory of the richness they invoked. Drawing from this range of international locations was seen as innately beneficial to the classroom learning experience, although not necessarily the social scene. In the older grades, even by age eight, nine or ten years old, the children tended to split into cliques; Chinese and Korean

students in their groups and the international, expat kids, typically in another. These social groupings were expected and accepted by teachers and persisted with a few “special, cross-over kids” managing to maintain friendships across those divides.

> *I was between classes so Lyndsey took me under her wing. We spent time in the auditorium watching the younger children prepare for the Lunar New Year Assembly. “It’s a huge deal” she told me. We watched from the side seats of the theatre as each class sat in the audience, waiting their turn to go on stage. One group sang a song, while the next showed their tai chi moves. Unprompted, Lyndsey started unpicking the composition of each class for me. She assumed I would want to know, that it was significant for my research. In fact, she pointed out and named around a half of the young people in each class, with their corresponding passport or home country. The result was that the other half, the local children, were not mentioned, nor singled out as offering any cosmopolitan richness.*

The school’s imperative was two-fold: acting as inclusive host for the international community of teachers, families and students and secondly, in turn, a western notion of inclusivity and an abstract set of principles regarding the languages and experiences required to be cosmopolitan, provided by the IB curriculum and the teachers. In practice this stance put the “local” kids somewhat at a deficit, as if they were the beneficiaries of the richness imported through others. To an extent, the beneficiary notion was true since the cosmopolitan education experienced by local students was more than just a curriculum. But the deficit view was perhaps blind to the cultural accommodations and work the local students undertook at school. These young people were operating, daily, in a second language. For the

children who moved to BWS mid-way through an education at local school, they had the additional work of adjusting to the social and academic expectations, which they said were drastically different. I suggest the experiences and expectations of the teachers and their interpretation of the curriculum meant that local Chinese students were not formally recognised or given credit for their inclusive day-to-day "work" at the school.

> *Susan the pre-K (kindergarten) teacher welcomed the class at the playground door and walked them up in a line; a slow, child's-pace affair with a dozen little people laden with backpacks almost the same size as them, drawstring bags with swimming kit dragging along the floor beside them and some with packed lunches. As we climbed the stairs, their tiny proportions and the depth of each step became clearer; this start to the day took physical effort from them and they were not rushed. Half a dozen little conversations peppered the student convoy and eventually, we reached the classroom and their lockers outside. Bags were dumped from shoulders with visible relief. Conversations continued with Susan watching on as most of them simultaneously changed to indoor shoes and hung up their coats. "We really like to have them practice being self-sufficient…" Susan said, in a low voice. "There's such an ayi culture here and the kids just have* ***everything*** *done for them. So, that's why we walk them up and make them carry their own stuff" The morning class started with a discussion about "resetting" the room after playing; yesterday "wasn't so hot" Susan told them; "Ms Jasmine (the classroom assistant) had a lot of clearing up to do after you left!"*

I spent the afternoon with the art teacher, Rachel. She grouped the fourth graders together to teach a technique and discuss composition. In the middle of the direct teaching, the studio door was opened by a handyman. He and Rachel didn't seem to know each other and before moving into the room he spoke in Mandarin and pointed to the lights. Rachel paused. She prided herself on knowing some Mandarin but she wasn't able to converse. In her Ontario accent she took a guess, "Oh, you're here to fix the lights?" It was kind of awkward. Everyone was paused and the handyman clearly didn't feel comfortable coming in without permission. He spoke again and again, there was an awkward pause as his words hung in the air. Chen, one of the fourth graders spoke to him. They went back and forth for a long minute until Chen turned back to Rachel and said, "Yes, he is here for the lights." Rachel looked at Chen, replying to him, "okay, thank you. great." Keen to get back to familiar ground, Rachel reminded the group of the project aims and the students were sent to tables to start work. This gave us some time to talk directly. The handyman worked quietly in one spot of the room and after a few minutes left the room. Without asking, Rachel started to give me a breakdown of the international/local composition of the class. Not long started, she decided to make it a class-wide discussion, raising her voice and asking the children, "Remind me, how many Europeans do we have in this class?" Hands were raised and in response, Rachel challenged herself to name the child's home country; each happily nodding in response to being remembered and recognized. "Okay, you can get back to work" she told them, as her voiced lowered and she turned her attention to the

local students; two in particular. "These two here, I just can't get them to split up. Every task they do, they want to do it together, watch and you'll see. I just don't know how we're going to get them to be more independent…" She had indicated a young pair of local, Chinese boys that were working intently together on a joint project.

The shifting make-up of the student body was re-emphasized by 2016. In Beijing, a balanced enrollment with a twenty-five percent cap on Asian students operated until 2013 when it was lifted. And, with the extension of the special license to a few other institutions in Beijing in 2015, the pursuit of balanced enrollment was no longer pursued. This resulted in a majority of Chinese passport holders, said to be sixty percent, but in experience terms was felt to be higher; children with foreign passports who have been born and brought up in China.

Summary Beijing

This chapter has shown the institutional layer of negotiation in and around the Beijing World School, revealing a production and negotiation of the cosmopolitan global that is feeling its way forward, with no real template or guarantee. The school provides consecration; sets them apart.

What is the strategic value of a cosmopolitan education, of the inclusion of western education via curriculum, teachers and pedagogy? The merging and clashing of parents and school are producing their own logic, their own strategy, within a liminal setting. At the same time, if young people are positioned as being at a deficit, if parents are seen to be rejecting and problematizing the western curriculum and pedagogies, what is also happening is these families are refining and managing the aspects of power, dispositions and creating a cosmopolitan strategy of value – for

imminent negotiation of university entrance and attendance but all with a firm sense of China as the home base. So the school creates a cosmopolitan strategy whereby inclusion is about managing “relations of power” and two fields of power. But what actually happens…is that the work of the institution is strategic in its lived reality and helps students/families to adopt a pragmatic approach to IB -they don’t have to believe. Their parents also doubt and what they are building is in its trial phase.

The legitimacy they seek is institutionally produced here in the sense that the systems and social structures of the school enable the negotiation of the cosmopolitan. But, as we will see, unlike the New York case, the legitimacy does not come solely from institutional acceptance.

Part Two: Manhattan World School



Visual 21: Manhattan World School, Elevator Interface in three languages.

“Take Elevator C”

> *At MWS, you had to know where you were going. While in many foyers it was standard to locate the elevators, press the call button, sleepily step inside the car and then consider which floor you needed to visit; sometimes you didn’t even have to push the button, because someone else may have pressed it. But at the world school, there were no passengers. A newcomer to the lobby was faced with two*

digital touch screens, each one placed between two imposing freight sized elevators to the left and right. You entered your destination, after which you were told which of the four elevators was best placed to take you there. If you made the mistake of sneaking on just any car, you would find there were no internal controls and unless previously determined, the elevator simply wouldn't stop. If the simultaneous English, Spanish and Mandarin interface didn't create anxiety, the premature and binding decision of one's destination had the potential to cause stress. Yet in the lobby each morning was a stream of students, already seasoned professionals, with their destinations in mind and ready to abandon their morning chat if the computer deemed it necessary; that they should take elevator A, while their friend was better placed in elevator C, that's just how it worked.

To know where you were going was an expectation and a corporeal purpose enforced daily through the design of the school building and all that happened within. Much like the elevators, what was developed at MWS operated within set parameters, designed from the outset. Here I argue the cosmopolitan strategy in New York was not plucked out of the blue but was conceptualized, produced and woven into a particularly American cultural context, leveraging a global orientation and aligning their cosmopolitan education towards the values and practices of elite US colleges.

In this half of the chapter, I show the New York strategy as a relatively unproblematized entity, due to not only the merging imperatives between family and school but, unproblematic through the development of the world school within, and as an extension of, the "collective illusion" (Bourdieu, 1996:160) of worth and merit that, most immediately, oriented access to

higher education in the United States. I will show the cosmopolitan strategy produced at MWS as deliberately resonating with powerful, existing ideas of inclusion and diversity, enacted as individualised qualities and championed through the college admissions process. The aim of the strategy therefore was to ensure access to elite higher education but more broadly to position them as a worthy and meritous elite in America who, by succeeding in gaining a place at an elite college gained legitimacy from this enshrined institutional process. Much like insular art or Celtic knotwork of the Dark Ages, each aspect of the cosmopolitan strategy at Manhattan World School was created and resonated within a fixed pattern; each aspect looping, intertwining and fluidly reinforcing the next with no clear beginning or end. It is within this repeating pattern I show the New York cosmopolitan strategy as a form of resonances inside of and overlapping with stalwart American values and ideals of power, best symbolized through the opaque and competitive process of college admissions. This half of the chapter will present, in contrast to the Beijing case, a cosmopolitan strategy hinged almost entirely on the college destinations of the young people, from which the ecosystems and cosmopolitan education in the world school drew inspiration. The culmination of this case will therefore draw on the consecrating pressures and intentions of the Manhattan World School as it presses and prepares the young people for high school graduation. Throughout all of this, as suggested above, narratives of worth will weave through and permeate almost every aspect examined. As such, the New York case continues to show a singular track on which their cosmopolitan education is fixed; looping and intensifying with each layer and action. The final section in this chapter dedicated to analysis of the school's explicit cosmopolitan narratives and their fundamental purpose in not only "selling" the students to colleges but crucially, a recognition of these narratives as mantras, themes and ideas-to-live by, imprinted to students through their experiences at the world school. The overall effect from this section of the New York case should emphasize the "knotted" and intertwined nature of

the relationship produced between individuals and institutions; while aspiring to, projecting and believing in their own agency and control in a global world, such terms and moments of success are themselves the product of a world school education and the very privileged material and social conditions that make it.

College Destinations: Resonances of Legitimacy

As an entry point to the New York case it is important to recognize that student destinations, in the form of college acceptances after high school, feature as a core component of the legitimization sought through their cosmopolitan strategy. Elite college destinations would position the young people within social and alumni networks parents thought critical for future success and economic good fortune. But perhaps equally important was the symbolic "win" within a national landscape that valorized elite colleges as the pinnacle of individual success. Manhattan World School was pivotal in brokering access to elite and selective higher education in the United States; a highly competitive, universally aspirational yet opaque process. Admission to an elite college in the US offered a particular kind of legitimacy to these students, their families by extension and, to MWS which as a feeder school to such places would be able to establish itself as a viable for-profit enterprise. Particularly amidst the fledgling years of the world school, success was defined through development of a suitably exclusive "college list"; where student acceptances and offers reinforced the school's business model. From the outset then, MWS wanted to be seen as a new and creative enterprise. Yet their cosmopolitan narrative should be understood as part of a buy-in, rather than a challenge to legitimizing notions of what was considered powerful and worthy.

Students were the "deliverables" of the business. Such a focus was explicit in practice and in early school publications, again showing their global gaze

as focused on the elite educational spaces in the United States. As one mother told me…. Although the identity of the school was purportedly "global" in its conceptualization, it is significant to recognize the driving and foundational needs of this institution as it worked on developing an *instituting magic* (Bourdieu, 1996) it's ability to consecrate and legitimize the new elite with access to a selective US college as the tangible outcome.

""Beyond the Norm College Placement"

> *Manhattan World School realizes that the college record placement of its first ninth grade class (graduating 2016) will play an important role in establishing the reputation of its first school. In addition to taking great care in selecting applicants for that grade, MWS is also implementing extraordinarily strong college placement capabilities. Staff, including the leadership team, are working with those students during their four years in the Upper School…and developing a significant working relationship with admissions offices of top universities and colleges… Throughout the world there are many superb higher education programs. MWS will know them, make sure that they know and respect MWSs' graduates and help each student find the best school for his or her goals – whether that is Princeton or Pratt, Harvard or Howard, Amherst or Annapolis."*
>
> MWS School Brochure, 2014, pg 9 & 27

An early buy-in to MWS was indeed *part* of the strategy. As I will show in this chapter, many of the parents in the high school calculated the "risk" involved in placing their child in a new school with the added incentive and support their child would receive, since the school itself needed the

students to succeed. They were correct of course, since the world school was able to reverse-engineer the personal attributes and experiences required for entry. While elite college admissions offered mobility and legitimacy to students and families, becoming a “feeder” to such colleges was essential for the world school’s success particularly in their early years of operation.

The mutually advantageous pursuit and merging of imperatives is significant as it produced a strategy for admission which was ideologically unproblematic and in contrast to Beijing, a relatively smooth, albeit demanding and intense affair. With such a focused gaze and sense of purpose, the increased squeeze and expectations surrounding the young students in the first high-school class at MWS becomes clear. The strategy to promote students then, worked hand-in-glove with the promotion of the school and its cosmopolitan education; the high-stakes bartering of global-minded young people into some of the nation’s most powerful institutions, in turn validating the world school and its investors. The most pressing question to follow such an understanding should be, why the character of such a strategy needed to be global or cosmopolitan? Since, unlike Beijing, the students at MWS were resolutely domestic in their college aspirations. Yet the reasons for the cosmopolitan character become more apparent when considering in greater depth the symbolic power of the elite colleges. In so doing I suggest the cosmopolitan strategy at Manhataan World School was produced in ways that resonated with the illusion of America’s multi-cultural meritocracy, the very same narratives of inclusion and worth that ensured colleges maintained their positions of domestic aspiration and power. With their gaze fixed on these destinations and with a desire to be included, the cosmopolitan strategy at MWS was produced within and dependent upon resonating with the terms of those institutions.

Where Did You Go To School? A Case of Legitimacy

From the first graduating class in 2016 students indeed went to Harvard, Stanford, UPenn, Yale and a variety of low-acceptance-rate liberal arts colleges; all based in America but for one or two exceptions. Parents of younger students were somewhat relieved and reassured by this list; the school's model "worked."

> *Where did I go to school? It was a question that always sat strangely with me. The first instinct was to think of my high school in Greenock, on the west coast of Scotland. Why would anyone want to know that? What did it matter? Didn't everyone just go to the school closest to them? But, of course, it was a resolutely American question where school meant college and college meant, for me, university. And really, it referred instead to finite US college options, which it was assumed I had attended; isn't that what everyone aspired to? The question was mostly focused on undergraduate entry, the real test. And, this was an opportunity to be pigeonholed; your college was presumed a choice, an affirmation; it said something about your character.*

In the United States, the college you went to mattered; assuming you went to college. One's alma mater formed the content of many first introductions, it eluded to a social network or kinship of alumni, social class and, correctly or not, it was suggestive of individual merit, academic "smarts" or both. It is this landscape of higher education provision in the US, viewed from within, that contextualises the "structural homology" which, using Bourdieu's framing, suggests a "fundamental opposition in the field" (1996:136) whereby private, selective and Ivy league universities were most powerfully

endowed and public universities, local, city or community colleges less so. In terms of academic record Bourdieu suggested “one of the most crucial powers of an educational institution is undeniably its ability to consecrate or, on the other hand, to relegate, degrade, or symbolically abase” (1996:224). That distinction in higher education hinged largely on the structures of admission, widely applied but made mainstream by the Ivy League “Big Three”; Harvard, Yale and Princeton Universities. The particularities of merit defined through these admissions procedures tell the story of persistent social inequality in the United States, sustained by narratives of equal opportunity and inclusion.

A newcomer to the US college landscape should understand that admissions processes of elite colleges are part of maintaining social structures in the United States “characterized by vast inequalities in wealth and power” (Karabel, 2005:5). Most crucially these institutions maintain a balance between their position as universally aspirational symbols in the US alongside their constitutional right to select and reject candidates; to remain exclusive. Jerome Karabel’s (2005) insights on the admissions practices of the “Big Three” confirmed a history of class domination and exclusions made possible through their shifting requirement for admission. Once academically successful Jewish students started to outnumber the traditionally white Protestant students and alumni in the 1920’s, the criterion for entry were changed. Due to pressure from donor-making alumni the policy change ensured academic merit alone was no longer considered sufficient for entry (Karabel, 20015) therefore effectively controlling the student body composition and the on-campus culture. The admissions systems from Karabel’s three cases influenced a model for admissions systems in colleges across the country; systems that continue to reinforce class-biased subjectivity inherent with an institution’s right to choose the most “worthy” candidates. As a hangover from the anti-Semitic practices of the 1920’s, consideration of one’s “character” was still in

operation during the period of my research, a tool that in practice required alumni interviews or family legacies where candidates were considered to be a match with the college ethos. Yet admissions practices had moved on, arguably shifting in response to the relative power amongst different ethnic and racial groups, adjusting the composition of diversity on campus accordingly. Karabel chronologically evidenced the evolving definitions of "merit" made real through the shifting criteria for admission. His work draws a parallel between the social and political upheavals of the country itself; immigration, civil rights movement and gender struggles, showing how these institutions adjusted and accommodated change at crucial times in order to retain their power, their financial support from alumni and equally, the perception of them as beacons of meritocratic opportunity In practice. This led to evolving patterns of ethnic and racial dominance amongst student bodies at colleges, policies of race-based affirmative action and a narrative of institutional "commitment to diversity." A college's power to subjectively compose the "best" and "diverse" student cohort effectively sets the terms on which students, families and schools compete each year.[28]

This view leads us to one of the most pressing threats and opportunities driving the cosmopolitan strategy in New York, the perception and reality that wealthy, qualified international applicants were now a presence on elite American campuses and qualifying under terms of "diversity" otherwise previously fulfilled domestically. The monied power of global

[28] The college negotiation of inclusion and diversity, and the high regard for their institutional autonomy to do so, is considered an enactment of the First Amendment, supported by the US Supreme Court in 2003 (Grutter vs. Bollinger). It is also a right, legally contested by racial and ethnic groups who believe their admissions are limited by enactments such as quotas. The 2003 ruling supported the University of Michigan's Law School admissions policy, in terms of their race-based affirmative action. As a result, the undergraduate admissions process, the Harvard Plan, was cited as an example of excellence, allowing universities across the country to retain practices that had come to serve as bedrock examples of their open opportunities and commitment to diversity. Additionally, the 2003 ruling affirmed the autonomy of universities to make selective decisions, considering not only race but some highly subjective criteria when deciding whom to admit or reject. In effect, the "highly individualised" consideration given to an applicant, holistically determining their potential contribution to an institution was enshrined in law.

elites is welcome within the institutional business models and American colleges were adjusting their admissions to accommodate, as with other interest groups in the past. Yet, the admissions criterion for America's colleges become "exceedingly strange" (Karabel, 2005:1) when viewed from outside the US. They prompt the need to understand, *"why the ability to run with a ball or where one's parents went to college is relevant"* (Ibid). The situation for a MWS cosmopolitan strategy balanced the insider knowledge of US college admissions with the advantages and timeous interest in "global" students; ready to bring their individual talents and money. The continued provision of scholarships and, in the period following Karabel's research, the introduction of "needs blind" admission at Harvard have continued to fuel the belief, if not the reality, that any worthy candidate, regardless of ability to pay, can "make it" and be welcomed by these exclusive institutions. Yet these admissions structures persist in selecting those who will ensure the college's reputation and power. And it was through knowledge of how these systems worked that parents and Manhattan world school produced the cosmopolitan strategy.

Their Global Gaze: Buying Into this Version of Merit

It was their self-presentation of *being* different, of doing things "differently" that drove the individualized and institutional components of the cosmopolitan strategy; it was the leverage they needed to position themselves advantageously in a "position to win" and gain access to elite colleges. The cosmopolitan strategy produced in New York relied upon, in many senses, this matter of presentation, as I have already shown in this case; how it looked, how it fitted, how it sold itself were all an important part of what it needed to achieve. The cosmopolitan education at MWS had three main audiences that required buy-in; parents, colleges and the students themselves. But what is significant in MWS are the ways these cosmopolitan forms of presenting oneself, the school's mission, the daily

teaching and learning, one's aims in life and so on (in fact everything they did) resonated within and reflected strong currents of belief about who and what is of value in a global America. So here I show the institutional production of cosmopolitan strategy as it resonates across these three user-groups.

> *"…But we stole ideas and we believe in theft, especially in education…people tour our school and ask us, "Where does your mathematics come from? Exeter. Lower Grades? Singapore. We took it…we are systems integrators…we don't have to be the creator of the ideas."*
>
> *John Skittle, School Founder*

Manhattan World School presented itself to families in 2012 as a fresh slate and a "new school of thought"[29]. Yet the school equally benefited from positioning itself as a "best-of-breed" enterprise drawing from the collective legitimacy of established, elite educational, curriculum and pedagogy. The power implicit within several of these choices lay within the suggestion of academic rigour manifested within specific educational institutions in the case of mathematics, the city-state of Singapore and city of Shanghai[30] Such alignment indicated the content and character of that considered to be valuable and academically elite; markers by which to recognize the "logic of the field of power" (Bourdieu, 1986) in which Manhattan World School, and the families, sought to establish themselves. There was therefore no mention of Paolo Freire's critical pedagogy but rather a sense of judiciously chosen approaches from feeder schools to the Ivy League and some popularized international trends. An American elite boarding school

[29] The World School brochure and website, 2012

[30] The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study by OECD in nearly 80 nations of 15-year-old students' scholastic performance on mathematics, science and reading in which Shanghai and Singapore are often singled out for high attainments in mathematics. Commonly the approaches to mathematics teaching in these places is considered to be the cause of high scores, rather than the socio-economic make-up of the groups involved.

provided the Harkness Method; essentially a round-table discursive procedure which aimed to encourage peer-to-peer rather than teacher-led discussion[31]. From abroad came the notion of language learning through immersion in either Mandarin or Spanish, because it was thought, "(we)… simply don't do languages well in the States."[32]

The eclectic approach to school curriculum reinforced the common-sense notion of the school's diversity, judicious gaze and ability to pick "the best" from around the world; a central characteristic of the school. Just as the universities developed and retained the power to select and reject applicants, they set the tone for and definition of merit. The world school can be seen to follow that model in their selection and rejection of curricular content. I suggest that here we can see which systems or places in the world were considered worthy of attention, but more than this, which constitute power and offer competitive value. Such choices were also visible in the hiring of faculty and leadership.

Faculty and leadership choices at MWS suggested a close association with America's elite higher education; staff having been educated there, operated within or led selective institutions. It was as if they were being baked-into the everyday. The parent tours that passed me on Wednesday mornings had a set-script for each part of the building; I've heard several times that the "World Course, unique to MWS, was Harvard designed."

For those parents who were not able to name drop where they went to college, they now had day-to-day conversations about the school their child went to, "…the curriculum, designed at Harvard. The chairman of the school? From Yale…" The parent buy-in was straight forward, as the

[31] I was familiar with discursive, socratic and collaborative approaches to learning but was not familiar with "Harkness" an approach known by many terms but here referred to by the surname of a teacher from a school in the North-East of US.
[32] John Skittle, speaking at MWS Headquarters, May 2014.

previous chapter showed. Yet what became more apparent were the institutional structures designed to simulate proximity to these powerful elements of the field; not only through curriculum but through invoking the institutional associations amongst school leadership and teachers, suggestive of the social networks required to forge the necessary paths for students.

Cosmopolitan Education: Producing Worthy Consecration

> "*I want her to be able to see the totality, the whole picture…"*
>
> *World School Parent*

The first section considered motives for the cosmopolitan strategy, the legitimization of these young people sought through association with MWS and elite colleges. This second section considers more closely the institutional means of consecrating these students through a world school experience. In exploring these aspects I show the institutionally designed expectations for young people and the perceptions of worth generated for and around them. Here, again, the boundaries around which they imagine and pursue a cosmopolitan education are realized and enacted within a neighbourhood and, a building in Chelsea, New York. The notions of international competition then start to fade and were brought into focus a more immediate image of the worthy cosmopolitan self as one resonating with stalwart American values of entrepreneurialism, innovation, creativity and individualism.

Elite Schools "always fulfil a function of consecration, and the technical operations of the educational process they accomplish are at one and the same time, are inseparably, moments of a rite of institution; selection is also "election," exams are also "trials." Training is also "ascesis." Isolation is also initiatory retreat, and technical skills are also charismatic qualifications."

(Bourdieu, 1996:102) Keeping this in mind, this section will start to show more of what would typically be considered consecration in elite education. But here I move beyond the "selling" front which was so powerful at the world school and provide instead the experienced view of the priorities and foci during the early years of teaching; the stuff they designed and did in order to mold the high-school kids into worthy graduates and worthy elites. Specifically, I consider the institutional production of cosmopolitanism at MWS, made visible in the ways they defined and operationalized their cosmopolitan education. These institutional structures are shown to produce and replicate the ideals and values regarding personal, individual worth. For the avoidance of doubt that education, of course, not only included curriculum but the sum total of the relationships, experiences, resources, people and driving beliefs resonating therein. Mindful of the intended outcomes and the field of power discussed earlier, it will be no surprise that the school's formulation of worthy consecration revolved around a sense of agency, control and individual achievements. Specifically, I show that these aspects were doggedly pursued and produced in ways that emphasized individual capacities such as creativity, awareness and fearlessness. What becomes clearer through these insights from the early days of teaching is that in fact, the expectations pressing onto students were intense and compounded by the very fabric of the building, their teachers, leadership and design of their school day. As a result, these broad attributes were trickled, pounded and etched into every moment of the school day. From the perspective of the young people, these expectations were sometimes difficult to live up to. So the weight and specificity of what is expected of them starts to build up in this section. Yet most crucially, while agency and control are defining features in the consecrating aspects of this American cosmopolitan education, I show that in fact, the student's education was pre-determined, bounded and narratives of worth presented and pressed onto them; weaving all the strands together in that fixed and looping knotwork pattern I referred to

previously. In contrast to the expectations laid on them, the students in fact did not have to imagine much at all, since it was all packaged for them and right there at the school.

Being Creative: A Way to Begin

Manhattan World School was a gallery space. It was for private, not public consumption. As well as providing a forty-eight year lease, the building's owner utilized the space to store and display his art collection. A large-scale Chuck Close self-portrait was positioned to greet anyone exiting the south elevators on the eighth floor. Along the carpeted corridors, punctuating the twin digital screens at classroom doors, famed prints and lithographs were hung, labeled with small white information cards to their right side. Notices of student bake sales and community service projects flashed up alongside these expensive pieces of art; they shared the space equally. One floor below, a Shepard Fairey print stated, "LIBERTY, SHELTER, EQUALITY." It was a limited edition. It was one of a hundred created to aid the Coalition for the Homeless. [33] The poster was used as an example of art activism. The kids learned it was, *…" okay to use other's ideas if you're giving them new meaning, such as Fairey does with art nouveau/deco icons and the work's title…"* taken from Joe Strummer of The Clash. Art and creativity were literally part of the furniture in the world school.

During my first ever visit to Manhattan Work School in early 2013, I was inducted into the space by visiting their black box theatre during photo day. Each child lined up awaiting their turn. They were asked not to lean against the wall. That seemed like a fairly banal, but normal teacher request. I thought nothing of it until the teacher turned to me and motioned to the black wall behind them, "That's a Sol Le Witt installation, you know? We did it as a start of school project."

[33] Shapard Fairey, 2009 The Future is Unwritten. Screenprint 40" x 30" Edition 13 of 100.

[34]

Visual 22: Wall Drawing #123A: Copied Lines *is an early Sol LeWitt piece from 1972. First installed at the Addison Gallery at Phillips Academy (Andover, MA). The instructions read: "*The first drafter draws a not straight vertical line as long as possible. The second drafter draws a line next to the first one, trying to copy it. The third drafter does the same, as do as many drafters as possible. Then the first drafter followed by the others, copies the last line drawn until both ends of the wall are reached.*"*

Recognised as an artist inspiring the minimalist movement, Sol Le Witt was chosen by the creative team behind the school, rather than the building's owner. Le Witt was best known for a series of works in the form of instructions, to be carried out and enacted by others. This made the chalkboard "lines" wall (formally, Line Drawing 123a) a meaningful choice for the school. The children were asked to engage with this work of art, to be drafters, to be responsible for enacting this prestigious work; prestigious because of its associations and provenance. With the mere drawing of a chalk line, something children commonly do on sidewalks, they became intimately connected to the artist; their chalk line was a work of art.

The lines were gone by the time I returned in 2014. A new installation was prominent on a wall in the parent café. Wall Drawing 620a. It was a good

location. Almost every visitor to the school came there and as a hang-out space for high schoolers and parents. Wall Drawing 620a had required special installation and this time was carried out by Sol Le Witt's own draftsmen. I couldn't help but see this as a setting a working example to the young students at the school; that artists can be the people with the ideas and then have other people do the messy, arduous work of enacting it. When complete, the school ensured everyone could value and appreciate the piece for its full value; they made a time elapse video of the installation, they asked students to reflect on the artist's instructions and most importantly, the video drew attention to the artist's philosophy. "Ideas can be works of art" (LeWitt, 1969)



Visual 23:Parent Café at the Manhattan World School with Sol leWitt installation team.



Visual 23: Parent Café at the Manhattan World School with Sol leWitt installation team.



Visual 24: Parent Café at Manhattan World School with Sol le Witt artwork 602a.

When the master drafter of Sol Le Witt's work (602a video in parent café) spoke to a half-dozen high school students, they sat in front of the wall in the café. The students were without desks in front of them, awkwardly cross legged or folded arms while he spoke about the process.

> *"This drawing is a realisation of Sol's plan for 620a. What appears to be a green colour is a series of combinations of yellow and blue…Multiple layers of transparency, the ink, by*

its nature carries a certain amount of pigment, it has a dye quality to it, the wall is painted in a fashion where it has a texture similar to an orange peel. The pigments collect in the low spots. The texture and that dye part ends up in the high spots. There is a visual transparency and a concentration, so there's a sense of a hand motion in it but that's an inherent part of the process. It's rubbed on to the wall, patted on to the wall in a very specific process and then when that is sufficiently dry, the second colour, be it the yellow or the blue is put on top of it and that is what would ultimately create what this green is."

This was an example of the "creative soup: the students swam in at the world school. The young people he was speaking to were fourteen. They didn't have to take in every word and from the looks of it, they didn't. But what they did take in over the many times they heard adults speaking in their school, was the tone, pace and nature of what was being spoken about; always the process with control and specificity applied to every tiny detail. By hearing about the molecular distinction between dye and pigment; a colour is no longer just a colour, nor is green simply the mixing of yellow and blue. The composition of colours is categorized, named and analysed for relevant qualities or factors, such as UV stability (dyes are not UV stable, but pigments are). From what I saw and heard across the months I spent in the school I suggest that drawing on the creative industries and in-practice experts, repeatedly, allowed the Manhattan World School to devise a cosmopolitan nomenclature. Some of the terms through which they defined cosmopolitan worth rested then, on creativity and agentically-framed processes.

Part of their cosmopolitan strategy was an orientation to "the process". Although, this could be argued to be the content of most critique and

discussion in the creative pursuits. But, here the interrogation of a creative process became an avenue to structuring thinking, responses, questions and so on. What became important then was the very act of choosing how to identify and categorise a topic; knowing that in doing so it set the terms of understanding and power in the most basic conversations. And to be able to do that, respond in that way, was an essential part of the New York cosmopolitan strategy; part of the The point is, it's not just being able to speak in an art world or, a literary world, it's about being able to apply that perception of process to anything and to be in a position to have an entry point for any conversation; to enter into and feel a command or control amongst any topic, including one's own development and process of learning. Where the conditioning for such engagement is day-to-day this becomes a fundamental expectation of young people at the world school.

Focusing Their Global Gaze: Dominating the Narrative

> *""Why would he want to apply to college in the UK? All his networks are going to be here…(United States)"*
>
> Manhattan World School Parent

Definition of merit and basis for cosmopolitan approach comes from the Big Three. The production of their cosmopolitan strategy resonates with the cultural ideals these institutions represent. Timing as an important aspect. Temporally, the nature of the strategy is arguably cosmopolitan in response to shifting interest groups. So while the cosmopolitan strategy is authentically American, the very fact it has assumed a cosmopolitan character and explicit narrative is in response to their need for legitimacy. They want to make their worth and merit appear natural and built in, like it's in their DNA but actually it's materially built in, produced and projected.

Individual merit and agency are institutionally produced and institutionally affirmed. Yet, the projection of universal attributes through a cosmopolitan narrative rests upon material, social and economic privileges and it is the collection illusion of individual agency and merit in spite of favouring students from these conditions that is essential for an institutions continued legitimacy.

Yet, I continue to emphasize the role of social institutions in the (re)production of elites. The need for credentials persists (Khan, 2012:371). An important part of the strategy is promotion and projection of legitimacy as universal ideals and narratives, despite the material needs and supports underpinning their consecration; the range of factors they draw on in order to consecrate and be worthy. In these early years of the school, it is visible that the start-up nature of the school and the buy-in of parents to a new institution allows them to connect as mutual pioneers. These narratives are the way for them to be in control.

The school produces a cosmopolitan narrative that is a buy-in. They are embedding themselves within existing power structures. This is illustrated through their production of a cosmopolitan strategy that weaves together well-worn aspects of American ideals and ways of being. The cosmopolitan strategy in New York is a spread-bet. The definition of merit in New York can be understood as a reformulation and extension of existing ideals/structures in America. They are buying in, replicating and repackaging what they are doing, within existing relations of power; trying to outflank the old established elites. There is a desperation and angst amongst the ambition and certainty in New York. Institutions as legitimizing bodies are an essential part of being worthy elite – particularly so amongst the entrepreneurs, movie stars and amorphous “institutions” that don’t come with certificates and alumni. The world school in turn, offers not only a good pathway to try for admission, but for every child there, offers a

"Harvard curriculum". I showed their orientation within the field of power governing elite education and merit in the US. The close orientation suggests the cosmopolitan strategy is one of buy-in and resonance in order to be included, to be aligned.

It's about being creative, entrepreneurial etc. By believing that individualization they are fracturing the universal terms on which they claim / produce legitimacy. Narratives of value and worth are used and developed. They Believe in the Narrative of Worth - "…the process of transformation accomplished at "elite schools," through the magical operations of separation and aggregation …tends to produce a consecrated elite that is not only distinct and separate, but also recognized by others and by itself as worthy of being so." (State Nobility:102) So if we take Bourdieu's notion of separation and aggregation as an implicit function of elite schools, this helps us to see the school undertakes this process through its institutional mission and structures, school-wide where such consecration is produced through staffing, content, interactions and projections of the cosmopolitan narratives, resonating ultimately with the students.

Cosmopolitan Strategy: Conclusion & Discussion

This chapter considered the cosmopolitan strategy. It considered the institutional production of two cosmopolitan strategies at world schools in Beijing and New York; where financially endowed families chose a world school in order to put their offspring, "in a position to win." By focusing on the intended destinations, enactments and outcomes of the strategy I showed the contextualized motives driving the school, families and young people in each case. I suggest these cases stitched together social mobility and elite class making with globalizing practices through the production of their cosmopolitan strategy. The role of institutions within the

strategy, although different in each case, is pivotal in shaping and endowing cosmopolitanism within relevant fields of power. Assuming a Bourdieusian spirit, this chapter examined how such merit and value came to be defined; how it is produced through the structures of schooling in a world school and the institutional relationships developed therein. What they are doing; how they define and seek to leverage cosmopolitanism through a world school education shows two versions of what it means to be worthy cosmopolitan, global elite. As such, this chapter continues to assert the thesis-wide premise that there is no singular form of cosmopolitanism, that it's form and purpose come from motivations related to social mobility and, specifically, that explicit attention to the production of cosmopolitan strategy provides greater insight to the nature of those motivations and contextual, rooted drive for a cosmopolitan education and orientation.

Production of Cosmopolitan Strategy

Cosmopolitanism is made and produced; context therefore matters. The cultural orientation of cosmopolitan strategy in each case shows elites are situated within and woven amongst specific social, temporal, cultural and economic conditions. These schools are producing ways of thinking about and presenting of self/class/class-making. Cosmopolitanism then, is less about world democracy and global solidarity and rather it is about positioning and class making practices; it is not about a universal set of competencies or singular bankable forms of cosmopolitan capital. I suggest that cosmopolitan cultural capital is about class-making, specific to each field of power, identified. This begins to set the world school cosmopolitan in contrast to any "general image of liberal global unity." (Calhoun, 2002:876). Understanding of cosmopolitanism is evolving and incomplete (moving beyond moral to real life instantiations). Understandings can no longer be about abstractions but something being pursued within actual, concrete, lived conditions and through the black box of institutions.

From literature, we understand “trajectories” via educational routes well; less so the practices of actual capital production and field production – an in-the-making sausage factory perspective. Bust this myth - It is vital to look at the actual nature of cosmopolitanism to disavow notions of universal dispositions and competencies. For example, is it actually, how much and to what extent does the need for extensive interactions across multiple nationalities (Igarashi & Saito, 2014). Igarashi & Saito considered the institutionalisation of cosmopolitanism through cultural capital and

Attending to the production of cosmopolitan strategy is particularly important in the study of elites and elite-making. I suggest elites should not simply be understood in terms of the types and volumes of resources/capital they have but as groups and individuals made and produced. Attention to the production of cosmopolitan strategy helps to uncover the motivations and drive behind the production of cosmopolitan capital as a means to legitimate and distinguish themselves. Retrospective views of elites perhaps over-emphasize the significance of the institutional form of capital (the diploma or degree) or valorize the social capital created through these institutions, whereby, we miss the actual negotiations, tussles and experiences that constitute these relationships, and the nature of learning and achievement that is validated through educational qualifications.

An important aspect of this chapter was to move any focus on education-based cosmopolitanism away from immediate discussions of cultural capital and instead move the focus to the production of cosmopolitanism. By looking at why, how and when cosmopolitanism is made accounts for the conditions, the context and the field of power orienting such production. I don’t believe, as Kim (2011,2012) suggests that it is because of superior education, enhanced cosmopolitanism or commonly held views about a

global economy. Rather, cosmopolitanism is shown here a product of aspirations, social mobility strategies, including institutional support, economic prosperity and material privilege and cultural locations.

Considered here are the boundaries of their view, that heir global gaze was oriented to their perceptions of what is economically and culturally powerful. In contrast to other literature in this area, I suggest the focus on production is helpful; it moves discussion away from suggestions of "international networks" and instead shows the motives, means and outcomes of the strategy and these suggest cosmopolitanism is more about domestic and national positioning; albeit, leveraging a global cosmopolitan orientation to achieve that end. To that end, it appears cosmopolitan production may happen within geo-political, global gazes while situated within national contexts.

Being Worthy Cosmopolitan Elite

Secondly then, the production of cosmopolitan strategy provides insight to the relational nature of cosmopolitanism in the form of designed and lived consecration through a world school education. What has been of interest in this chapter has been, "…a focus…not only on practices, but significantly, on the narratives that are articulated by individuals, families, educational institutions, social clubs and so forth about how particular groups come to understand themselves as elite or otherwise." (Maxwell, 2015:23). Attention to the field of power allows insights into the ways a global orientation is produced to position the schools and young people advantageously. In the United States, the production of a global position is such that it buys-into the existing social order; the only change being the inclusion of the students and school. In Beijing their strategy poses a shifting/evolving definition of merit; one which is liminal in the field. Relational nature of cosmopolitanism and elite making is important to

understand as part of the field of power and how they consecrate themselves against / with established elites in their domestic/national settings. Relational nature of cosmopolitanism is actualized through the deliberate cosmopolitan positioning here involving implicit boundaries and consecration where they are "socialised into particular orientations towards the self, others and broader society." (Maxwell, 2015:20).

Inclusion was a term of analysis in this chapter because at its best, cosmopolitanism is an inclusive concept. However, in the real world it creates boundaries of worth and value; not purely on economic terms but in ways that mark greater cultural exclusions. What this chapter has achieved is to consider the built-in exclusivity of cosmopolitanism, as produced in both world schools. That is not to say these people were unkind but rather to recognize that in each context, the inclusion served as a tangible strategy for competitive advantage and by its very nature, fractured broader notions of cosmopolitan inclusivity. This chapter looked at the nature of the cosmopolitanism as it was produced in these schools, giving close attention to the multiple influences and layers involved in creating the attitudes, practices and cosmopolitanism that forms elite class-making. That is, if we take for granted that class-making is what they are doing (as in well-trodden territory in sociological literature) then what can be best understood here is the motivations and characteristics of what they are producing in the name of cosmopolitanism; the measures of becoming a worthy elite. Need cosmopolitan literature here.

The Role of Institutions in Producing Global Narratives

A focus on production then and an insight into the nature of merit and legitimacy sought through the cosmopolitan strategy, helps to reshape and reorient the role institutions (such as global HE) are often presumed to play in our globalizing world. Higher education institutions play a role, but not

perhaps as definitively as suggested by Igarashi and Saito (2014), nor for the reasons/motivations they suggest. It is not the "global" field of Higher Education that is undergirding the profitability of cosmopolitan capital but a domestic situation where competition is more difficult to influence and the international-standard of education the top tier universities are aiming for is the goal, represented by the brand. This brings into question the relationship between "global HE" in the US and the world schools. While it may be assumed by some that HE is driving cosmopolitan capital, perhaps it's wiser to ask, where the drive for cosmopolitanism is coming from? Is it a projection, call and draw, coming from the global nature of US Higher Education, to which those in China are responding? Perhaps not as much as is assumed. Rather, this research suggests they are already negotiating and enacting what it means to be cosmopolitan, what it means to strategically engage with the global. This suggests two different kinds of global enactments are happening around the same time, interacting in some ways but serving different motivations and agendas.

This opens discussion about the power of institutions to produce aspects of the "global" and cosmopolitan. Most importantly I'm suggesting the institutions (both world schools and US/UK HE) are made powerful and "global" because of the families/students attending; not the other way around. The is quite a significant reconceptualization of class and social mobility as it relates to institutions.

The type of institutional experience provided in these two world schools differs significantly in the construction of inclusive cosmopolitanism. From Snee's (2013) study of gap year narratives, I take the idea that narratives of difference, constructed around a distant other or place, are necessary ways of ascribing value. This type of narrative was heavily present in New York and underpinned the institutional structure of the school and its plan for expansion; more and varied was better, the "other" places would add

richness and so on. Yet, the diversity of the student body and families, with immigrant and second generation immigrant status emphasized, does not have a similar sense of the "other" during the school day, as is the case in Beijing. By contrast then, it is the Beijing World School day-to-day that engages young people in the negotiations and inclusion of the other. Such an experience, sometimes odd and often awkward, pushes young people beyond the type of self-referential cosmopolitanism (Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst, 2005) where individuals coalesce around similar views. Rather, what they have in Beijing, and what they believe they are developing in New York by way of its innate diversity, is an "ordinary cosmopolitanism" (Skrbis & Woodward 2007)

This chapter considered the strategizing and "work" of class making and social mobility for the new global elite at an institutional level where the family partnership with World Schools were formative in the production of each cosmopolitan strategy. The relationships between self-titled global institutions, class and cosmopolitanism are the substance of this chapter. The two strategies, made real through a world school education, consisted of planning, maneuvering and enactment; the aim of which was to produce trajectories and schooling experiences manifesting the aspects considered essential for the young people to legitimately assume elite and powerful positions in their respective global worlds. In turn then, such production made visible the beliefs, domestic societal contexts, economic and institutional supports that structured these cosmopolitan strategies and, the fields of power that oriented them. Each case is therefore valuable in its own right. Ethnographic understanding of the motives, means and intended outcomes in each setting offers insight to the composition of new elite's sensibilities as they leverage their economic resources and global orientations to achieve a legitimized position of power for their offspring in domestic and national contexts. It is through this situated view that we can better understand the role of the global within this multifaceted web of

relations (Weber, 1928) that produces cosmopolitan strategy. If we understand the institutionalized part of elite social mobility as part of such a web, what we see is that notions of globalization shift from being distant or reflective of international reach, to something locally imagined, produced and leveraged; no longer omnipotent or indiscriminate forces but exclusive and constructed.

7. Thesis Conclusions & Reflections

This research has provided greater insight to the way we understand global elites. By viewing cosmopolitanism as relational and embodied discourses, it has been possible to better articulate how these elites negotiate and understand their privileged positions in the world.

By exploring the (re)production of the new global elite in both Beijing and New York City, my work has shown the class practices of families, the establishment and networking of institutions and the embodied discourses of global merit; produced through and negotiated by the young people in these elite families, in relation to place and cultural context. What emerges from these insights is a diverse rather than singular, " globalised class" (Cousin & Chauvin, 2021). Not "ever more similarly educated" (Ibid) but rather, formulating a sense of who they are and should be, alongside the contexts and commitments that matter most to them. Significantly, these perspectives on elite (re)production ground the global in the corporeal realities of these parents and young people, muting notions of cosmopolitan capital that has transnational neutrality and value. The provincialisation of cosmopolitanism is made visible through their class practices and (re)production of privilege.

While wealth remains a significant dimension in social stratification (Killewald et al, 2017:398) this research has contributed to studies of elites, interested in understanding how wealth mobilises and underpins; not simply institutional access but the ways that elites feel about themselves and the way they see themselves in relation to others (Kantola, 2020).

The two cases provide a pertinent contrast of the way cosmopolitanism in conceived, mobilised and embodied. As such, this research has attempted to undertake Beck's task of defining, or least exploring, cosmopolitanism;

the nailing of a pudding to the wall (2992:17). Cosmopolitanism is not just "capital" in the sense that it can be unproblematically accrued or deployed (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007) but is reflective of, borne of (and in NYC projects) normative beliefs that shape what makes a meritous and worthy cosmopolitan elite. As with all research, my work captured a "moment in time". However, this is a claim worthy of attention for three particular reasons, pertinent to the field and future research in this area. It also acts as a helpful, temporal organiser for the main discussions and contributions arising from this thesis.

First, my contrastive ethnographic data captured a moment in the lives and efforts of the newly-moneyed elites, at a moment where the parents were "all in", acting and strategizing on behalf of their children to construct and secure cosmopolitan capital. I find this significant in the study of elites because too often analysis of elite (re)production is undertaken in retrospect and is covered by the veneer of institutional membership and legitimacy; which obfuscates and smooths the anxieties, precarity and decisions made by parents and young people at a time when they didn't know how the "story" was going to end. What resulted was insight into the values and beliefs that oriented the super-rich in times of action; not just the institutional associations they desired for their children, but the cosmopolitan habitus of these parents. What I managed to "get at" was a sense of who these people were and how they see themselves. When taken alongside their personal biographies and their commitment to and relationship with the World School, I find that formulations of elite cosmopolitanism can serve a common institutional goal, that of strategic positioning for entry to elite higher education in the United States and UK. Yet, those same formulations can be understood and held differently; that is to say there are varied formulations of elite cosmopolitanism, based on personal biographies, national and global experiences and orientations. While the World Schools, the educational institutions, may benefit from the

projection of cosmopolitan virtues (Rizvi, 2005) the embodied, lived and experienced versions speak more plainly to the aspects of distinction that matter most to the holder. This research therefore supports the arguments made by Howard & Maxwell (2021b) that notions of cosmopolitanism are understood and practiced quite variously. This research also builds upon the suggestions from Howard (2022) that as a global-orientation, cosmopolitanism is informed by, “maintaining attachment to the values, norms and customs of their origins.”

Substantively, my research appears to have opened a hidden demographic of elite cosmopolitan Chinese who have in turn, given cause to return to and extend dominant understandings that, “students must go to the West to advance their privilege and power” (Howards, 2022:8). My research has shown that while students and parents strategize towards an Anglophone university, their doing so is purely part of a strategy, and is considered a risky one. This finding mutes notions of “West is best” and instead, suggests, “West is second-best, but it will do” when compared to the highly-regarded and widely revered Chinese elite universities.

Given this contrasting insight to the production of elite cosmopolitanism can we begin to imagine a historical, contextual life for” the cosmopolitan”? Once, “the prerogative of the European elites” (Bertron, 2016, Cousin & Chauvin, 2021) but now, produced for distinction by newly-moneyed and cosmopolitan elites in Beijing and New York, each with their own characteristics and priorities.

Second, the data generated from engagement with these World Schools during their early and formative years provided special insight to the tensions, negotiations, effort and agency of actors within the “start-up” period of an elite school. Indeed, the effort required and pressures of presentation, family satisfaction, mutually advantageous outcomes for graduating students and the crafting of an external profile / reputation is

exhausting. By its very nature, it is something that occurs only once in each institutions lifespan. What resulted here was insight to the organisational and economic foundations of these enterprises; where, how much and from whom they got their money to support the school's work. What also resulted was an insight to the wealth of non-elite cosmopolitan capital from teachers, support staff and members of the school community who played a daily and often tireless part in running these buildings and institutions; their beliefs and interests in cosmopolitan education underpinned the operational success of the World Schools; perhaps not enough attention has been given here to their particular habitus and role. Yet, what was evident and discussed was the ways in which the combination of school and family versions of cosmopolitanism led to the formation of an elite educational strategy. Since the period following my field work is not present in this thesis, I cannot draw upon data to substantiate this claim: However, I hope it will be considered fair to suggest that this institutional "start-up" moment-in-time is just as fleeting and as precious as that of a family. For once the processes, staff, reputation and relationships are established, routines and institutional norms have a way of bedding in, after which the routines and strategies become smoother, less problematic, less negotiated in-the-moment, no longer discussed and perhaps less immediately visible in terms of the choices made or concessions made to particularly strong characters and preferences. Certainly, institutions evolve. And, as the Beijing case shows particularly well, there can be a near constant, pragmatic approach to opportunities and change. As an addition to the literature on elite schooling in globalising circumstances, this study opens up questions about the status and power of new institutions. This suggestion might well offer permission to those seeking to explore and better understand new, elite schools. That choice would perhaps bring insight to the institutional strategies and work involved when there is no heritage or brand from which to draw legitimacy, as in the case of British-heritage schools or IBDP. I argue then, the early start-up moments of new institutions then can provide

insight to the motives and mechanisms underpinning new and elite schooling.

This research has provided greater insight to the way we understand global elites. By viewing cosmopolitanism as relational and embodied discourses it has been possible to better articulate how these elites negotiate and understand their privileged positions in the world. By exploring the (re)production of the new global elite in both Beijing and New York City, my work has shown the class practices of elite families, the establishment and networking of institutions and the habitus of cosmopolitan merit; produced and negotiated by the parents in these families. What emerges from these insights is a diverse rather than singular, "globalised class" (Cousin & Chauvin, 2021). Not "ever more singularly educated" (Ibid) but rather, formulating a sense of who they are and should be.

Significantly, these perspectives on elite (re)production provide insight to the actually occurring forms of elite cosmopolitanism. The provincialisation of cosmopolitanism is made visible through the parent's engagement with the World School.

Contributions: A New Demographic & A New Type of School

Where we look matters. A central contribution of this thesis was insight to the elite and often "hidden" practices of elite making in elite World Schools. Bunnell has recently stated of international schools that, "….the existence of these organisations has rarely been directly questioned" (2022:42). My research is a direct contribution to this aim and offered for discussion. Tristan Bunnell's comment remains valid however and much work can be done to engage with and understand the role of World Schools and others in the globalised education industry.

In the same way, there are still hidden areas to be uncovered in the field. I appreciate that Bunnell et al (2020) review the most elite and established of England's schools, noting those which has established satellite campuses and those either choosing not to do so, or keeping such efforts on the down-low. Framing this within their elite status, Bunnell et al draw attention to the fact, "elite schools are typically keen to hide their commercial behaviours as these are at odds with their efforts to emphasize a disinterested, aristocratic ethos. Their internationalising practices may be hidden or very carefully framed as a result (Courtois, 2016) in 2020:704. Drawing attention to the core ways in which established elite schools claim their status (history, location, selective admissions, high fees, educational resources (e.g. Teacher/student ratio) and "intangibles" that typically include parental influences. While work in increasingly focusing on Asia (Lee & Wright 2015, 2016 Loh 2016, Liu 2018, 2020, Wu & Koh 2022, Bunnell 2019) this study appears to be the first to explicitly contrast "East" and "West" formulations of cosmopolitan education. Further consideration must also be given to the hidden or less-attended areas. In this way, Howard & Maxwell (2021b) argue the "global south" is not necessarily a matter of equator/geography, but rather about geo-political power.

I have offered a new type of Elite International School, that I've called a World School. I consider these to be a subset or perhaps an evolution of elite and international education.
A significant aspect from this research was the consideration of a school dealing with "toddlers" (aged 2) to adolescents (age 18). I mention this as a note of interest and one that has informed and enriched the engagement with parents and schools more broadly.
By considering parent's commitment to an institution, amounting to nearly fifteen years (maximum) as many of these parents did, the resulting personal and social investment provided an "all in" feeling to the school community. I offer this in contrast to notions of

perpetual mobility and rootlessness, since what occurred in these two schools during this period was quite the opposite. As a contribution to this field of study, I ask for consideration as to the commitment or otherwise of different types and programmes being researched and, the “stakes” for those participating. Each of these aspects informs and changes the resulting commitment and development of cosmopolitanism.

Demographics in Extant Research

Lee et al, suggest the growth of demand for international schools in China (in contrast to other parts of East Asia) is driven by non-Chinese nationals (2016:53). Given my research, this appraisal no longer fully represent the on-the-ground picture of local socio-economically privileged interest and demand for international education. The focus and conclusions perhaps better reflects the legal and political restrictions in place, until 2015, for local (non-foreign-passport-holding) students, who were legally unable to attend an international school. In the time period of my research from 2014-2016, I captured an experimental school in Beijing with permission to education local Chinese students from 3-18 in an international curriculum, in contrast to the national legal framework. This highlights the extent to which the experimental Beijing World School was “hidden” from view. And perhaps reminds us to consider the hidden cases, something common amongst studies of elites. In contrast to the focus on “predominantly globally mobile expatriates or students of Chinese heritage with overseas passports” (Lee et al, 2014) then, my research targets the under acknowledged, hidden and under- researched group of cosmopolitan Chinese nationals, the local and newly moneyed elites choosing international education, the trailblazers who took their children out of the national

system and into a cosmopolitan one. This research shows such a demographic exists.

The growing demographic interested in international and cosmopolitan education appears to be amongst those deemed the "localised middle-classes" (Howard & Maxwell, 2021b), and the "middle-class elites" (Poole 2020:448). This does not detract from the focus in this research, but is a welcome source of conversation and contrast. While the "typical produce of the GEI (Globalised Education Industry) is the non-elite private school" (Bunnell et al, 2020:694) these distinctions and explorations are helpful in building an understanding of the types and enactments of international education. I greatly appreciate that Bunnell et al (2020) have suggested, "there is a paucity of research of the actors involved, and the diversity of institutions that are now evolving within local education markets" (2020:691). I agree that a focus on the actors is required, with an interest in their relationships with and through the schools they populate.

I appreciate Tristan Bunnell's (2019) unpacking the problematic categorisation of "International Schools" as an area that has little conceptual framing and continues to be debated without a firm theoretical platform (2019:5). I appreciate also his call for a more "nuanced and stratified approach" to classification and examination of a "new era" of international schooling. Poole (2020) questions the extent to which the typologies for international schools (Hayden & Thompson) are western-centric, asking how well they extend to that context.

The recent work of Howard and Maxwell (2021a) is of particular analytical interest. Using the frame of Global Citizenship Education (GCE), rather than cosmopolitanism, they show two differing types of leadership being

developed through GCE in the global south. This framing captured for me, the type of exploratory and inductive approach to understanding what is happening in the name of “the global”.

Re-Orientation for Cosmopolitanism

Through my contrasting analysis of elites in Beijing and New York , I have shown that formulations of elite cosmopolitanism can serve a common institutional goal, that of strategic positioning for entry to elite higher education in the United States and UK. Yet, those same formulations can be understood and held differently; that is to say there are varied formulations of elite cosmopolitanism, based on personal biographies, national and global experiences and orientations. While the World Schools, the educational institutions, may benefit from the projection of cosmopolitan virtues (Rizvi, 2005) the embodied, lived and experienced versions speak more plainly to the aspects of distinction that matter most to the holder. This research therefore supports the arguments made by Howard & Maxwell (2021b) that notions of cosmopolitanism are understood and practiced quite variously. This research also builds upon the suggestions from Howard (2022) that as a global-orientation, cosmopolitanism is informed by, “maintaining attachment to the values, norms and customs of their origins.”

Substantively, in contrast however, my research appears to have opened up a hidden demographic of elite cosmopolitan Chinese who have in turn, given cause to fracture dominant understandings that, “students must go to the West to advance their privilege and power” (Howards, 2022:8). My research has shown that while students and parents strategize towards an Anglophone university, their doing so is purely part of a strategy, and is considered a risky one. This finding mutes notions of “West is best” and instead, suggests, “West is second-best, but it will do” when compared to the highly-regarded and widely revered Chinese elite universities.

Given this contrasting insight to the production of elite cosmopolitanism can we begin to imagine a historical, contextual life for" the cosmopolitan"? Once, "the prerogative of the European elites" (Bertron, 2016, Cousin & Chauvin, 2021) but now, produced for distinction by newly-moneyed and cosmopolitan elites in Beijing and New York, each with their own characteristics and priorities.

Epilogue

The planning of this research began with the opening of the Manhattan World School in 2012. Fieldwork occurred during 2014 and 2016. The analysis and completed write-up of ethnographic scenes occurred in the following years, until 2021. An epilogue is now added in 2022.

The study of elites, elite education, cosmopolitanism and international schooling has experienced substantial growth during this period. Research on elite schooling in China has started to emerge (Howlett 2021, Willis 2020, Wu & Koh, 2022). This can be attributed to the exponential growth of international schools in the PRC and the expansion of government-supported International Baccalaureate programmes. The growth in scholarship is also aided by the relaxation of legal restrictions (this happened in Beijing in 2015) allowing local Chinese students to attend international schools. Much has changed in this landscape, far faster than in New York. The Beijing World School now operates on a similar permission to others and now integrates aspects of the Chinese National Curriculum for the children aged 2 to 18. Now in its second decade of operation, this school can perhaps begin to claim some of the legitimacy and heritage that is an aspect of elite education.

The Manhattan World School did not achieve its aim of "…a dozen or so schools over the next decade." It's planned expansion into Beijing for the second school/campus came to a stop in 2015/2016 and the school had to abandon that plan. Insight to the reasons was gained from both the New York and Beijing side; the focus groups they held in Beijing to drum up parent support, "…didn't go well. The parents just didn't "get it"…" and there appeared to be surprise and disappointment on the New York side as a result of that. From the Beijing side, this was an "unknown" group that hadn't considered the permissions required, hadn't considered the boarding

requirements typical for a city the size of Beijing and, ultimately were not able to negotiate the cultural and political landscape needed to operate in the PRC. The stock-holders pivoted to Brazil and opened their second campus in São Paulo in 2018. A partnership was forged with an existing school in Shenzhen, PRC allowing them to claim a third campus in 2019; where students visit, but enrolment numbers of locals is unknown. Having just reached its 10th anniversary, the Manhattan World School can claim three campuses and an extensive "online programme." The next proposed sites for campuses are Miami (2023) and Silicon Valley (2022), both in the United States.

Upon reflection of the growth in these new(ish) institutions further observations can be drawn. The "reach" of the American-styled Manhattan World School did not extend as far as was planned or as they expected. The upcoming and additional two campuses extend the national scope rather than geographically international reach of the school. What conclusions can we draw from this? Certainly, the bureaucracy of international development must be considered more problematic than the national? The global pandemic of late 2019 through till now has almost certainly impact their growth. But I believe there is a shifting market also, for the particular type of "global" the Manhattan World School provides. And, at this stage, it appears that market is closer to home than was originally conceived. It will be interesting to see if this continues or if there is a surge of interest and opportunity for growth beyond America in the coming years. And, if so, with what demographic, in which locations and, for what reasons?

The developments in Beijing and the PRC more broadly have shifted from private, experimental enterprise (as was the case in the Beijing World School) to more closely permitted, regulated and controlled by the government. The demographics appearing to show interest in international

education in Tier-2 cities in China, at a far more affordable fee rate than the Beijing World School appears to be the “elite-middle class” (Poole, 2020) or the “global middle class.” It is important to remember that the government has controlled and permitted 2-year programmes of International Baccalaureate programmes for locals since the 1970s. However, a new age of access appears to in progress. Given the government controls and stipulations regarding the Chinese National Curriculum, what kinds of global orientations will this type of schooling produce? Why is it seemingly so appealing for the wealthy middle classes? What type of role does the government have in mind for this area of schooling, in contrast to the national system including cultural rites-of-passage such as the gaokao? I am in little doubt that the China Mind, China Root will feature in some way, perhaps in a different formulation, within these newly emerging schools.

These elites are not global in the sense of continuous mobility but rather rooted, and globally-oriented in their reception to and (re)production of privilege and status, matters that are deeply contextualised and operationalised in geo-political and social conditions. It is my hope that there has at least been an attempt here to engage with the tension, between global-orientation and parochialism. I have shown the specificities and cultural orientations of these elite families. I state clearly; these are not transnationally coherent or connected tribes. They are not, “ever more singularly educated” (Cousin and Chauvin, 2021). More than simply charting or characterising the nature of newly-moneyed elites in two places, I have shown the construction of, the roots of what is considered valuable, powerful and legitimate means for elite status in Beijing and New York. They are cases of cosmopolitan elites; showing the steady repetition and replication practices, the “same old, same old” in New York and, the analytic, experimental and liminal risk-takers in Beijing. Does this perhaps capture or characterise a particular moment in geo-political history? The rise of China and the decline of America? Time will tell.

My ethnographic data captured a moment in the lives and efforts of the newly-moneyed cosmopolitan elites, at a moment where they were "all in", acting and strategizing on behalf of their children; the anxieties, precarity and decisions made by parents and young people at a time when they didn't know how the "story" was going to end. What resulted was insight into the values and beliefs that oriented the super-rich in times of action. Certainly, the schooling choices and everyday lives of these actors acts as a window onto larger structures of elite-making through family aspirations and educational strategies. Yet for these particular cases and these specific elites, in New York and Beijing, a further significance is made possible. By considering the motivations and actions that constitute the "game" of elite legitimation, the field of power in which these families position their children is made visible. Combined then, in the work of these families and the enterprise of these new and growing institutions, is a positioning and posturing and reflection on their place in the globalising world; the characters of these two global powers emerges from the cases of their new cosmopolitan elite.

The geo-political landscape during my period of research provides further opportunity to reflect upon "the global" that informed and produced these negotiations and production of cosmopolitan elites. Drawing from Michael Mann's (2012) perceptions of the relationship between the "last Empire" the United States of America, and the rising power of China (PRC) there is perhaps evidence here of the waning cultural dominance of the United States and indeed "Western" cosmopolitan values, visible in my Beijing case. The negotiation of a new cosmopolitan elite in Beijing is suggestive of a reformulation and selective rejection of Western/Americanisms. The expansion stories of the World Schools in both cases, following my field work also speak to the geo-political controls and interests, most prominently in the Chinese case. It is perhaps interesting to see the rapid expansion of

Internationalised education provision across the many large cities of the PRC while in America it remains the purview of the East and perhaps soon, the West coast elite. It will be interesting to consider how this type of elite schooling might become massified for the wealthy middle classes or not, as in the case of America. I do not aim to reach beyond the confines of my data, but as cases of elite cosmopolitan production in these two locations, it is significant to notice the lack of overlap in the ways they see the world and their place within it.

Discussed in the previous chapter, the view from New York is ever-bold leading it to project its symbolic power and cultural weight. This is embodied by the families as much as the institution, with the confidence and certainty of being "the centre of the world." Yet, underneath this veneer and within these embodied certainties comes an awareness of the "competition"; for some this is a cursory recognition and for others, especially the for-profit stockholders, there is a readiness and defensive preparation (and plan to engage) with/against the rising economies of India, Brazil and China. Yet, faced with competing economies in a globalising world, the values and approaches to being and becoming elite in The United States remains largely unchanged (Cookson & Persell 1985, Gaztambide-Fernandez 2009a, 2015, Karabel, 2005); it's business as normal. Faced with the increasing waves of "global" change, which these elites and their school purports to ride and master, their approach remains the same. I wonder the extent to which the World School enterprise in New York will continue to typify the "business as normal" approach or, will consider diversification and re-orientation of its model in order to better reflect the values, motivations and aspirations of families outside of the United States. Here, I think of the work of Caroline Bertron (2016) where she presented the symbolic capital of Swiss Boarding Schools and their relationship to discourses of globalisation and, the resolutely anti-meritocratic approach within a set of schools. This type of insight helps to

give greater texture and meaning to the assumptions and opaque tropes of globalism that have also persisted during the period of my research and the overtones of globalism present in the Manhattan World School.

The greatest joy and surprise in my research then, offered the greatest contrast and significance in this work. What I found in Beijing was a doggedly pragmatic, analytical, strategic, liminal and risky approach to elite (re)production. It was a surprise to find an almost whole-scale cultural rejection of what they were seemingly aiming for; the goal of an elite UK/US university. For them, the institutional goal held none of the prestige or cultural affirmation that it did for the New York case. For me, that consideration was at first confusing and challenged my assumptions of what mattered and was important to these parents and young people. Yet it is here in their formulation of the "game" and the parameters of status and worth that their "China Mind, China Root" typifies their negotiation and formulation of elite cosmopolitanism. I offer this in contrast and discussion with works such as Liu (2020) in considering the construction of elite subjectivities in China. The early adopters of the World School in Beijing were not reflective of what he calls the, "hegemony of neoliberalism and neoliberal globalisation." Rather, that particular group of experimental and analytical cosmopolitan elite entered into and constructed a version of elite worth that reformulated national, local or global stereotypes.

From this, it is my hope that these cases and research contribute to a growing body of work that not only avoids or cautions against the essentialisation of our "global world" or "cosmopolitan narratives" but acknowledges the empirical evidence and encourages theorising that moves our understandings beyond notions of globalism. The work of Maria Lucia Guerro Farías (2020) is suggestive of this from her study of global citizenship in Bogota; Adam Howard and Claire Maxwell (2021a) also lead

this work with their consideration citizenship education in the global south and, Poole (2020) who questions the western-centric typologies by which international-schools still appear to be produced and analysed, even in the face of nationalised examples and government-school relationships in international schooling. I hope that my research on World Schools and cosmopolitan elites makes a contributions in this way; where the sociology of education and sociology of elites recognises that what we do is not simply, “who we are” but when and where we are.

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