

# The internationalisation of higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand: historical & contemporary contradictions & possibilities



<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/assets/Images/Culture-Community/Christchurch/RaceRelationsDiversityFern.jpg>

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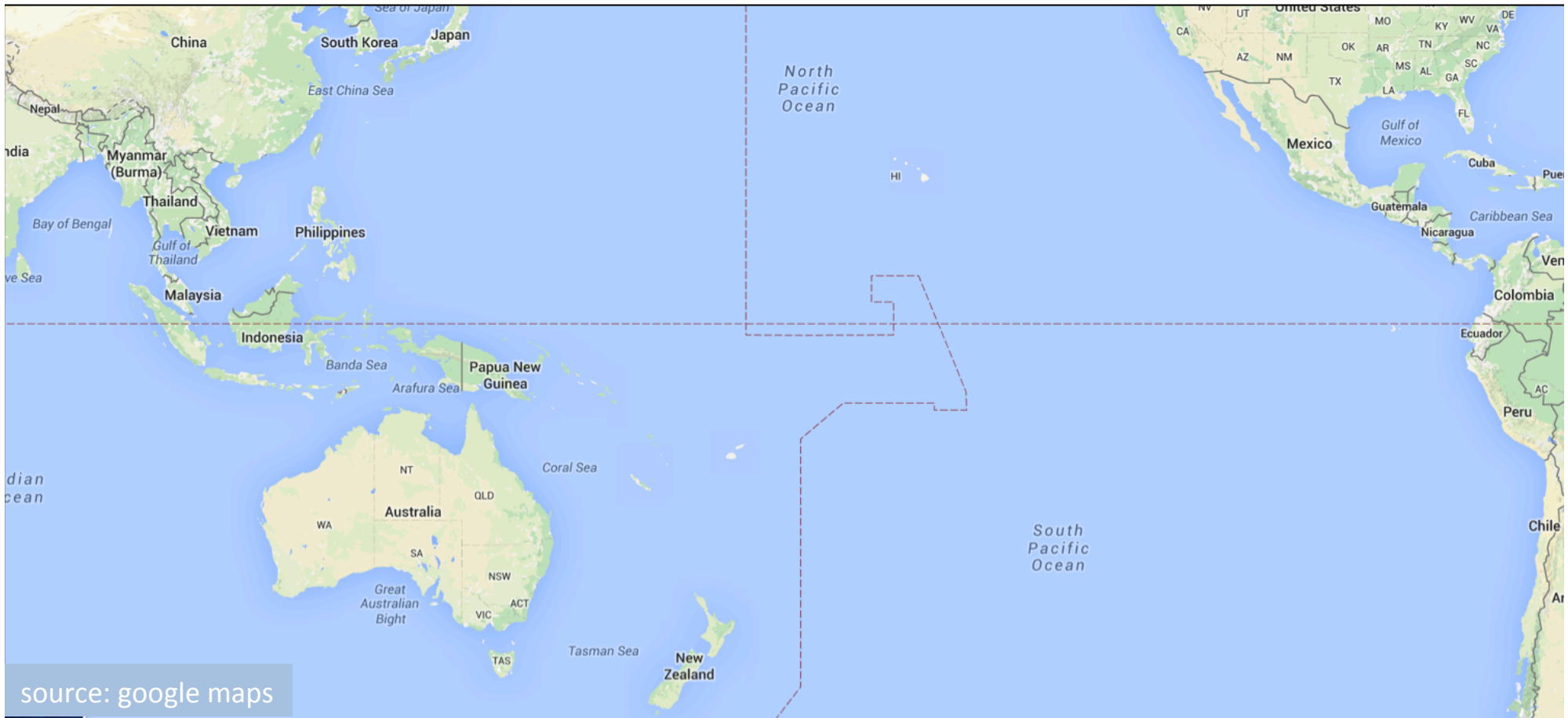
# Today

- Where is Aotearoa New Zealand?
- Internationalisation as a social imaginary
- How is 'internationalisation' imagined in Aotearoa NZ?
  - Historical imaginaries
  - Contemporary imaginaries 'on the ground'
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    - student reflections
    - staff reflections
- Possible responses

# Where is Aotearoa New Zealand?



<http://www.tourism.net.nz/images/maps/worldmap-1g.jpg>





<http://www.geographicguide.com/pictures/oceania-map.jpg>

# Social imaginaries

(Rizvi, 2006)

- “...common understanding[s] that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy”

(Taylor, 2002, p. 106)

- provide a means by which we might “suggest transformations of the prevailing order” (Rizvi, 2006, p. 196)

# Internationalisation as a 'global social imaginary'

(Stein & Andreotti, 2016)

- grounded in assumptions of the universality & superiority of Western knowledge
- primarily positions international students in terms of “cash”, “charity”, or “competition” (with local students' entitlements)

BUT important to attend to the *contradictory* ways in which internationalisation is imagined & enacted 'on the ground' "in order to challenge the logic of 'there being no alternative'" to the current status quo

(Robertson, 2006, p. 305; also see Larner, 1998a, 2003)

# Internationalisation as a social imaginary in Aotearoa NZ

## Historically...

Interwoven with understandings of 'nationhood' & the legacy of British colonisation (Larner, 1998)

Three phases:

1. NZ as "Britain's farm" (p. 602)
2. NZ as a separate nation-state; education crucial for "social coherence" and "national economic security" (p. 603)
3. NZ as "a node in the flows & networks of the Pacific Rim", reimagined in relation to 'globalisation' (p. 607)



## Currently...

- ‘Export education’: sixth top export industry (2014 - \$2.4 billion)  
(<https://www.nzte.govt.nz/en/invest/statistics/#toc-exports-top-20-commodities>)
- 70% of international students from the Asia region  
(International Division MoE, 2013)
- 90% of Asian international students enrolled on a full-fee paying basis  
(MoE, 2012, personal communication)
- ‘Local’ students mainly interested in exchange with other English-speaking countries (Doyle et al., 2008)
- Conflation of ‘Asian’ with ‘international’, & ‘international’ with ‘other’ (Collins, 2006)

# Contemporary imaginaries of internationalisation in Aotearoa NZ

## Policy

- a source of revenue
- a source of 'human capital'
- a means for fostering New Zealanders' capacity to 'look outwards'
- a means for fostering 'mutually beneficial educational relationships'

The statement, which aims to double the economic value of international education to \$5 billion over the next 15 years, includes targets to:

- develop and sustain mutually beneficial education relationships with key partner countries as a leading part of New Zealand Inc strategies in Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas
- increase annual revenues from providing education services offshore to at least \$0.5 billion
- increase the number of international students enrolled in New Zealand providers offshore, from 3,000 to 10,000
- double the number of international postgraduate students (particularly in programmes in addition to those at PhD level) from 10,000 to 20,000
- increase the transition rate from study to residence for international university students
- increase New Zealanders' skills and knowledge to operate effectively across cultures.

<http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/overall-strategies-and-policies/leadership-statement-for-international-education/>

## Marketing material

internationalisation as adventure, welcome & success

A world-class

educa

unfo

adv

New Zealand  
Discover our  
unbeatable li

<http://www.study>

Where  
strangers are  
friends.

New Zealand is a diverse country of many cultures. We're

ea

Ready for career success

A New Zealand education can give you the qualifications and skills to excel anywhere in the world in your chosen career.

<http://www.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/why-nz/work-ready>

# University students' reflections

Critical ethnography 2005-2006 - 20 participants (all women)

9 international students

3 partners of international students

8 'local' students (3 born in Aotearoa NZ)

## Encountering dominant imaginaries

“When I met people on the campus .... the perception they have of me... is... I'm an Asian, they think I'm [a] young international student, therefore you've got money.... And you study science or commerce... They don't see me as an individual person, but they just start ....thinking of me because of my appearance, so... I think that has to be changed. Obviously, ok, I'm an Asian but I'm not an international student...” (Stella, Korean local student)

“Sometimes ...just some drunk students walking past by and they will swear at you...like 'go back to China'.” (Frances, Chinese international student)

## Disrupting dominant imaginaries

“The best thing is ...I get to know about Asian cultures more. I think it sounds really weird but I didn't know about Asian culture when I was in Japan. I thought Japan is Japan, not other part of Asian countries, but now I have got so many Taiwanese friends & Korean friends & Malaysians, ... & so on, and also I met so many people from.. Brazil or Germany...if I live in Japan maybe I didn't have so much opportunities.”

(Miho, Japanese international student)

“After I go through all this thing...when I go back to Malaysia and someone need some help I'll be really glad to help you know, but before I experienced I was like, ‘You choose to come *here*,.. you should be alright!’” (Violet, Malaysian international student)

# In university teachers' reflections

*EIHE* tag on project: survey of NZ university faculty, 2016 (n=74)

## Potential benefits of internationalisation (*agree or strongly agree responses*)

1. enriching the diversity of the student body (97%)
2. enriching the diversity of the faculty body (95%)
3. sharing scientific knowledge with others & promoting intercultural skills (94%)
4. promoting deeper understandings of the local-global connection (86%)
5. developing the reputation of Aotearoa NZ (83%)
6. facilitating international mobility (82%)
7. making the curriculum more relevant (79%)
8. building strategic relationships to leverage trade objectives & attracting international students to address skilled labour shortages (56%)

## Potential problems caused by internationalisation

*(agree or strongly agree responses)*

1. financial goals supersede educational goals (76%)
2. differential fees to international students are used to address chronic funding shortfalls (74%)
3. only those students with sufficient means benefit (68%)
4. over-representation of certain countries (62%)
5. poorer countries are deprived of talented people (brain drain) (60%)



# What would you change? (NZ faculty suggestions)

Re-imagine internationalisation...

*in terms of excellence*

“Research quality should try to mimic the best American universities, not the second tier British universities.”

*in terms of exchange*

“If I could wave a wand, I would change the notion that the university is a business and needs international students to shore up its finances...I would encourage domestic students to make use of exchange in order to experience other cultures, & would see such exchanges as the primary vehicle by which international students are brought into the university.”

*as a long-term endeavour*

“Shift from a short-term goal (ranking & income) to a long-term goal (global social benefit)”.

*in relation to place, locality, relationality & responsibility*

“[Develop] a more strategic focus on regional & global equity.”

“[internationalisation] needs to be grounded in social justice praxis so that the inequalities of globalization as it impacts education are foregrounded & students are encouraged to speak out about racism on campus. In settler countries, internationalisation also needs to be grounded in a recognition of First Nations’ place-based responsibilities.”

## Some questions to ponder

- How can we strategically work “within/against” dominant imaginaries of internationalised HE? (Lather, 2006, p. 41)
- How can we leverage contradictions to shift dominant imaginaries, recognising that policies are written by *people*? Who should determine which shifts are desirable?
- What are the connections & contradictions between historical & contemporary imaginaries of nationhood & internationalisation in your contexts?

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2016 faculty survey respondents

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