

Book Review / Compte rendu

Brooks, R., & Waters, J. (2011). *Student Mobilities, Migration and the Internationalization of Higher Education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Pages: 208. Price: 100.00 USD (hardcover). ISBN 9780230578449

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Current research investigating international student mobility tends to focus on economic factors and government policies. *Student Mobilities, Migration and the Internationalization of Higher Education* departs from this trend by looking at internationalization of higher education from students' perspectives. Drawing on case studies of international student mobility from East Asia, mainland Europe, and the UK, the authors have developed a strong analysis on the relationship between the internationalization of higher education and the understanding of student mobility. Informed by key conceptual ideas and discourses associated with employability, cultural capital, social reproduction, and cosmopolitan identities, this book is a timely investigation of the changing patterns of international student mobility. With the majority of educational research examining student flow from countries in East and Southeast Asia to Anglophone destinations, the authors take a unique position by considering the perspectives of students who come from continental Europe and the UK.

According to the authors student mobility is changing direction, from inward migration to outward migration for some Anglophone countries. They also point out that countries such as China and India, which used to be "main senders" of students, are now attracting students from overseas. The analysis of the changing nature of student mobility is developed through eight chapters.

The introductory chapter highlights relevant literature and explores the link between neoliberalism, globalization, and education. The authors survey literature around highly contested concepts such as neoliberalism and globalization, and suggest that these two terms should be problematized and kept analytically distinct. By clarifying the distinctions between empirical facts, ideology, and the social-imaginary natures of globalization, this chapter also briefly introduces some key conceptual ideas that are explored in more depth in the later chapters.

Chapter 2 addresses the policy context of contemporary student mobility in higher education at the international, regional, national, and local levels. While many researchers and scholars argue that globalizing pressures and the influence of transnational organizations have fundamentally changed educational policy and practice, the authors contend that individual nations still retain considerable decision-making powers.

Chapters 3 through 5 provide strong empirical evidence on the student experiences from East Asia, mainland Europe, and the UK. Although examining a similar group of young students seeking higher education in an overseas environment, these chapters point to a very different picture for each individual region. The authors maintain that students from East Asian countries such as China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan are motivated by the potential to accumulate social and cultural capital. On the other hand, students from mainland Europe are motivated by broader economic and political considerations, such as instilling a particular type of European identity. While suggesting that the motivations for students from the UK who study abroad are less clear, the authors do illustrate the privileged nature of the experience of UK students seeking overseas higher education.

Chapters 6 and 7 highlight key themes emerging from the analysis of the preceding case studies. In Chapter 6 the authors explore the emergent geographies of student mobility and introduce a distinctive geographical perspective into their analysis of it. In Chapter 7 they reflect on the changing nature of higher education within the context of internationalization. Drawing on the earlier case studies, this chapter explores the internationalization of higher education by looking at different aspects of societal change. The concluding chapter then proposes three main areas for further research: the scales of student migration, the uneven geographical distribution of student mobility, and the effort to bring together theories and practice in order to identify policy implications.

As established experts in this field, Brooks and Walters have brought new insights to an understanding of the relationship between student mobility and internationalization of higher education, which will certainly benefit researchers and policy makers. By integrating theories and ideas across socioeconomic domains, this book looks beyond the economic argument of internationalization and student mobility and urges greater focus on political, social, and culture considerations. Another significant contribution of this book lies in the fact that the authors explore the experiences of students from mainland Europe and the UK, where the students are usually considered to be from more “privileged backgrounds.”

This book brings a unique geographical perspective into the discussion of student mobility by raising the issues of spatial disparities and power imbalances in the internationalization of higher education. The authors do make an effort to situate gender considerations into the picture of internationalization. Although only discussed in a couple of pages at the end of Chapter 3, it is important to note that the authors are intending to draw attention by calling upon more research on the often-neglected area of gender inequality in international student mobility.

This book offers an in-depth overview of student mobility by focusing on less-discussed areas and making connections between neoliberalism, globalization, and education. However, the literature review section in the introductory chapter does not provide enough background on conceptualizing internationalization of higher education.

Although mentioned briefly in the final remarks of the last chapter, by not providing an overview of the debates on internationalization, the authors seem to imply that there is a common or uniform approach to understanding internationalization. It would have been helpful for a contextual understanding of what the authors mean by internationalization because that would give the readers a clearer picture of where student mobility stands as a product of internationalization.

The authors provide a strong analysis of the important policy context of student mobility at various levels. However, at the regional level the authors only focus on European Union initiatives that encourage student mobility, and there is no discussion of East Asian regional organization. Readers would have greatly benefited by an analysis of policy context of regional organizations in East Asia such as ASEAN. The authors suggest that pursuing international education could contribute to the wider context of distinction that creates inequalities between nations. Future analysis of the issues highlighted in this book could lead to a more in-depth discussion of how student mobility might be perpetuating greater inequalities across regions and social classes.

As one of the most popular student-receiving destination countries, Canada has witnessed significant changes in the nature of student mobility over recent years. The analysis in *Student Mobilities, Migration and the Internationalization of Higher Education* could certainly shed some light on the policy decision-making process in Canada. The geographical perspective applied in this book could lead to a more robust understanding of factors contributing to student flow to Canada. After all, international student mobility is not just about students flowing from east to west any more. This phenomenon is much more complex since the various forms of internationalization of higher education that are taking place globally need to be better understood. ✱