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**NO PLACE LIKE HOME?
THE EXPERIENCES OF SOUTH-EAST ASIAN
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN
NEW ZEALAND AND THEIR RE-ENTRY INTO
THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis on the experiences of Southeast Asian tertiary international students and their re-entry into their countries of origin falls broadly into three parts. The first part examines the political and philosophical background of export education in New Zealand; the second part examines the perceptions of and about international students in New Zealand; and the third part examines returnees' experiences of re-entry. It charts the shift in education policy from the Colombo Plan through to neo-liberal government policies and current government policies. It identifies and analyses the perceptions of and about Asian migrants and students in New Zealand, historically and contemporarily. It identifies the re-entry transitions, particularly as experienced through disenfranchised grief and changing worldviews. It argues that these transitions challenge returnees' notions of self-identity, self-narrative, and ontological security. In particular, it argues that returnees' sense of 'home' is disrupted and challenged and that a sense of homelessness is a defining feature of the re-entry experience. It is argued that home can be defined beyond geographical boundaries, transnationally and through computer mediated communities. The difficulties of re-entry can be mediated somewhat through self-reflexive preparation and social support in returnees' countries of origin. Together, these can lead to re-entry being an ultimately positive and enriching experience.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

“We are dwellers, we are namers, we are lovers, we make homes and search for our histories” (Heaney, 1980:148-9). It is in this dwelling, naming, loving, making and searching that international students returning to their countries of origin find whether there *is* a place like home. For ‘Home’ becomes very problematic on re-entry, as does its attendant issues of self-identity, ontological security, settledness and belonging.

This chapter identifies the previous research on both international students in general and re-entry in particular, before critiquing the largely empiricist research methodology employed in the general research. This chapter then identifies the research hypotheses that informed this research. Following a commentary, and defence, on the method and ethics of this research, this chapter identifies the broad theoretical themes that inform the arguments and structure of this thesis. This chapter concludes by showing the structure of the thesis and arguing its importance to the study of international students and re-entry.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Most of the research on international students in general and their re-entry in particular has come out of North America and from psychology (e.g. Bochner, McLeod and Lin, 1977; Furnham and Bochner, 1982; Redmond and Bunyi, 1993). Within psychology, it has drawn on each of the major theoretical perspectives on acculturation: functional model of friendships, stress and coping theories, and social identification theories (Ward et al, 2001). Most of the earlier research was largely atheoretical, or at least empirical, and used a wide range of methodologies. More recent research tends to be driven by economic imperatives. (e.g. Infometrics, 2000).

In general, literature on international students falls into four areas: the problems of sojourners, the psychological reaction of sojourners, the influence of social interaction and communication on adaptation, and the culture learning processes in cross-cultural sojourning (Hammer, 1992). Students are one of the most studied groups in literature on cross-cultural transition; they are distinguishable by virtue of the fact that their educational goals are their primary purpose for their (temporary) migration.

The material on student sojourning is significant, and growing, although it has really only developed in the last fifty years (Bochner and Wicks, 1972; Bochner, Buker and McLeod, 1976; Bochner, McLeod, and Lin, 1977; Carey, 1956; Chinn, 1987; Clark and Pyle, 1986; Furnham and Bochner, 1982, 1986; Kagan and Cohen, 1990; Kennedy, 1999; Kennedy and Dewars, 1997; Klineberg, 1976, 1981; Klineberg and Hull, 1979; Marion, 1986; McGrath, 1998; Marks, 1987; Pruitt, 1978; Redmond and Bunyi, 1993; Rohrlach and Martin, 1991; Sell and Craig, 1983; Singh, 1963; Uehara, 1986; Ward and Kennedy, 1993a, 1993b; Wiseman, 1997).

This research stemmed initially from research studies on the Peace Corps of the 1960s and developed alongside studies of international businesspeople. Much of this research has considered the affective, behavioural, and cognitive consequences of cross-cultural transition and has attempted to establish and predict which individual, social, interpersonal, structural and economic factors are reliable in predicting adjustment. According to Ward et al (2001), the best research is both long and expensive: longitudinal studies with a control sample of host nationals.

Ward et al (2001) have identified further salient themes in the research in this area: interpersonal and inter-group interactions; the difficulties faced by international students; academic issues in the intercultural classroom; temporal variations in psychological, socio-cultural and academic adaptation, and the re-entry experience.

Students are distinguishable from other migrants or intercultural sojourners by virtue of their educational goals: their academic performance is a crucial aspect of their cross-cultural adaptation. Studies in this field of student sojourning also differ methodologically. Compared to other sojourners, such as tourists, immigrants or refugees, students are more likely to have been part of longitudinal studies. Generally, these studies have concentrated

on two themes: the prediction of successful adaptation by pre-departure variables and the changing patterns of adaptation over time. It has also included research pertaining to re-entry (Ward et al, 2001).

While New Zealand scholarship has not extensively researched re-entry issues (except, notably, McGrath, 1998), international students' other experiences have been the focus of research (Aston, 1996; Back et al, 1998; Beaver and Tuck, 1998; Cook, 1995; Eng and Manthei, 1984; Infometrics, 2000; James and Watt, 1992; Kennedy and Dewars, 1997; Mills, 1997; Oomen, 1995; Smith and Parata, 1997; Tofi et al, 1996; Ward, 2001). Virtually all of these studies have researched international students at tertiary institutions. They have tended to consider the quality and quantity of contact, friendship patterns, social support networks, and the functional roles of intercultural interactions and have found that the amount of cross-national interaction is typically low, that international students expect greater contact with domestic peers, and that interaction with domestic peers is considered to have academic, psychological, and social benefits for the international student (Ward, 2001).

In the literature, international students are also called 'overseas students', 'intercultural sojourners', 'foreign students' and most things in between. 'International student' is probably the most rare of those terms, but is the most inclusive; it also is appropriate when dealing with re-entry issues. Michael Paige (1990:162) offers a definition of 'international student' that is adequate:

[International students are] individuals who temporarily reside in a country other than their country of citizenship or permanent residence in order to participate in international educational exchange as students, teachers, and researchers. They are distinguishable by virtue of being culturally different from their hosts. The definition has three key emphases: the temporary status of the sojourners, the educational purpose of the sojourn, and the cultural backgrounds that distinguish international from host country students.

However, while this is a useful definition, it is not a complete definition. Some students, such as the ones from Hong Kong in this study, may hold permanent residence or citizenship in more than one country, such as New Zealand. Technically, they may not be international students when, in all other senses, they are. However, the emphases in Paige's (1990) definition on temporary, educational, and cultural differences are important. When international students first arrive in New Zealand, most do not explicitly intend to stay

here. Nor are international students tourists: their visa stipulates they are here to study. In addition, they are culturally different from students of the host country. Their sojourning nature is also important: "they are usually more committed than tourists to their new location, but less involved than immigrants and resettled refugees" (Ward et al, 2001:142).

Research on re-entry

Much literature on re-entry and international education in general, is from a Western-based perspective and set of methodologies (Clark and Pyle, 1986); it was, until recently, also largely empiricist, although it would claim to be atheoretical (Martin, 1987; Ward et al, 2001). As Ward et al (2001:144) comment: "Most of the [early] evaluation studies were not particularly rigorous in their designs or the manner in which they drew their conclusions; however, as their aims were undoubtedly worthy, there was some reluctance to probe too closely into their effectiveness." More recent studies are more grounded theoretically outside empiricism, although also tend to be driven by the new aim of 'selling' education (Ward et al, 2001; cf. e.g. Infometrics, 2001).

Furthermore, studies have used a wide range of methodologies, thereby hindering comparative or replicated studies (Leong and Sedlacek, 1989; Martin, 1986). In addition, personal experience and statistical results are often at odds with each other, perhaps because researchers have attempted to detect significant change in people based upon abstract concepts (Sell and Craig, 1983). Very few studies examine the formation of intercultural friendships or the impact of past sojourn experience or the relationship between this and natural maturation (Martin, 1987).

Martin (1986) argues that there is a need to explore further theoretical directions and consider re-entry not, as previously, a static phenomenon or as something which began when the student physically returned home and ended upon complete acculturation. Re-entry cannot be defined by external temporal boundaries and may begin well before the student leaves the foreign culture, or well into their return home. Martin (1986) identifies three cultural contexts: the home environment pre-leaving, the foreign culture and the re-entry environment. She argues that the intercultural experience is viewed as a process of change and understanding and interpreting changes through interaction with others.

In research in the United States and Asia, Chinn (1987; personal correspondence, February, 2002) identified cultural, social, communicative, political, educational, spiritual and professional problems that may be encountered in re-entry. Amongst these problems she included identity confusion, loneliness and alienation, adoption of unfamiliar verbal and non-verbal codes, changes in political views or events, relevance and use of foreign education, an absence of a supportive faith community and an inability to work in one's chosen profession.

Also in the United States, Uehara (1986) noted that re-entry is a process that contains both positive and negative elements and finds similar factors of influence on the re-entry process, as did Westwood and Barker (1996). These mitigating factors were the length of stay in the host culture, the individual's personality, the quality of the cross-cultural experience, the degree of similarity between the host and home countries, the nature of employment upon return, and the amount of preparation before returning, with the addition of age, previous travel experience and amount of information about home country.

In a synthesis of past research, Uehara (1986) identified the variables of age, length of sojourn, level of adjustment in foreign culture, level of international political and social concern, value change, level of desire to return home and information about the home country. Uehara (1986) identified the physical and psychological symptoms of re-entry adjustment. These symptoms included alienation, anomie, depression and sometimes sickness. In measuring the adjustment of the student to the foreign culture, the variables of the proportion of local native friends, the individual's status in the foreign culture, the confidence in the local language and the individual's level of satisfaction were also important. Uehara (1986) poses two questions: 'what is the most important thing you learned about the US as a result of your trip abroad' and 'what is the most important thing you learned about the foreign culture?' A further question, 'what is the most important thing you learned about yourself' is worth adding.

Research on Return Migration

This thesis reflects, in part, the recent changes in theorising migratory movements for their “meaning” “in a world full of the metaphysical displacements of homelessness, alienation and the uncertainty of places” (Bedford, 1997:55); there is extensive New Zealand literature considering this, particular within the Pacific (cf. Bedford, 1997; Macpherson et al, 2001; Spoonley, 2000; Spoonley, 2001). It has also been recognised that these “displacements” feature in the lives of return migrants as well (Connell and King, 1999).

There is an extensive literature on return migration internationally (e.g. Connell and King, 1999; Gmelch, 1980; Gmelch, 1987; King and Strachan, 1980; King et al, 1983; McGrath, 1991) and in New Zealand the literature concerns New Zealanders returning from overseas (Bedford and Lidgard, 1993; Lidgard, 1991; Lidgard, 1994a; Lidgard, 1994b) as well as Chinese migrants returning to their countries of origin (Ip, 2000). Much of this literature examines, amongst other things, *why* migrants return to their countries of origin, the impact that return migrants have upon their countries of origin, as well as a detailed demographic analysis of the *types* of return migrants (e.g. Lidgard, 1994b). It also favours conceptualising migration beyond the settler/sojourner dichotomy (Ip, 2000) and as circular, rather than linear (Skeldon, 1997).

However, where this thesis differs significantly from this literature is that for the most part the graduates were obliged to return to their countries of origin. Most of these graduates had limited-term student visas or obligations in their countries of origin to return to (such as serving out a financial bond to their government or company). Therefore, there is not an issue of *why* graduates return. Rather, given that they have returned (under compulsion or otherwise) the pertinent issues centre around their re-entry experiences and processes.

Research Methodology and Empiricism

However, the great majority of this research is also empiricist and that may be its greatest weakness. By definition, research cannot be *a*theoretical. Despite their best intentions, researchers will bring certain assumptions to their research. Similarly, research cannot be

entirely objective: there is no such thing as objectivity, just managed subjectivity. As Smith (1993:26) notes:

For empiricism [,] the connecting point or linkage between the subject and independently existing objects and processes was the observation of those objects and processes (experience). However, this posed a major problem, because the observation of reality, or an observer's experience of reality, is in a very serious sense internal to the observer or subject.... The question, therefore, is that of how can one know that any given recording and processing of experience has resulted in an accurate representation as opposed to a distortion of how things really are.

Empiricists responded to this dilemma by seeking to ground their knowledge on a scientific, logical assessment of experience, which meant that science, both natural and social, rested on the data of the empirical world. As Smith (1993:28) argues:

These brute data or givens, which could be expressed ostensibly, or, put differently, because they could be depicted in a theory-neutral or in a neutral, scientific language, were considered independent of any particular theory and independent of the particular interests and purposes of any individual.

Of course, despite their best intentions, it is impossible to separate the interests of the individual researcher and the structures of which that researcher is a part, not to mention the structures of which the subjects are a part. The failure of empiricism is because it "became clear that experience could not serve as an unambiguous reference point for theory choice and for distinguishing knowledge from opinion" (Smith, 1993:44) and furthermore,

[t]he observer and the observed cannot be separated and then reconnected, as empiricists had hoped, because there are no such things as theory-free observation, brute data, and so on. What counts as data and knowledge is influenced by the interests, purposes, and social practices of those who lay claim to that data, and knowledge (Smith, 1993:49).

This research, on the other hand, recognises the structural, political, economic, and ideological structures that impinge upon, restrict, and affect international students' experiences. As Ward (1980:42) has argued: "scholars are not required to make their writings either simple or comforting; they are supposed to assist in revealing the truth about a people and its cultural roots", while Said (1993:314) argues that "[t]he job facing the cultural intellectual is therefore not to accept the politics of identity as given, but to show how all representations are constructed, for what purpose, by whom, and with what

components.” In studying the experiences of international students therefore, it is necessary to bring into discussion the broader issues beyond the individual’s re-entry experiences and include analysis of broader social contexts and trends.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Significant advances in understanding and the attainment of knowledge are more likely to be achieved when a clear hypothesis is put forward against which evidence can be tested. The evidence may not correspond to the hypotheses, which may then be discarded or modified, but it will ferment further questions (Tosh, 1991). This type of research is not quantitative in the sense that it is not necessary to have definite hypotheses to be tested empirically, although there are general hypotheses.

There has been very little research done in New Zealand on the re-entry of international students (primarily McGrath, 1998). At the outset, a series of hypothesis about re-entry were postulated, drawing on both the New Zealand and overseas research noted above, as well as anecdotal and impressionistic evidence of the experiences of international students. These general hypotheses were all explored through this research:

1. That re-entry is a *process* and not a static event and may begin while the student is in the home country and may end up to two years after their return home;
2. That there are *noticeable and definable changes* in the variables of *behaviour, cognition, spirituality, worldview and attitudes* in the process of re-entry;
3. That *the integration and/or participation in the host country adversely affect the re-entry process*, making it more difficult for the student to adjust back into their home country;
4. That *ongoing communication between the student and the host country* after their return home assists the ease of the re-entry process;
5. That a *mentor and/or support group* within the home culture *beneficially assists the re-entry process* upon the student’s return home;
6. That *preparation for and awareness of the re-entry process* while the student is still in the host country *beneficially assists and eases the re-entry process*;
7. That *finding employment, which has congruence to the student’s training*, within a three-six month period of returning home *beneficially assists and eases the re-entry process* for the student;

8. And that *support and realistic expectations from the student's family* assists the ease of the re-entry process.

In sum, these hypotheses argued that re-entry included *process, individual change* (in world view in particular), *preparation* (and attendant building of expectations), and *the importance of social networks* in both New Zealand and their countries of origin.

However, in the course of the fieldwork it became clear that the re-entry processes and experiences of international students could not be examined without also examining the experiences of international students whilst in New Zealand, to which the first half of this thesis is devoted. Given the emerging nature of the importance of these New Zealand experiences during the research, no particularly hypotheses were established early on; nevertheless, as will be demonstrated, the students' experiences and the particular political, ideological and social environments in which they lived them are centrally important to this thesis.

ETHICS OF RESEARCH

This type of cross-cultural research presented particular issues (cf. Spoonley, 1999). In undertaking this research, I have been aware that I am a white, European, English-speaking New Zealander, studying Asians, most of who do not have English as their first language. That entailed going through the necessary gatekeepers in order to access research participants (such as alumni associations and the like in these countries of origin, for example). Furthermore, I have never lived abroad, and therefore never had the experience of re-entering my own country, except for a brief period after I completed the fieldwork for this research. Nevertheless, the stories and responses told by returnees are in many cases deeply personal and also largely similar to each other.

The debate about who should write what should not rest on grounds of race, religion, or gender: to do so is openly deterministic, prescriptive of learning and imagination, and will tie us to either patterns of polemical thought or personal experience alone. That is not to ignore that the writer brings individual perceptions and judgments influenced by contemporary intellectual trends, or that this will affect their selection of what is and what is not important data (cf. Ward, 1980). As Binney (1995:5) says of history, so it can be said of any interpretation, analysis, or retrospective structure of past events, writers, ideas, and

trends: "History is the shaping of the past by those living in the present. All histories derive from a particular time, a particular place, and a particular cultural heritage."

There are benefits in an 'outsider' being involved of research of this kind. A number of the returnees' interviewed in this research spoke for the first time about their re-entry experiences; many of their responses were deeply personal and highly confidential. The 'objectivity' of the researcher and the fact that the participants were unlikely to encounter the researcher again (and therefore potentially re-live their re-entry experiences as through the interview) were conducive to returnees' openness. In respect of the nature and personal content of these responses, some responses are not cited directly in this thesis. However, the general tenor of their responses clearly shaped the arguments and comments herein. The participants information sheet and consent form can be seen in Appendices C and D respectively.

METHOD

A case study approach is an in-depth observation of social settings or more particularly certain features of social settings. The flexibility of this approach, through the in-depth interview, allowed a focus on the detail of the important aspects of the re-entry transitions and life-agendas of these returnees. It is a useful approach to explain the re-entry transitions and is flexible enough to encompass events that occur over a period of time over which the researcher has no control. It cannot be easily generalised and has no external validity, short of the validity within itself, where it is expected (and can of course be proven wrong) that certain experiences will be common across most graduates. Whichever methodology is used it must be both reliable and valid (Thomas et al, 1995). However, it is important to recognise that reliability and validity are not synonymous with objectivity (Petrie, 1995).

In an interview, each party is affected by the other; the presence of an outsider will affect the atmosphere in which the interviewee recalls the past and relates it. In addition, the memories of interviewees are filtered through subsequent experiences; they may be contaminated by the media, overlaid by nostalgia, or distorted by emotion. Moreover, an individual's perception of the world never corresponds to reality in its entirety (Tosh,

1991). Again, this indicates the importance of analysing individual's experiences alongside broader social contexts, perceptions, and politics.

This research is based on 36 interviews of returnees (all from universities in New Zealand) from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Hong Kong. The demographic detail of these interviewees can be seen in Appendix A. In the cases of Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, most of the returnees had returned to these countries within the last five to ten years. In Thailand, interviews were largely undertaken with students who studied in New Zealand under the Colombo Plan. While these particular interviews informed the research, they are not directly cited in this thesis.

All the interviews took place in students' countries of origin at a variety of locations, including returnees' homes and workplaces as well as public places such as parks and restaurants. The author undertook all the interviews; most interviews were tape-recorded (those that were not were notated) and then the author, along with two research assistants, transcribed the tapes in New Zealand. The tapes were transcribed verbatim and the returnees' responses cited in this thesis appear in this form. Retaining the pauses, and noting the laughs and other linguistic particularities (such as the 'ums' and 'ahs') is quite deliberate as these un-spoken aspects of the conversation illustrate, amongst other things, the ease or difficulty returnees had in answering questions, their nervousness in doing so, and the amount of thought they had to put into their answers. It was also felt that correcting the grammar or sentence structure of returnees' responses would also remove the uniqueness and personality of each response.

Comparative to other New Zealand research in this field (McGrath, 1998), thirty-six graduates is a relatively small sample size. However, it became very clear in the early stages of the fieldwork that the material being presented by the graduates in their responses to the interview questions was repeating itself after about the eighth interview. Increasing the sample size therefore would not have added any new information to the research, nor to the depth of the responses. Furthermore, given the qualitative approach to this research, this sample size was sufficient in providing the depth of ethnographic data required. Clearly, a quantitative approach would have used a much more different methodology but, as outlined below, this approach was deliberately not utilised for a variety of reasons; in

addition, there is no data on the total returned student population from New Zealand with which to compare or contextualise.

In this technique of qualitative research, the sample was drawn not according to a probability theory or random selection, but on the deliberate selection of “theoretically important units” (Davidson and Tolich, 1999:35). Generalisations, therefore, are based on typical cases. For qualitative research, such as this, the sampling techniques used are both practical and pragmatic: they aim for depth, rather than breadth, and this depth takes time and effort to obtain, with the research problem emergent, rather than fixed (Davidson and Tolich, 1999). As Davidson and Tolich (1999:117) argue: “The more you want to know about something in depth, the more attractive qualitative research becomes”. The depths of the returnees’ responses are demonstrated in this thesis and, as noted below, the qualitative nature of this research is distinctive amongst other research of this kind in New Zealand.

The interviewees were chosen through a snowball technique. While there is a risk in this approach toward collecting data that reflects particular perspectives and omits others, this was largely avoided through following several ‘snowballs’, both from within New Zealand and in Asia. Nevertheless, there is a slight bias amongst returnees toward Christians (hence, the coverage given to this area in Chapter Five) and toward women. Various ‘snowballs’ were pursued, including: through the author’s own contacts, through the various contacts of research participants, through contacts of other New Zealanders who had befriended international students, and through alumni associations.

Generally poor record-keeping and a lack of recent graduates amongst alumni associations meant that contacts provided through these groups were largely of Colombo Plan graduates, or graduates of that period (as was almost exclusively the case with the graduates from Thailand). Also, while every university (at the time of the fieldwork) was represented amongst the graduates in this research, the higher proportion of Victoria University graduates reflects not on the author’s personal contacts of fellow graduates of that university, but rather on the large number of contacts of various research participants.

As Connell and King (1999) note, individuals’ testimonies are an important and vital part of understanding migration, and drawing on migrants’ stories (in a variety of forms) is

becoming a key methodology in migration studies (e.g. King et al, 1995; King et al, 1998). Connell and King (1999:19) express it eloquently: “The simple power of the testimony of individual migrants is often stunning, capturing in a few words a whole world of meaning”, and “[t]he complexity of roots and routes, the meanings and metaphors of shifting identities and aspirations, are more evident in these creative forms than in most social surveys” (Connell and King, 1999:21). Thus, the interview was chosen as the most appropriate method for this exploratory research because it was likely to elicit responses that are more honest and it gives individual meaning to events rather than clinical evaluation inadequately quantified in a survey.

To follow McGrath’s misgivings (1998:4):

It was decided to start with interviews with a survey...[because I had] a personal disquiet related to the literature on graduate re-entry. This was related to two factors. The first was that there were only a few studies available. These were based on surveys, the findings of which centred around survey questions which in themselves appeared to assume answers or restrict the range of possible answers. The second related to the fact that survey questions drew from understanding graduate re-entry within the literature. The literature, however, revealed that most information relating to graduate re-entry comes from understanding re-entry and entry of migrants, business personnel, aid workers, and missionaries, all of whom encountered different experiences of sojourn from students.

In short, surveys assumed too much. As it was, in this research, the questions asked changed slightly after the initial interviews, after it became clear that returnees emphasised areas that the questions had not explored or that the preliminary research had not anticipated.

An in-depth interview allowed the interviewee to freely express attitudes, perceptions, and experiences, but not without structure to the interview. To that end, the interview focused around certain key themes but with room to explore additional issues (see Appendix B). Furthermore, a structured interview would limit the spontaneity and flow of natural conversation. Face-to-face interviewing is problematic in terms of controlling interviewer bias, particularly through body language (Crettenden, 1995). Yet interviewing is far more representative of the depth and breadth of people’s experiences than a simple numerical answer to a closed question (Farrall et al, 1997). Furthermore, in-depth interviewing gives indication of meanings and interpretations that individuals give to their lives and events

(Minichiello et al, 1990). The nature of this research necessarily involved sensitive qualitative understanding.

Lupton (1999) also supports interviews because interviews recognise both phenomenological experience and personal biography and acknowledge that an individual, with reference to their particular socio-cultural framework, interprets events. However, political and cultural attitudes are also likely to influence response rates, as are familial or religious authority in the governance of personal conduct (Egger et al, 1995). Certainly, in this research, where responses were politically sensitive, the tape-recorder was turned off and no notes were taken. These governing authorities also influenced the ethics of this type of cross-cultural research.

The particular countries of origin were chosen partly because of the nature of the snowball technique used, partly because of the diversity they offered (different nationalities and different size cohorts of international students in New Zealand overall), and partly because of the similarities between them (in that, in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore, most of the returnees were of Chinese ethnicity, as explored in Chapter Seven).

No students from Mainland China were invited to participate in this research, which, given the significant increase in Chinese international students in New Zealand since 1999 may appear to be an oversight or omission in this research. However, that is not the case. At the time when this research began (in 2000), Chinese students were not studying in New Zealand at the same levels as they are in 2002, nor was their significant growth anticipated at that time. Above all, however, there weren't significant numbers of mainland Chinese students re-entering their country of origin (at least in relation to the numbers of mainland Chinese students in New Zealand or in comparison to students of other nationalities, such as Malaysians, for example.).

The factors that affected returnees' re-entry processes were many and varied and it is too simplistic to narrow analysis down to any one particular variable and, for that matter, virtually impossible to isolate one variable from the many other variables with which it interacts and intersects. Therefore, while the particular social mores or political climate of their countries of origin at the time of their return may have influenced the returnees' perspectives and re-entry processes, to a greater or lesser degree so could have their

expectations about finding employment, their new-found religious beliefs, their reluctance or otherwise in returning to their countries of origin, the strength and depth of their social and friendship networks in New Zealand, and the relationship with their families upon their return. The strength of any one factor was unique to each individual.

Many of these factors are discussed in further detail in the following chapters; however, the families of returnees deserve particular mention here, for several reasons. Firstly, it is often (although not always) the families of these returnees that send them abroad to study and, importantly, pay for their tuition and living costs, in the first instance. This may even be the case for students on scholarships (which may only cover tuition fees and may offer a choice of countries in which to study of which New Zealand is only one). Secondly, and by implication, it is worth noting that these families are *able* to send their children abroad (with respect to financial abilities, familial responsibilities, and expectations of their contemporaries, peers and other families in similar social situations). This is not to say that all the families of these returnees were very well to do; for many of the returnees in this category, their families made significant sacrifices, yet significantly these were sacrifices that could be made. Thirdly, these familial sacrifices usually had certain reciprocal expectations attached, such as: an expectation that the student would return 'home'; that the student, upon returning, would financially support his or her siblings in a similar endeavour; that the student, upon returning, would work in the family business; or that the student would fulfil any number of other social and familial expectations, which are noted in more detail alongside returnees' own comments in Chapter Six.

It is also worth noting at this juncture the type of lives to which the graduate returned to in their countries of origin, particularly as their experiences upon their return did not meet their expectations. Most graduates did not return and immediately find well-paying employment, establish (or re-establish) robust friendships, join social clubs or alumni associations, or generally undertake endeavours which could be seen to be both positive and (if they had employment, outside their heavy work commitments) productive. They may have found employment in English-speaking multi-national corporations, but many did not; they may have settled quickly into a supportive social group, but many could not; they may have sought out other returnees to discuss their re-entry experiences, but most did not.

STRUCTURE AND APPROACH OF THESIS

This thesis falls broadly into three parts. The first part examines the political and philosophical background to export education in New Zealand; the second part examines the perceptions of and about international students in New Zealand; and the third examines returnees' experiences of re-entry.

The first part of this thesis concerns itself with the experiences of international students within New Zealand and while much of the data from Chapter Five onwards draws on the interview material with returnees, there is also an extensive use of 'official' documentation surrounding both international and tertiary education in New Zealand.

Chapter Two draws upon the ad hoc material related to the aims and history of the Colombo Plan. Outside academic theses (e.g. Cook, 1995), this material is usually embedded within literature concerning New Zealand's foreign affairs policies (McIntosh, 1977; McKinnon, 1988; McKinnon, 1993), although a very small number of documents written at the early stages of the Colombo Plan are held at the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington. Regrettably, there is no comprehensive history of the Colombo Plan from a New Zealand perspective from which to draw.

Chapter Three, which is concerned with Government policies from 1984 to 1999 draws on both official documents and heavily ideological and influential papers. Whilst the documents critiqued in this chapter are not exclusive, their influence in both policy formation and in subsequent academic discourse (e.g. Boston, 1988; Boston et al, 1988; Butterworth and Tarling, 1994) necessitates a close examination of them here. The *Government Management* reports from the Treasury (1987a, 1987b) are amongst the clearest indications of the ideologies that informed the policies of the Governments of the time. The Business Roundtable Report on Reforming Tertiary Education in New Zealand, published the following year, takes the ideas expressed by Treasury and applies them further. The Hawke Report, on the reform on the tertiary education sector, put many of these ideologies into realisation, while the 1989 Education Act and its amendments legislated them. The ideologies expressed in these reports and the policies they engendered were continued on by the National Government in the 1990s, during which time full-cost fees for foreign students were also introduced.

While at one level Chapter Three is a synthesis of tertiary reform in New Zealand in the latter half of the twentieth century, the critique of these policies and ideologies is in order to demonstrate, with necessary detail: the increasingly peripheral (if not absent) consideration of international students' needs or pastoral care (a notion, however, that features from 1999 onwards as noted in Chapter Four); the increasing financial importance of international students to both tertiary institutions and the country as a whole, where neo-liberal ideologically-driven policy saw the benefits of international students virtually solely within their revenue generating potential; and how these attitudes toward international students (as peripheral to policy and as a means to generating revenue) in turn effected social perceptions of international students, support given to international students by universities, and the experiences of the international students themselves. For the experiences of international students did not happen within a vacuum; these ideologically and political antecedents are central in understanding the development of New Zealand's export education industry.

Neo-liberalism was a driving and powerful ideology in the formation of public policy from the 1980s onwards and both Nikolas Rose, from a post-Foucauldian perspective, and Jane Kelsey, from a post-Marxist perspective, offer helpful frames of understanding of this ideology and its impact. Education from this period was ostensibly framed within neo-liberal ideology, where the *laissez-faire* notion of the market saw a deliberate (albeit partly reactive) shift toward the commodification of education in New Zealand. From the notion of a minimum State, there was a gradual withdrawal of funding of tertiary institutions, which in turn led to tertiary institutions seeking their funding elsewhere, including via overseas students. Moreover, in Government reports of the late 1990s on tertiary education (following the trend set the decade earlier) international students are largely absent. This is a clear indication of the lack of synergy between education policy and *export* education policy.

Chapter Four continues the arguments set out in Chapter Three in terms of the absence of international students' experiences and needs from the development of the tertiary education sector in general. It notes the apparent significant shift toward the regulation of quality with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* drafted in 2001. It critically analyses the Code, suggesting it has significant weaknesses in its intent and application, but also highlights its ideological underpinnings, particularly when placing

the Code alongside the introduction of the export education levy and attendant legislative changes to effect the industry as proposed in the Tertiary Reform Bill (2002). It also identifies why a regulated Code was not introduced earlier and what this demonstrates about its philosophical underpinnings and the agendas of its architects. The period that this chapter covers (1999-2002) also marks significant reforms in New Zealand's tertiary sector alongside a greater discursive recognition of the Export Education industry, demonstrated through two separate strategies on the tertiary and export education sectors and the reports of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission, from which these strategies and subsequent reforms took their lead.

The key arguments of this chapter are that whilst this period marked a significant foregrounding of quality within discourse and policy, this quality was based on philosophical precepts (some reflecting philosophies expressed almost a decade earlier) rather than practice *per se*. Further, despite an apparent proactive involvement by the State in the export education industry (and therefore a significant departure, it would appear, from policies prior to this period), this involvement is one where the State regulates and yet this is also a remanagement of risk: the Code and levy places both risk and responsibility onto the industry providers themselves. At one level, therefore, little has changed. Yet, at another level, the heavily promoted discourse of quality (as determined and measured by the State) places expectations not only upon the industry, but also upon prospective international students to New Zealand, that their experiences will be marked by the quality as outlined in the Code.

The experiences of the international students in this research are analysed in Chapter Five, largely through the theoretical approach provided by Bourdieu's (1991) notion of 'cultural capital'. To Bourdieu, 'cultural capital' is seen as a useful resource, a symbolic strategy of identification, and most significantly of all, something that once attained can be converted, into economic capital. In and of itself, an overseas degree is not a form of cultural capital; rather it is the use and environment in which it is used that determines its effective convertibility. In this, Bourdieu's sociology is helpful in identifying a socially constructed range of possibilities in which human agents act and with which they interact. Therefore, students' choice of New Zealand as a study destination can be seen as a means to an end, namely the eventual attainment of cultural capital.

Bourdieu is also useful here in framing the experiences of international students within New Zealand, in particular their experiences of exclusion. Bourdieu's notions of capital, habitus and field are mediating terms through which social structures determine the place, time, participants, codes and competencies of discourse (cf. Cicourel, 1993). This discourse may be of expectations of New Zealand against which the experiences of the international students are lived and may markedly differ, including experiences of racism and social exclusion.

Calhoun (1993) argues that belonging entails perception and in this chapter, this perception is examined through first noting the historical antecedents of perceptions about Asian peoples in New Zealand. This chapter considers Asian students within the larger Asian migrant population, as few others distinguish between migrants and students, particularly if they are not phenotypically distinct. It notes both the increase of Asian migrants to New Zealand from the 1990s and the significant increases of international students to New Zealand during this same period. In so doing, it gives an indication of the demographic environment in which the students of this research lived their experiences. Noting social perceptions of Asian migrants, as through other research, and perceptions of Asian students, as seen by the research participants, it also places these students' experiences within a particular social environment. The students' experiences of racism as well as two central experiences identified by the research participants, of university life (including social interaction with others) and university support, are then critically analysed.

Chapter Six onwards deals with particular issues surrounding returnees' re-entry. Chapter Six examines the particular transitions of the re-entry process, whilst Chapter Seven explores the complex notions of 'home' for returnees. Drawing on the re-entry experiences noted in these chapters, Chapter Eight suggests means of preparing for re-entry, particularly in terms of moving from a disrupted self-narrative to building a new biography, and the importance of social support. Chapter Nine concludes the thesis, drawing the themes together and notes the implications of this research.

Returnees' re-entry, whilst a process, is nevertheless marked by particular issues faced in this transition; Chapter Six analyses these particular issues through the notion of disenfranchised grief. After noting the cultural context of most re-entry research (largely from psychology), this chapter also notes that a common theme in this literature and, more

importantly, in the responses of the returnees in this research, is one of loss. It became clear early on in the fieldwork that the expressions returnees were giving to their experiences resonated with notions of grief. This notion complements notions of culture shock, also expressed in this chapter. Disenfranchised grief is essentially a grief that a person encounters when they incur a loss, which cannot be openly acknowledged as it is neither socially sanctioned nor supported. Therefore, this lack of acknowledgment may exacerbate this grieving process in a number of intense and significant ways; these ways were clearly identified by returnees. Losses are inherent in re-entry and disenfranchised grief provides a useful and helpful framework in which to analyse these losses and returnees' experiences of them.

While some losses are tangible (such as proximate friends and possessions), others are intangible. A change of worldview is such a loss, compounding issues faced during the significant transition of re-entry. Inevitably, the worldviews of returnees changed; of course, given the life stage of many of the returnees, they may have done anyway, yet their experience abroad may have accelerated those changes. Parts of these changes of worldview are inherent in culture shock and recognition that there are (sometimes significant) differences between host and 'home' countries. Other changes in worldview stem from that the expectations that returnees had upon and of their re-entry.

Sometimes these expectations were their own expectations (finding well-paying employment, for example); other times, these expectations were imposed on them by others (working in the family business, for example). Dashed expectations for returnees can be particularly difficult to handle, especially if returnees have based their self-esteem and ontological security on achieving certain expectations. According to the returnees' own accounts, their expectations largely centred on employment, familial relationships (complicated by filial piety obligations and, in some cases, religious conversion), and social support and friendships.

Giddens (1991) argues that a self-identity has to be continually re-ordered against a backdrop of shifting experiences. One of the most significant background shifts for returnees concerns their conceptions and definitions of 'home'. Alongside marked expressions of loss and grief, returnees also noted a profound sense of homelessness. 'Home', as a physical location, becomes foreign and returnees search out for a new place

to call home. Chapter Seven explores this search and does so through the very useful framework of transnationalism.

This thesis is concerned with 'home' in its broadest sense, particularly, in the sense of the politicisation of "belonging" (Bedford, 2002:8). Hammar (cited in Bedford, 2002:4) argues that:

[migration policy] is evaluated, debated and decided not just on facts, but as a symbolic representation of something great and important: conceptions of myths about country, nation, history and origin, people, citizenship and welfare.

While this thesis is not concerned with immigration policy *per se* (beyond that discussed in the early chapters) and is rather concerned with international students within tertiary education policy, the issues surrounding the powerful symbolism of these myths mentioned above profoundly shape and affect notions of home and belonging for these students, as both students and as returnees.

Transnationalism is a significant and contemporary paradigm to understand migration, global networks, and the experiences of people, like international students, who traverse countries. This paradigm of transnationalism, and transnational processes "present profound challenges and opportunities to states, corporations, cities, and territorially based actors of all kinds" (Rogers et al, 1999:iii). Furthermore,

The 'trans' of transnational processes marks precisely this long-distance crossing of boundaries, as distinct from international processes, which maintain both boundaries and the original social and political forms.... Transnational exchanges [involve] regular and repeated movements across national boundaries, in which individuals maintain continuous contact with events and other individuals in more than one place (Rogers et al, 1999:v).

International students do not necessarily engage in transnational processes, although they *may*. These *transnational* students/returnees in turn face particular issues and processes in their re-entry. Transnationalism, therefore, provides a valuable paradigm for several reasons: it recognises both the nation-state (and its attendant structures) and the individual actor; it acknowledges the importance of global networks, whether real or virtual, local or global; and it provokes new approaches to 'home', identity and belonging.

Giddens (1991) argues that major transitions may disrupt the self-narrative. The role of structures (ideological, economic, and political) in both disrupting this self-narrative (and,

in turn, ontological security) and in helping or hindering its recreation cannot be underestimated. 'Home' is not only a perception (or creation) of the individual agent; it is also a response by these agents to the ideologies and structures that provoke perceptions of belonging or exclusion. The re-entry transition is one such disruption of the self-narrative and Chapter Seven examines this disruption, in terms of its effect on returnees and their responses to it. While much of this is tied to notions of self-identity and ontological security, it goes broader to consider notions of 'place' and 'space'. Even if returnees are ambivalent about 'placing' 'home' (and they are), this does not deny the issue that places are still significant. Their experiences of 'place' in both New Zealand and their countries of origin affects returnees' 'transnationality' and their ties, definition of social space, and redefinitions of home.

For many returnees, home is related more to people than place, yet even if this is recognised it does not easily ameliorate feelings of homelessness. Returnees could be described as 'third culture kids', straddling cultures, expectations and places. It was expected that many returnees would find strong identity in their ethnicity, which for most of the returnees, was Chinese. However, whilst many returnees admired much of their Chinese ethnicity, there were also parts of it about which they were very ambivalent. This ambivalence was in part a response to their particular *nationalities*.

Singaporean-Chinese returnees identified certain aspects of being *Singaporean*, which gave them a sense of place, even if they did not agree with all its aspects. Malaysian-Chinese returnees, on the other hand, identified their ethnicity and nationality (i.e. Malaysian-Chinese) as a form of differentiation between the other (competing) ethnicities in Malaysia. Hong-Kong Chinese returnees were a special case: many of these returnees were permanent residents in New Zealand. They too identified particular unique values of Hong Kong Chinese, but again expressed ambivalence about wholeheartedly accepting them. Affinity and yet ambivalence toward their Chinese ethnicity was common amongst returnees.

With a place not satisfactorily found in ethnicity, some returnees sought a place beyond physical borders, within computer-mediated communities (CMCs). CMCs eased, in part, the re-entry processes for many returnees; for in this forum, they could engage with others going through similar experiences. Yet, as with the use of CMCs from the host country,

they could also have the negative consequences of returnees living in two 'realities', where they retreat from actually engaging with their physical environment. CMCs provide a shared narrative for those who can access them, they provide a forum for socially sanctioned grief, and in offering returnees a new place to belong, they suggest – along with other approaches – a way to prepare for re-entry.

The preparation for re-entry is the subject of Chapter Eight. Drawing on the themes and experiences noted in Chapters Six and Seven, this chapter looks at how narratives broken can be rebuilt, how home lost can be found and how identity challenged can be re-integrated. Beck (2001) argues that with the intersection of detraditionalisation, individualisation and globalisation, life is experimental – there are no historical precedents. This is true for the re-entry experiences of returnees: returnees' self-narrative is disrupted and their ontological security is challenged; in order to resolve this, a coherent narrative needs to be sought.

Part of achieving this coherent narrative is for returnees to seek it willingly. Re-entry can be particularly difficult for graduates who do not wish to return; for in not accepting the likely inevitability of their return, they do not prepare or recognise that their self-narrative will be disrupted. A self-reflexive realisation and preparation is necessary for returnees: a recognition that they themselves have changed is a significant step in establishing a coherent narrative. In a similar way, social support in returnees' countries of origin has an important part to play. Many returnees identified the distinct lack of social support, of any kind, upon their return to their countries of origin. This tended to perpetuate their disenfranchised grief, their lack of belonging, and their belief that their experiences were unique. However, in establishing a coherent narrative, the issue is not one of choice between various place-bound identities, but one of integrating the positive elements of different social settings and experiences, where 'home' is reconceptualised, and where the re-integration of self-identity takes place in a transnational community.

While a transnational community is important for re-entry and features very strongly in the second half of this thesis, different themes take significance for the first half of this thesis, concerned with the experiences of international students in New Zealand. Thus, while Chapters Two through Four considers the formulation and effects of policy, Chapter Two in particular considers it through a historical perspective. This perspective not only

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identifies the historical importance of international students as part of New Zealand's foreign affairs policies, but also identifies one of the most crucial shifts in policy, from aid to trade.

FROM AID TO TRADE:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'EXPORT' EDUCATION POLICY IN NEW ZEALAND

INTRODUCTION

In considering the experiences of international students in New Zealand today, it is useful to consider the experiences of the early international students that arrived in New Zealand, particularly those that came under the Colombo Plan. Not only does this provide a useful backdrop for comparison, but also, alongside charting the changing policy direction toward international students, it indicates how contemporary international students' experiences and re-entry are part of a bigger picture and broader processes.

This chapter is the first of three chapters devoted to critically analysing these broad processes from a broad policy perspective. Together, these chapters show the changing and, at times, ambivalent relationship between policies regarding international students and other policies regarding foreign affairs, trade and education. Recognising the changing nature of these policies provides a useful and necessary framework in understanding both the experiences of international students over this period and the political, economic and social expectations placed upon them. Chapter Three places the changing policies within the overall social and educational reforms that began with the 1984 Labour Government, whilst Chapter Four is devoted to the particular policies surrounding international and tertiary education of the Labour-led Governments from 1999 to 2002. This chapter, however, considers the very beginning of Asian students in New Zealand, with the Colombo Plan.

In 1984, the Chair of the Study Group Review on International Education, Professor Bruce Ross, wrote to the Minister of Education stating that: "I personally believe that the most important conclusion to emerge from the Study Group is that New Zealand has no policy

on the internationalisation of New Zealand education” (cited in Bennett, 1998:31). In the sense of a comprehensive and coherent policy framework specifically devoted to international education, Professor Ross was correct.

International students first came to New Zealand in 1951, under the auspices of the Colombo Plan of 1950. This plan, deliberately directed toward the poorer countries of Asia, while purposed to aid and development ends, extended beyond humanitarian principles. It played a strategic role in New Zealand’s foreign affairs policy. It was a companion to other Cold War alliances; it also shared their cause, namely, fighting communism. It was a response to instability in the Asia-Pacific region and the insidious threat that communism, like dominoes, would sweep its way through Southeast Asia to New Zealand. In addition, in accordance with New Zealand’s philosophies at the time (namely that ‘the pen is mightier than the sword’), it was a battle of ideas: educate them or be invaded by them.

By the end of the first year of the Plan, sixteen students were in New Zealand; eleven years later, in 1962, there were 450 students. However, with expansion came restriction. From 1969, universities progressively introduced quotas. The 1977 quota restricting the number of students from any one country to forty percent of the total intake appeared to be directed against Malaysians. No sooner were quotas introduced, then there was demand for their removal from both Singapore and Malaysia; the intimations toward charging full-cost fees were beginning to grow.

There were other underlying changes. In both Australia and New Zealand, there was concern from policy-makers, politicians, and educationalists, that international students were displacing sponsored and domestic students; concerns about the effectiveness and equity of educating Asia’s elite were also raised. Alongside this, New Zealand’s foreign policy direction was changing: its commitment to the Commonwealth was weakening, its alignment with the United States during the Vietnam War indicated a shift in its bilateral ties, and communism appeared less of a significant threat. In the face of these, education seemed a less effective weapon than once thought.

In the 1970s and 1980s, New Zealand's foreign policy had shifted to an emphasis on trade and New Zealand's economic policy was becoming increasingly more liberal, in turn engaging with the economically burgeoning countries of the Pacific Rim. In addition, there were increasing burdens on the educational infrastructure, and government reports recognised the financial costs of educating overseas students, questioned the necessity and efficacy of the aid and development model hitherto used and broached the issue of adding a surcharge or lowering the subsidy to international student fees. There was much more aid in the 1970s under the Labour Government, which went to the Pacific in particular. New Zealand's political and economic allegiances were also shifting at this time and its role in the Commonwealth was losing significance as it sought to both align itself more with the United States while also forging an independent identity.

At this time, a \$1500 fee was introduced, although regulation through strict educational entry requirements was still the favoured option. International student numbers continued to rise significantly and discussions about increasing their fees, as part of broader discussions of a user-pays market-driven economy, became more pronounced. However, even before full-cost fees, concerns were being raised about the impact of large numbers of international students on the quality of education, particularly in the absence of any practice code. The significant increase in private language schools in the late 1980s and the financial collapse of two of these schools in 1991, through corruption and mismanagement, only heightened these concerns.

In 2001, the aid component in international education was substantially, and formally, reduced. International education in New Zealand is now, in the twenty-first century, firmly within trade parameters, the few remaining vestiges of the Colombo Plan and all its motivations are no more: gone is the threat of Communism, gone, largely, is the notion of aid. Not only has the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade increasingly withdrawn from the international education industry over the past thirty or so years, the philosophical missions of education-as-aid and education-as-trade have changed. The former asks 'what are your needs and how can we help them?' while the latter asks 'what are our needs and how can we advance them?' (Ministerial Review Team, 2001). These goals are mutually exclusive and the recent trend is toward altruism to New Zealand's benefit rather than altruism primarily for the benefit of others.

However, in order to understand international education today, it is useful to understand its history: the international education policy of today has its antecedents in the various policy frameworks of years' past. In New Zealand's context, this means turning to the Colombo Plan.

THE COLOMBO PLAN

Students have studied abroad since time immemorial, and travelling scholars can be traced right back to 272-222 B.C. Over the proceeding thousand years, international centres of research arose in Egypt, Greece, Persia, China, and Japan. International education developed through the universities of the late Middle Ages in Western Europe, particularly in Paris, Rome, Bologna, and Seville, and flourished during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This took students to the elite universities, which was seen as crossing national, ethnic and language barriers. There was a continuing strong increase in international education with the democratisation of tertiary education in the nineteenth century, encouraged by the governments of France, Germany, England, and Russia, and it continued to expand during the nineteenth century, including increased participation by United States' institutions (Ward et al, 2001).

However, international education of Asian students in New Zealand began more recently, in 1951. Its starting point was the Colombo Plan agreement between Commonwealth Foreign Ministers that took place the year prior in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). It took as its templates the Marshall Plan of the United States and the Point Four plan of the United Kingdom, although its objectives were wider, and it was specifically directed toward the poorer countries of Asia. The first issue of the *Colombo Plan News* (1956)¹ writes of the Plan in these terms:

The Colombo Plan, apart from being a vast co-operative enterprise designed to bolster the economic and technological development of various countries of South and South-East Asia, holds a significant place in the history of human relationships. The visits of Asian trainees to member countries of the Plan and the despatch [sic] of experts to different Asian nations have stimulated cultural interchanges and closer understandings of other ways of life which have previously been clouded by distance and other difficulties such as language. New Zealand was a foundation member of the Colombo Plan and has been playing an increasingly active part in providing assistance under the Technical Co-operation Scheme. There are, as a result, a growing number of people from both outside

and within New Zealand who have been or are associated in some way with the Colombo Plan. Approximately 100 Asian trainees are at present taking courses within New Zealand while there are over 200 others who have received awards and since returned to their own countries.

Aside from the curiosity as to why the first issue of the *Colombo Plan News* was only first published six years after the Plan was signed, this article is interesting for other reasons as well. Its opening statement that '[t]he Colombo Plan...holds a significant place in the history of human relationships' is fairly ambitious, although its aims to overcome 'distance and other difficulties' are commendable. This article is important not because of the detail it provides in the last sentence, but because of the philosophy it espouses in the preceding sentences. The emphasis is on improving, bridging, and establishing important cultural (and, by implication, diplomatic) relations not, significantly, on making money or primarily building trade relations.

There were other educational plans that resulted from New Zealand's membership of the Commonwealth, such as the Special Commonwealth Africa Assistance Plan, established in 1960, and the Commonwealth Education Scheme, established in 1958 (Cook, 1995). However, the Colombo Plan was much more than the training of Asian students in New Zealand, and much more than humanitarian aid. There *was* a degree of colonial benevolence in the Plan, or at least in some people's interpretations of it; as one author writes:

A large part of the poverty and suffering in South and South-East Asia derives from the conservatism and superstition of the peasant, so his education and enlightenment must always be among the first objectives of any fundamental development programme. Rural Development, in fact, is one of the most important items in every development plan throughout the region (Bridsen, 1952:13).

While the benevolence of the Colombo Plan was more ideologically motivated than substance-driven, there were nevertheless important developmental projects that took place under its auspices, and the education given to students under the Plan was of benefit to them (cf. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001).

The Impetus behind the Colombo Plan

Colonial benevolence or otherwise, there was also an anti-communism impetus to the Colombo Plan, driven by domestic and international politics. In 1949, a National Government came to power, ending the term of the first Labour Government. Wood (1977) suggests that this new Government, while holding onto the tenor of its predecessor's foreign affairs policy, shifted the emphasis from one of worldwide collectivity *vis-à-vis* the United Nations, to one against the 'red peril' of Communism, spreading through Asia from its base in mainland China. This is true. However, the Labour Governments of the time had anti-communist aims in both their domestic and foreign policies (McKinnon, 1993). Articles from the *External Affairs Review*, the journal of the Ministry of External Affairs² seem to buttress this anti-communist stance. One article suggests that New Zealand had to "face the realities of their geographical position in the Pacific" and recognise "how closely their destinies were linked with those of their neighbours in South and South East Asia" (Department of External Affairs, 1962:1).

Many of these appraisals and comments on the Colombo Plan were written during the Cold War, at a time of discussions about regional security, fears about the 'red peril' (communism) as well as its 'yellow' counterpart (Asians themselves). Despite the active involvement of the USA, and its shoring up of allies for the Cold War, New Zealand's defence against Communism was still, albeit ostensibly, very much part of "Imperial Defence" (McIntyre, 1988a:134).

In 1947, New Zealand military chiefs believed that within the next ten years there could potentially be a war against a combination of 'Asiatic powers': Russia, China, and Japan. Various responses were mooted. However, the response New Zealand Prime Minister Fraser took to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting in 1948 was three-fold: the base of New Zealand's security was the United Nations, which Fraser was instrumental in establishing; the British Commonwealth of Nations, a nod to the past; and recognition of the increased predominance of the United States in the Pacific (McIntyre, 1988a).

The Colombo Plan, then, was one of a line of various 'defence' pacts, which went back to the Canberra Pact, and included the Manila Pact (1954), which, in turn, established SEATO, and ANZUS. It was also at the time of the crisis in Indochina and the

independence of Malaya. The ruling National Government at the time seemed assured that this independence (of Malaya) would not threaten Commonwealth security interests, particularly the Singapore base, but it was the Colombo Plan, not forms of military involvement, that remained central to its engagement with South-East Asia (McKinnon, 1993).

To a large extent, education was secondary, so was 'imperial defence'. To New Zealand there was a dual concern: the impact on regional security of Asia moving westward (*viz.* the Domino effect) and a desire on New Zealand's part to be one of the western grouping of nations, not an antipodean Pacific or Asian island; as Malcolm McKinnon (1993:39) argues:

Concern about the intentions of Asian powers, coupled with awareness of Britain's concentration on Europe, and of the transformation wrought by the aeroplane, intensified preoccupation with the country's defence to an unprecedented degree, and one rarely matched in any subsequent period.

The defence grouping ANZAM (Australia, New Zealand, and Malayan grouping) saw Communism – emanating from the People's Republic of China (formed in 1949) and spreading throughout South East Asia and possibly even to New Zealand – as its greatest threat (McIntyre, 1988b). The Member of Parliament Sid Holland expressed as much at the time: "if people will consult a map they will realize that the troubled area of the world – from Korea, to Japan, Formosa, Indo-China, Indonesia – is a succession of steps in the direction of New Zealand" (cited in McIntyre, 1988b: 145). Absurd as it might seem that the whole world was pointing toward New Zealand, this fear-driven parochialism was motivated by the Domino Plan, a significant current of the time. Furthermore, New Zealand wanted the United States on board; Sid Holland may be quoted again: "we must earn the active support of the United States by demonstrating to her that we are prepared to play a part in our defence" (cited in McIntyre, 1988b:145).

In this then, the barrier against Communism was going to be one of ideas, not simply military intervention. These ideas were a means to an end: to raise the standard of living in these countries; to preserve (or, in some cases, create) democratic institutions; and to impart Western values (McKinnon, 1977; cf. Oakman, 2000). South and South-East Asia were also valuable trade routes for both New Zealand and Australia and important enough

that they could not lose them to a wave of communism (Department of External Affairs, 1962; cf. Auletta, 2000). The Colombo Plan was not only altruistic, but was also a significant and strategic part of New Zealand's foreign policy (McIntosh, 1977; McKinnon, 1977).

The Colombo Plan then was not so much an attempt at misguided politics, rather a response to the global situation at the time. In part it worked: it was benevolent and it did educate, but it also was part of a broader defence policy; other aspects of New Zealand's defence policy led to Vietnam (McIntyre, 1988b). The Colombo Plan, on the other hand, motivated by the threat of Communism, fought with ideas, and when the time came to change tack, did so.

Details of the Colombo Plan

Assistance under the Colombo Plan took two principal forms: technical assistance and capital aid. The two were not mutually exclusive, as expert personnel were needed for capital aid projects, but it was the Technical Cooperation Scheme, established in 1950 as an integral part of the Colombo Plan, that was significantly instrumental in bringing international students to New Zealand.

The Technical Cooperation Scheme assisted in three ways: the supply of experts to assist in research, training and development; the provision of training in universities or similar institutions; and the provision of equipment for training or research purposes. Students came to New Zealand under the second of these three ways of assistance. To qualify for these training places they had to fulfil two criteria: that the training they requested would be beneficial to both the country concerned and the trainee; and that the trainee was properly qualified to benefit from the training (Department of External Affairs, 1962).

Of all the countries that initially signed to the Colombo Plan in 1950,³ New Zealand was the first to receive students: it received six students from Ceylon [Sri Lanka] in March 1951 to train as dental nurses (Department of External Affairs, 1962). Sixteen students arrived in New Zealand during the first year of the plan (Department of External Affairs, 1962). According to the first issue of *The Colombo Plan News*, there were 93 Colombo

Plan students as at 18 May 1956.⁴ The subjects they studied were primarily agricultural based subjects. Between the beginning of the Plan and 1962,⁵ New Zealand spent over £2,321,500 on technical assistance and 1,113 students from South and South-East Asia had received training in New Zealand; it was anticipated that at the end of 1962 there would have been 450 international students in New Zealand that year (Department of External Affairs, 1962).

Universities both facilitated and responded to this growth in international students from the Colombo Plan. A rise in international students was attributed to the new English Language Institute at Victoria University of Wellington, while other universities increased their training facilities. Massey College in Palmerston North (now Massey University) built a dairy technology unit and hostel in September 1960 at a cost of £190,000; agricultural based subjects had not yet been usurped by economics or computer studies. Canterbury University brought Warwick House to overcome accommodation shortages, and in 1961, the Government financed a new hostel building at Otago University for 56 Colombo Plan students at a cost of £90,000 (Department of External Affairs, 1962).

NEW PRESSURES: NEW RESPONSES

Yet, while universities accommodated the large increase of international students, they also put quotas on the numbers they would accept because of this increase. General quotas were introduced at Auckland University in 1969, at Canterbury University in 1970, and at Otago University in 1971 (Cook, 1995). In 1977, a quota was established that limited the number of students from any one country to no more than forty percent of the total intake of international students; as Malaysian students comprised 71% of the first year private students admitted in 1976, it was clear that this policy was directed toward Malaysians (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992).

Officially, quotas were designed to enable the extension of the range of countries from which New Zealand could admit international students. However, Cook (1995) supports this claim of discrimination against Malaysians and demonstrates that the Government files indicate what the University Students' Association at the time claimed: that the measures were aimed at Malaysian students. Prime Minister Muldoon justified the fee by claiming: that most Malaysian students came from wealthy backgrounds; that a high proportion of

Malaysian students remained in New Zealand after graduation; and that these students were a burden on the New Zealand taxpayer (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992). These claims are unsubstantiated. Nevertheless, this fee, in addition to imposed quotas, saw a drop in the number of Malaysian students in New Zealand in this period: 546 admissions of Malaysian students in 1976 dropped to 121 admissions in 1983 (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992).

Several issues strained bilateral relations between Malaysia and New Zealand. These issues included: the political activities by some Chinese Malaysian students while in New Zealand, such as public protesting; the apparent high “defection” rate of Malaysian students; and the dominance of Malaysian students in the international student population. There were also racial problems between Chinese and Malay students in New Zealand, concern that Malay students were getting bursaries ahead of Chinese, and the ongoing exclusion of Chinese from education in Malaysia. Furthermore, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, placed restrictions on students when they returned to Malaysia. Taken together, the presence of Malaysian students in New Zealand had drawn unwanted attention to Malaysia’s internal affairs, in particular the racial policies of its Government (Cook, 1995). In addition, the 1969 race riots in Malaysia, the subsequent Malaysian New Economic Policy and the National Language Policy were seen as discriminatory against Malaysian Chinese and that led to an increased influx of Malaysian Chinese tertiary students to New Zealand around this time (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992).

There was also pressure on New Zealand from Singapore and Malaysia for it to remove the quota system and to offer “open entry”, thereby allowing unrestricted access to sending-country sponsored students. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs saw significant advantages in this and in implementing a full cost fees policy. They saw the full cost fees policy as solving the problem of limited capacity: an open entry policy would be limited only by the availability of places and ability to pay full cost fees (Cook, 1995).

Changing Ideologies

Other changes can be identified that led to a shift in the policy and practice of international education in New Zealand and elsewhere. In Australia, from the 1970s, there was an increasing concern that the number of private international students was increasing and possibly displacing sponsored students (Auletta, 2000), or, in New Zealand’s case,

displacing domestic students (Cook, 1995). Furthermore, the political background was also shifting. While in the early 1960s the view was held that human capital was the key to development, particularly through the education of the elite, in later years there was an increased emphasis on technical education and universal primary education (Hayden, 1986).

In New Zealand, the “insularity and parochialism” that marked its colonial period was banished by the internationalist independence that marked foreign policy from the 1930s to the 1960s (McKinnon, 1993). However, the independence of New Zealand’s foreign policy was questioned when it sent troops to Vietnam, even if it retained one of its traditional foreign policy goals of keeping a friendly power on its own side of the Pacific (McKinnon, 1993). Here, the Labour Party found itself in conflict: its goals of anti-militarism and anti-Communism being mutually exclusive on this occasion (McKinnon, 1993). There was a mood of change: a change of focus in foreign policy and the role of education within that policy. Not longer did education fit comfortably within anti-communist aims, sit alongside other defence alliances, themselves imminently threatened, or find its home within conceptions of ‘imperial defence’ or related to broader Commonwealth objectives.

In addition, attempts to justify the Colombo Plan on humanitarian grounds were criticised by government officials, and the Capital Assistance Scheme did not appear to be delivering quantifiable change (Oakman, 2000). The Ministry also questioned whether private overseas student policy met current aid objectives; furthermore, they had little input in any case into policy development in this area and nor was there any monitoring of the education of private overseas students to guarantee whether the courses private overseas students were taking were of benefit to their home countries (Cook, 1995).

The anonymous writer of an article in the *External Affairs Review* (Department of External Affairs, 1962:21-22) wrote:

I have tried to show that Asia is on the move, that new relationships are being created, that fresh opportunities for useful action on New Zealand’s part are opening up. If we are to make the most of these opportunities we need a foreign policy which is not static. It must be flexible and subtle enough to be able to respond to changing circumstances quickly and effectively.

It was changing circumstances that saw a fundamental shift in New Zealand’s approach to international education, in Asia and New Zealand alike. What Auletta (2000:57) has

written in reference to Australia could also be applied to New Zealand: “By establishing and normalizing the flow of foreign students into Australian educational institutions, over 30 years and more, the Colombo Plan established preconditions for its opposite – the focus on trade rather than aid, in which Australia transformed itself from sponsor to seller.”

Changing Foci

New Zealand’s foreign policy had shifted: it too was undergoing transformation. In the 1970s and early 1980s, it was recognised that New Zealand had a ‘foreign policy of trade’, a contrast from its earlier foreign policy alliances (McKinnon, 1993). In time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Overseas Trade were amalgamated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, cementing this shift. The astonishing economic growth of countries on the Western rim of the Pacific fuelled discussions about ‘new economic relations’ with these countries and discussion of these ‘economic relations’ was one of the standard ways of expressing a commitment to the liberalisation of the New Zealand economy and a greater openness to foreign investment and migration (McKinnon, 1993). As Mike Moore, the then Minister for Overseas Trade, expressed it: “We have gone... from seeing Asia as a source of threat to seeing Asia as a source of opportunity for New Zealand” (cited in McKinnon, 1993:277). Gone was the communist threat and gone (for all intents and purposes) was education-as-aid; the liberalisation of New Zealand’s economy, and an increased openness to foreign migration saw trade become a significant factor in foreign affairs; the role of international education in that framework was also influenced by the recognition of the costs of educating overseas students.

During the 1970s in New Zealand, pressure on educational resources was part of broader economic concerns. As part of its recommendations to reduce public expenditure, the Government in 1970/71 recommended that a \$100 surcharge be placed on international students. The fee was not introduced, but the recommendation was indicative of an awareness of the costs of educating private overseas students. In a 1973 review, the Treasury estimated that the net cost of educating private overseas students in universities was \$3.3 million (Cook, 1995). These intimations toward surcharges and the recognition of costs were indicative of a shift, brought about by the decreasing threat of the ‘red peril’, by ideological change, and by economic imperatives.

Cook (1995) argues that the significant increases in private full-fee paying students in the late 1960s had shaken policy-makers from their complacency. This significant growth in private full-fee paying students was alarming for policy-makers for several reasons: it challenged the aid and development model hitherto used; it highlighted the wealth of ASEAN countries such as Singapore and Malaysia; and it therefore also questioned the necessity of the aid and development approach. There was also a fear that the sheer numbers of international students would get out of control in terms of manageability within the industry in general and of these students in particular (Cook, 1995).

It was the threat of ever-increasing numbers that prompted a \$1500 concessionary fee for overseas students. There were numerous other suggestions, proffered between 1966 and 1973, of ways by which to restrict numbers. These suggestions included: lowering the age limit of private overseas students entering secondary schools, revising the *ad eundem* admission standard, charging fees for private overseas students (above the \$1500 concessionary fee), closing down some faculties to private overseas students, and enforcing stricter controls on the extension of permits for students who had failed courses. In the end, the Government favoured regulation through strict educational requirements (Cook, 1995, citing Department of External Affairs memo, 1969).

The \$1500 fee was recognition by the Government of the costs of educating private overseas students and that, in the perception of the Government of the day, the benefits no longer outweighed those costs. It was a measure of short-term internal financial administration: it was estimated that the \$1,500 fee would save the Government \$330,000 in 1979/80, which would increase to \$1,320,000 in 1982/83 as students were admitted under the new fee policy. There were four groups exempt from the fee. The first exemption was for students from the South Pacific region. Pacific students studied in New Zealand long before Asian students arrived here: the low educational standards in the South Pacific meant that, since the 1930s, a proportion of the region's secondary school students were educated in New Zealand. Furthermore, the education-as-aid motivations toward South Pacific countries continued long after this aim had dissipated from New Zealand's dealings with Asia (Cook, 1995). The other three groups exempted were students on special study programmes, students who were already studying at a tertiary institution, and private overseas students who were attending secondary schools, but would later attend a tertiary institution in New Zealand (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992).

At this stage, the fee was not seen as a revenue-generating exercise, as much as necessary accountancy: the books needed to be balanced (Cook, 1995). A Caucus Committee of the Third Labour Government balked at a suggestion by the Interdepartmental Committee into Overseas Students that education should be sold to students from the South Pacific and ASEAN countries (Cook, 1995). However, there *were* significant economic reasons to introduce fees. Neville Bennett (1998) argues that pre-full-cost-fees for international students, the subsidies of New Zealand tax-payers money went to students who came from affluent families and who – more significantly – were unlikely to become New Zealand tax-payers in the future. In 1989, international students paid the same fees as domestic students of \$1,000. The subsidy for international students was calculated at \$23 million. Therefore, Bennett (1998:21) argues, while Monash University was charging fees on a scale between A\$7,000 and A\$14,000 and Sydney University charged A\$8,000 for English as a second language or A\$9,250 for an MBA, New Zealand was “handing out virtually free university education” to its sixteen hundred undergraduate international students in 1986.

With questions being asked and objectives being renegotiated, meetings of the Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee on 27 March 1985 and 16 May 1985, drew up the following guidelines to enable officials to establish a framework for overseas student entry.

- i. Suitably qualified New Zealand students should not be deprived of the opportunity for tertiary study;
- ii. The number of overseas students (except graduate students and those meeting the full costs of their education) to be admitted to tertiary institutions and secondary schools should be controlled by quotas;
- iii. Overseas students should be admitted in these categories in the following order of priority:
 - a. Students funded under approved bilateral assistance programmes and under other approved international programmes;
 - b. Students from South Pacific and ASEAN countries, including those sponsored by their home government and private students, assisted by the New Zealand Government to the same extent as New Zealand students (except for Tertiary Assistance Grant);
 - c. Tertiary students from all countries who would meet the cost of their education;
 - d. There should be provision in 7th forms for overseas students who wish to proceed to further study in a New Zealand tertiary institution (Cook, 1995:39; citing

Of these points, the first appears to have come to fruition; or at least, demonstrating that New Zealand students have been deprived of attending university because of international students is difficult to prove. The fact that there are now no quotas on the admission of international students to universities (although particular courses may have general quotas for all students) makes displacement of domestic students unlikely. Finally, while some international students do attend universities under aid programmes, that number, as evidenced by the recent changes to the ODA scholarships, is decreasing (Ministerial Review Team, 2001), while private full fee paying students are increasing, both nationally and internationally (cf. Ministry of Education, 2002c).

The recent significant increases in private fee paying students are part of an overall increase in international students worldwide. The total enrolment of foreign students in the US, France, Germany, UK, Canada, and Australia was fourteen times greater in 1990 than it was in 1950. In 1990, there were almost 800,000 international students in these countries (Back et al, 1998). The same is true of New Zealand: the sixteen students in New Zealand under the Colombo Plan at the end of 1951 had grown to 52,700 foreign-fee paying students by July 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2002c).

Internationally, in 1995-6, the key market providers of the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, and New Zealand had over 100,000 European international students and over 360,000 Asian international students (Bennett, 1998). By the mid-1990s, there were one-and-a-half million international students worldwide and it is predicted that by 2025 there will be five million international students worldwide (Back et al, 1998). In the mid-1990s, 46% of these international students were from Asian countries with 63% of these students travelling to an English language destination (Back et al, 1998). This growth can be attributed to the demand for an international education as much as to the recognition of universities of this demand and subsequent marketing to this growing market.

In 1999, the United States had half a million international students. In Australia, the average number of international students per university is the highest average in the world: 1,800 (EduWorld, 2001). Australian figures predict that by 2010, 53% of international students to Australia will be from Asia (Back et al, 1998). In New Zealand, there was an increase in international students by two-and-a-half thousand between 1959 and 1991. There was a further two-fold increase in students by 1997 (cf. Back et al, 1998; McGrath, 1998), and between 1999 and 2001 there was an 86% growth in numbers of international students in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2002c) In 2001, there were 52,700 international students in New Zealand; the majority of whom came from Asia (Ministry of Education, 2002c). .

With increasing numbers as significant as these, the former notions of international education were being challenged. The reality of education-as-trade was increasingly incompatible with the notion of education-as-aid, as Neville Bennett (1998:23-4) argues:

[T]he governing ethos of education was of planning, regulation and quotas, all married to the idea that it was a free good, or at least a heavily subsidised one for local and foreign students. The concept of restricted entry to popular courses obviously rested on some bottlenecks in capacity; but there was a feeling that the planners knew best.... The providers wanted to dominate and guide consumers: an occupational hazard for educators. Within this structure, overseas students were welcomed as applicants for aid – provided that they came from the right countries.... The ‘aid’ attitude was underpinned by a widespread sentiment that education should not be commercialised. Selling services was commonly perceived as the thin edge of the wedge to creeping commercialism.

The perception of the ‘thin edge of the wedge’ was astute, but neither quotas nor any other forms of restriction could prevent the shift toward commercialisation. As argued more fully in the next chapter, the emerging political philosophy was neo-liberalism: a user-pays market-driven philosophy, which affected education as it did every other area of New Zealand life at that time. In 1991, with the Education Amendment Act, domestic tertiary students were still subsidised (albeit not as heavily as before); international tertiary students were not.

These changes were incremental rather than substantive. It was a reactive rather than a proactive approach: the numbers of international students grew and the political philosophies changed and the changes in the international education industry responded to

this growth and change rather than planned ahead for them. Rather than stepping forward with long-term objectives, the Government was caught on the back-foot responding to (initially) short-term crises.

The introduction of full-cost fees dates from 1987. In 1987, the Market Development Board commissioned Sir Frank Holmes to examine the potential and concept of foreign exchange earning from exporting education services. The report, launched in November 1987, concluded that there was substantial scope for exporting education (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992). Holmes identified a trend that was less a deliberate plan and more a product of philosophies and events of the time. Nevertheless, this report was the road to the introduction of full-cost fees. The direction of New Zealand's policy toward international education had been changing for some time, but this report served as a signpost of things to come.

UNDER PRESSURE: THE NEW PERILS

As the 'red peril' served as an engine for early policy on international education, so new perils were suggested as brakes for later policy. This call to put the brakes on came from non-governmental lobby and pressure groups. Historically, non-governmental involvement has taken the form of concern over the welfare of international students and their access to New Zealand educational institutions; these concerns continue to the present day. While for some, opposition to policies was altruistic, for others it was also ideological, particularly when full-cost fees were introduced (Cook, 1995).

One such pressure group was the New Zealand University Students' Association. It identified controversies in Britain and Australia over the use of recruitment techniques of international students and suggested that a code of practice be introduced, to protect the quality of education received by both domestic and overseas students. It suggested that international students should not be recruited unless they were guaranteed admission to a quality education programme, that the information provided to prospective students should be accurate and realistic, and that preparatory courses should be provided (Cook, 1995).

The Association of Commonwealth University Staff also expressed concerns about the deterioration in quality, as well as the establishment of what they referred to as 'national

ghetto institutions', namely private education providers catering solely for international students. They claimed that these institutions would offer negligible benefits to the students, minimal benefits to the host country, and provoke hostile reactions from communities (Cook, 1995). Their concerns were valid.

Between 1986 and 1989, the number of private language schools grew more than four-fold, from 10 to 44; according to Beng Ghee Ang (1992), there was a belief from some quarters that a quarter of these schools could be financially shaky. Schools heavily reliant on the Chinese market suffered when visas were suspended from Beijing after the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 (Beng Ghee Ang, 1992). The consequences of ignoring advice from interest groups were clear in 1991, when they failed to prevent the chaos generated by the collapse of two English language schools (Cook, 1995; cf. Beng Ghee Ang, 1992).

In 1991, the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee commented on the dearth of support systems for international students and predicted a reduction in student numbers and an emergence in social and cultural problems (Cook, 1995). With the exception of a slight blip after the introduction of full-cost fees in 1991 and the Asian economic crisis of 1997, their first prediction has proven to be incorrect: international student numbers have actually increased. However, their predictions about social and cultural problems have proven to be true. In addition, the increase in non-English speaking language students, many of whom attend private training establishments, has further exacerbated social and cultural tensions. One must be careful though of attributing social and cultural problems solely to a lack of support. Other factors may include an increased visibility through an increasing number of students and a historical discrimination against Asian migrants in New Zealand, which are dealt with more fully later.

THE END OF THE COLOMBO PLAN

The original intention of its planners was that the Colombo Plan would last for five years, but that deadline was extended on several occasions (Department of External Affairs, 1962). Oakman (2000) suggests that the primary objectives of the Colombo Plan had been achieved by the mid-1950s, yet its other objectives, namely halting communism, modifying resentment between Australian and Asian living standards (in Australia's case), and strengthening amicable political relationships, were still cognisant.

In New Zealand, the Colombo Plan was integrated into official bilateral aid programmes in the 1970s, whereupon it developed into the Official Development Assistance Fund [ODA], administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.⁶ During the 1970s and 1980s, aid was a significant platform for foreign policy, but a platform driven by political, not developmental, reasons (Ministerial Review Team, 2001). However, that too has recently been substantially retrenched, the reasons for which are:

Foreign Affairs and ODA have distinctly different missions. ODA asks partner governments: what are your needs and how can we help them? Foreign Affairs asks: what are our needs and how can we advance them? These two missions are not only fundamentally different, they can sometimes be in conflict. The mixed missions muddy transparency of outcomes resulting in an organisation that cannot find out what really works for the achievement of any one goal.... Development assistance needs to operate within a learning environment, one that is comfortable with risk-taking, rewards effective innovation, learns from failure, encourages debate, is participatory in nature and works through active and equal partnership. MFAT does not provide that organisational culture. Poverty reduction is not core business of MFAT and given the differences in missions it could never be made so (Ministerial Review Team, 2001:6).

To this end, Wendy Cook (1995:214) comments that:

It could be unfortunate if, due to redirection of the aid programme, a situation resulted in New Zealand whereby the make-up of the overseas student population consisted predominately of full cost fee paying students, while poor students from developing countries are educated elsewhere.

The Colombo Plan was never primarily about development assistance. Nor is modern-day international education about poverty reduction. It is clear from the NZODA Report that the questions that drive New Zealand's ODA policy and the questions that drive New Zealand's international education policy are different: one is 'aid to New Zealand's benefit', the other is 'trade to New Zealand's benefit'.

CONCLUSION

While students have studied abroad for many decades, they have only studied in New Zealand in any significant number for the last fifty years. The first Asian international students arrived here under the Colombo Plan, an agreement that was less to do with educating Asia's poor and more to do with preventing the spread of Communism. The vast

majority of those students returned to their countries of origin where they sought to help 'develop' their country and prevent it from communism; at least that was the intention. They were to be modern 'Marco Polo's', bringing the West back to the Rest (cf. Trinh Khanh Tuoc, 1968). New Zealand was the first to receive students and the numbers of students grew significantly. Universities responded by building more buildings, delivering more courses, and introducing quotas.

However, having introduced quotas, New Zealand found itself under pressure to remove quotas: the first suggestions of this provided the genesis of introducing full cost fees for international students. This pressure, from Singapore and Malaysia in particular, came at a time of changing ideologies toward international education. Furthermore, concerns were raised about international students displacing other students and there were also new ideas in aid and development. New Zealand's role in the world was also changing and no longer did the motivations for international education fit easily into anti-communist rhetoric or broader Commonwealth aims. Attempts to justify the Colombo Plan on its humanitarianism were criticised, as was its utility and efficacy; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also increasingly played a more hands-off role.

Economies were changing: Asia's were growing and New Zealand's was becoming increasingly liberal. New Zealand's foreign policy emphasised more trade and less aid and, alongside recognition of the costs of educating overseas students, international education was increasingly discussed within a trade framework. Changing political ideology and economic necessity saw a concession fee levied for international students of \$1500, although strict educational requirements remained as the favoured form of regulation.

An increasing number of private fee-paying international students highlighted the emerging shift of education-as-aid to education-as-trade; international education, like education in general in New Zealand, was placed firmly within a neo-liberal paradigm of user-pays. The introduction of full-cost fees for international students was only a matter of time. Reports, such as one commissioned in 1987, foresaw the economic potential of international students in New Zealand, but this shift from aid to trade was incremental: it responded to the changing circumstances rather than proactively planned for them. Also responding to the changing scene, were non-governmental lobby and pressure groups, who traditionally have concerned themselves with issues to the welfare of international

students, and who highlighted potential problems with the significant increases of students and the entry of the private sector into the 'export' education industry.

Overall, with the shift from aid to trade, the *nature* of international education in New Zealand changed. Different motives and philosophies saw different responses. However, these changes were not isolated, they also paralleled global changes. Furthermore, the reforms in education in New Zealand were part of much greater reforms in the public sector in general and education policy in particular.

ENDNOTES

¹ Interestingly the only available issue in Wellington's Alexander Turnbull Library

² Now the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

³ The original members of the Consultative Committee were the United Kingdom (including its dependencies in South and South-East Asia), Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Ceylon [Sri Lanka], and India. By its third year, according to Bridson, 1952:9, "all the countries in the area" with the exception of Thailand, Afghanistan, and the Philippines were full members and the US had joined the Consultative Committee.

⁴ from Burma (7), Ceylon (15), the Federation of Malaya (24), India (15), Nepal (2), North Borneo (6), Pakistan (17), Philippines (1), Sarawak (3), and Thailand (4).

⁵ This date cannot be certain, as there was no date given for that specific article, which was in a collection of articles that had featured in a 1962 collection of External Affairs Review articles.

⁶ In 1999, the NZODA scheme, run by MFAT, supported 1,934 students in New Zealand, bilateral support programmes supported 605, the postgraduate scholarship scheme supported 229, the Aotearoa Scholarships Scheme, to Pacific Island countries, supported 718 students and the Commonwealth Scholarships Scheme supported 35 students. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (1999), *NZODA funds 2,000 overseas students* www.mfat.govt.nz/nzoda

WHITHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

UNIVERSITY REFORMS FROM 1984 TO 1999

INTRODUCTION

The environments in which the experiences of international students took place are both historical (as with the Colombo Plan) and political. While the Colombo Plan was, for the most part, within the territory of foreign affairs, subsequent policies concerning international education shifted toward other policy areas. This shift was not necessarily pragmatic; rather, it was philosophical (changing notions of supporting developing nations), global (the decreasing threat of Communism), and, particularly in New Zealand's case, ideological. Whereas once the education of international students sat comfortably within aid parameters, this was becoming no longer the case. Paralleling these shifts, were significant social and educational policy changes in New Zealand, which were themselves part of broader philosophical, economic, and political shifts and can be analysed and critiqued (cf. Boston, 1988; Boston, 1999; Boston et al, 1991; Boston and Dalziel, 1992a; Stephens and Boston, 1994). These shifts, in turn, affected New Zealand's approach to international students, from being recipients of revenue to being providers of revenue. There was not so much a deliberate calculated shift, but, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, changes were incremental and largely reactive to changing circumstances in foreign and trade policies.

The detail and depth of analysis given to changes in education policy in the period covered by this chapter is necessary for several reasons. Firstly, these changes show the educational environment into which international students were been recruited. Secondly, these changes show the pervasiveness of neo-liberal ideology in government policy of this period. Thirdly, and finally, these changes show the *absence* of international students (as a group of people, rather than a commodity) in the formation of this education policy. Whereas international students had a role under New Zealand's foreign policy from the 1950s into the 1970s, this had changed substantively by the 1980s. International students

had a far greater presence when New Zealand's foreign policy was aid-directed; their position in both recent foreign policy and education policy (domestic and international) is far more problematic and their direct presence and influence is less noticeable.

This chapter analyses these reforms through Government policy documents from 1984 to 1999 and to the election of New Zealand's fifth Labour Government. Education played a significant role in both the policy and philosophical agendas of the fourth Labour Government (1984-1990). Expressions of these philosophies, critically analysed herein, included the Treasury's *Government Management Report*, the Business Roundtable's *Reforming Tertiary Education in New Zealand*, and the Hawke Report. There was also significant legislation during this period, including the 1989 Education Act. Education policy held a relatively less significant platform in the National-led Governments (1990-1999), but this period saw an extension of the neo-liberal policies enacted during the 1980s. In the education field, these included lower subsidies and higher fees across the board, as well as a substantive legislative shift toward export education as trade.

New Zealand's shift toward the marketing and commodification of education was not unique. Similar changes took place in both Britain and Australia (Butterworth and Tarling, 1994; cf. Coady, 2000; Karmel, 2000). Of Australian reforms, one author commented that "the [Australian] government pressed its view that education was a commodity that should be marketed, a view which led to the selling of education like soap powder to those who could be persuaded to pay for it" (cited in Butterworth and Tarling, 1994:244). Similar growth trends also occurred elsewhere. For example, the 'Group of Eight' leading industrial nations has adopted a goal of doubling student and teacher exchanges in the next ten years (Ministry of Education, 2001a).

During the reign of the New Right in the 1980s and 1990s, the *raison d'être* of universities was threatened, or at least amended (Peters, 1997b). Under neo-liberal politics, education, in its economic rationale and as an 'arm' of the state was, like most other public sectors, reconceptualised. According to the neo-liberal agenda: the state was too large; it was undertaking projects that could better be done by the private sector; and the citizen, as an individual actor, was 'rational'. This 'rational actor' "possess[ed] the information to enable them to make the best judgments on risks and potentials in order to guide their conduct; they must be freed to choose according to the natural laws of the free market on the one

hand and human nature on the other” (Rose, 1999:139). In this agenda, “all aspects of social behaviour [were] conceptualised along economic lines – as calculative actions undertaken through the universal faculty of choice” (Rose, 1999:141).

Theoretical agendas drove the process, but they all returned to the notion of a rational actor and a minimum State (Boston et al, 1991). There are two consequences of this agenda relevant here. The ‘rolling back [of] the State’ (Kelsey, 1993) saw declining levels of State funding from universities under programmes of both the Labour and National Governments of this period. Universities needed to compensate this withdrawal of funding through other means. Here is the second relevant aspect. The 1989 Education Act and its subsequent amendments opened the way for selling New Zealand’s education abroad. Not only was the ideological environment ripe for such a change, the economic environment almost required it. Neo-liberalism drove the process, whichever party was in Government, a process that began radically, and with disarming speed with the election of the Fourth Labour Government in 1984.

TERTIARY EDUCATION UNDER LABOUR (1984-1990)

Holland and Boston (1990:1) argue that the Fourth Labour Government was responsible for a period of ‘perestroika’, of radical reform. The significant reforms of this Government “were responsible for the destabilization that characterized Government policy and administration from early 1988 until 1990” (Holland and Boston, 1990:1). The politics of the Fourth Labour Government were ‘radical politics’, which extended into every facet of New Zealand life and every avenue of policy. While its biggest changes were in administrative reform, economic policy, foreign affairs, and party and electoral behaviour (Boston and Holland, 1987; Holland and Boston, 1990), changes also extended into the education sector.

Education was a significant platform for the Fourth Labour Government, to the extent that the Prime Minister David Lange held both the Prime Minister-ship and the Education portfolio. Labour also reformed both the primary and secondary school sectors, in the form of its 1988 charter ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’ (cf. Grace, 1990). It adopted new – or, at least, reformed – notions of education, seeing it as a commodity, with key regulative principles

of choice in a free-market, parent-power, accountability, and efficient management (Grace, 1990).

Effectively, in this period, higher education in New Zealand was transformed from a social entitlement, albeit one conditional on ability and performance, into a private investment in 'human capital'. The changes were significant, but not wholesale. However, they were ideological and international and those two impetuses alone served as masters, rather than servants, in policy in later years. As Butterworth and Tarling (1994:63) argue:

In Britain, the United States, Australia and New Zealand the idea of education was enthusiastically reconstructed. The idea of education as a social good, which included education as social engineering, as the transmission belt of values and as potent engine of the consensus-seeking state, had prevailed through a century and more of public provision. This idea was now retired. The state would continue and even increase its expenditure on education, but as a matter of economic advantage. The focus shifted from the social good of the citizen as participant in the common weal and fixed on the individualised consumer of an investment good.

These changes were driven by neo-liberal ideology and attendant advice from Treasury and within the Cabinet itself. For example, advice given to the Government, by Treasury, suggested: that education was a commodity in the market place; that the important relationship between the education service and its participants was that of provider and customer/consumer; that the State was not the best mechanism for the provision of education services; and that such services would be better delivered through a free-market system (Grace, 1990). This market-principle philosophy was particularly applied to tertiary education and was most adeptly expressed in the Treasury's two-volume briefing to the incoming Labour Government, the second of which was entirely devoted to education.

Treasury's *Government Management Report*

Treasury's (1987b) report to the incoming Government on Education, *Government Management Volume II* sets out the ideological framework for the entire education system. Subsequent to this report, domestic university fees were substantially increased (although still subsidised), student loans were introduced, international student fees were increased (and eventually were no longer subsidised), various regulatory bodies were established

under the subsequent 1989 Education Act (such as Boards of Trustees and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority [NZQA]), and there was the growth of the private sector in all sectors.

In this Treasury (1987b) report, education was ostensibly framed within economic parameters and rhetoric. It set out three questions in its opening chapter, of: choice, funding (equity), and efficiency (expressed in this report as 'inputs' and 'outputs'). Implicit in these questions and related arguments are issues of privatisation, an increasing withdrawal of State funding, and measuring rates of return of investment in education, particularly in terms of improving "levels of performance" (Treasury, 1987b:17-18). The arguments made throughout the rest of this document tend to do so by way of bolstering these issues. Education is argued in terms of 'costs' and 'benefits' to the particular individual and to society. This following quote is indicative of its arguments:

Where the individual or their agent contracts directly with the provider of education, the balance of perceived costs and benefits of education to individuals and their agents will determine the demand for education. An individual or their agent will normally pursue education for that individual to the point where the costs to the individual/agent of an additional element of education outweigh the benefits. In such market conditions, the nature and extent of this demand for education will call forth the appropriate supply. To the extent that the costs and benefits of education accrue to the same individual, that person may be best left to determine the course of action for themselves, that is, choose the nature and extent of education he or she is to undertake. Between the customer and the provider an implicit or explicit contract exists. This bundles together for each party: *who chooses*, *who pays* (not necessarily, or entirely, in monetary terms), *who benefits* (ditto), and *who is accountable* for delivery of the services concerned (Treasury, 1987b:31, emphasis in original).

The notion of education expressed here is one of purchaser/provider, cost/benefit, and supply/demand. Here, education is unquestionably represented through the ideology of market forces. The report continues in this vein; case in point: "[E]ducational services are like other goods traded in the market place. If the purchaser does not treat them as such and seek a fair rate of return they are liable to loose [sic] out to the providers of the inputs concerned" (Treasury, 1987b:33). In this market place, less government is best government. Several arguments are made against government intervention in education and are summarised as follows:

[G]overnment intervention is liable to reduce freedom of choice and thereby curtail the sphere of responsibility of its citizens and weaken the self-steering ability inherent in society to reach optimal solutions through the mass of individual actions pursuing free choice without any formal consensus (Treasury, 1987b:41).

Here, the individual actor is rational, the market is “self-steering”, and the outcomes are “optimal solutions” (Treasury 1987b:41). There is also, according to this argument, increased risk for the tax-payer through state funding of, in this case, tertiary education; as the report continues: “[t]o the extent state funding acts to reduce the level of risk for individuals and employers, they may act to increase the riskiness of their actions, for example students may not study as diligently, increasing the risk of failing a course, since the taxpayer bears the cost of failing” (Treasury, 1987b:175). In other words, with the state paying for an individual’s state tertiary education, there is no incentive for that individual to study or work hard. Here also was the rationale for the significant increases in domestic student fees: domestic students can be expected in aggregate to remain in the country and therefore are a public investment in the future. No evidence is given, however, that this was actually the case, that pre-1989 (with the Education Act) the lesser fees paid was proportional to the number of individuals failing their university courses.

For the tertiary sector, the report recommends: removing central government controls and mechanisms so that tertiary institutions are self-steering bodies; making each tertiary institution a “profit centre” and decentralising “profit centres” to departmental or faculty level; retaining a central body to validate standards where public funds are at stake; removing externally fixed constraints so that institutions can respond to demand as they see best; selling New Zealand tertiary education abroad; and distinguishing entrepot and research functions from the education functions and funding them separately (Treasury, 1987b:193-4).

The selling of New Zealand education abroad is relevant here. In support of selling New Zealand’s education abroad, the report argues:

What is abnormal about the education sector’s failure to export its services is that this derives directly from government action to control demand (via the overseas student quota and other measures) whereas, in the case of other industries, export failure has been indirect – due to the protectionist policies which have had an adverse effect on their international competitiveness. As is the case of other industries, lack of direct exposure to

international competition may tend to reduce the productivity of domestic institutions. This would be to the long-term detriment of New Zealand students and to the overall cultural and economic development of this country (Treasury, 1987b:256).

The report predicts, accurately, that two large markets would be Korea and China (cf. Ministry of Education, 2002c). It identifies that international trends at the time, particularly in the United Kingdom, were in favour of re-introducing fees for overseas students. The report looks at whether a substantial increase of fees would affect the market and makes two interesting conclusions: “[a] lack of places for overseas students is likely to be a more serious immediate obstacle to the export of education by New Zealand institutions than any shortfall in demand” (Treasury, 1987b:260) and then a few paragraphs on, “[s]uppliers will need to pitch fees at competitive levels *without prejudicing the quality, and hence the reputation, of their courses*” (Treasury, 1987b:261, my emphasis).

This notion of quality is only mentioned briefly in this report. The report argues that the biggest incentive for tertiary institutions to increase their enrolment and fees for international students is the economic argument: they would retain tuition fees and recover capital used. However, where quality is mentioned, it is worth quoting.

The issue that does arise, however, is whether the state should intervene to provide quality assurance and, more particularly, to ensure that the reputation of existing academic courses is not undermined.... In support of this view, it would be argued that a private university with low academic requirements for degrees could undermine the marketing effort of all responsible, reputable New Zealand tertiary institutions.... The need may not so much be for visa restrictions on overseas students but for accurate descriptions, readily understood overseas, as to the education services on offer. Further, academic entry requirements should be determined and administered by the institutions themselves. There could be a role for an independent body to *validate* the accuracy of promotional material produced by educational institutions offering their services overseas (Treasury, 1987b:265-6)

As argued in the next chapter, notions of quality found resonance in the policy of the Labour Government elected in 1999. However, in sum, this Treasury report of 1987 explicitly saw education as “part of the market economy”, concerned with its “effectiveness and ‘profitability’ of its expenditure” in education (Treasury, 1987b:271).

Critique of the Treasury Report

This report was criticised by many (Boston, 1988; Boston, Haig and Lauder, 1988; Butterworth and Tarling, 1994; Jesson, 1989; Patterson, 1986). Boston (1988) argues that the report's authors had no background in education or philosophy, that they were under pressure to produce the report before the August 1987 election, that because of this time pressure, the report was not circulated for expert opinion, and that it contained some significant defects. These defects included: the lack of an operational model anywhere in the OECD from which to draw guidance; the difficulties of comparative institutional analysis; the broad-brush nature of many important issues such as the use of the term 'profit-centre'; the failure to define the term 'disadvantaged' or to state the level of subsidy for these groups; and the failure to undertake a full cost-benefit analysis of either the existing system or the preferred policy framework (Boston, 1988).

A further critique of this report by Boston et al (1988) strongly criticised the market-driven tertiary educational model espoused in this document, and maintained that this was inconsistent with the Treasury's expressed concern with educational quality and equality of opportunity. Boston et al (1988) argued in favour of the state remaining dominant funder and provider of education, and stressed that education should be regarded as a social entitlement. They further argued that vested interests become involved when private enterprise is the funder and/or provider. Butterworth and Tarling (1994:67) are more caustic in their assessment: "[I]t is doubtful that many members of the Labour Cabinet or caucus ever ploughed their way through *Government Management*. Few would have found it easy to accept that the individual was properly the exclusive object of the state."

While the Labour Government introduced a standard fee (many students had paid admittedly modest fees before then) only public institutions received EFTS funding. Here, Labour introduced a statutory fee regime of a flat fee across the country; this was quite different from the minimalist fees that had been charged previously. Moreover, the Labour Government remained committed to open entry (within the context of a cap on the number of funded places), the principle of equality of educational opportunity, and the provision of more-or-less universal allowances.

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However, the neo-liberal reforms did not 'free' an existing market, but organised the features of national policy to enable the market to operate: social government was restructured according to economic logic, and this economic government created and sustained elements of enterprise and competition (Rose, 1999). These reforms in the tertiary sector should also be understood within the wider context of public sector restructuring which took place under the Fourth Labour Government (1984-1990) (see Peters, 1997b). As Kelsey (cited in Peters, 1997b:30; my emphasis) argues:

The neo-liberal model sought to reduce that role to the production of education and training – *commodities which would be bought and sold in an artificially constructed education market and driven by forces of supply and demand*. Education could then be defined as a private good, with the burden of funding increasingly shifted from the state to the student.

Increasingly, *that* student was an *international* student. This shift of funding from the state to the student, and its attendant consequences, were predicted, with a degree of premonition, by Jonathan Boston in 1987 (Boston, 1987:181; cf. Boston et al, 1988; Boston, 1997):

It would be equally unfortunate if universities came to be seen as nothing but supermarkets selling educational supplies and offering certain kinds of research services to willing clients. Indeed, it can be argued that if a university fails to inspire its students to constantly seek out the truth, if it does not foster an insatiable curiosity about *all* things, if it ceases to be *universal* in the scope of its enquiry, if it dismisses as irrelevant the training and disciplining of the mind, if it adopts a purely vocational orientation and strives merely to respond to market signals and changing consumer tastes, and if it fails to maintain the fundamental distinction between the *value* of something and its *market price*, then it will have ceased to be a university.

Before 1990-1991, tertiary education and training in New Zealand was characterised by low fees, high state subsidy of course costs, and an income-support regime for students based on allowances rather than loans. Entry to tertiary institutions was based on the principles of universal eligibility and unlimited entitlement (Boston, 1992b). However, a combination of factors (demographic changes, changes in school curriculum and assessment methods, deteriorating labour-market conditions, higher retention rates at secondary school level, and generous income-support for full-time students) saw an increase of domestic full-time students from 35,000 in 1986 to over 54,000 in 1991 (Boston, 1992b).

Between March 1980 and March 1989, public expenditure on institution-based tertiary education and training had increased by almost 36 per cent in real terms; at the same time, public expenditure per equivalent full-time student (EFTS) declined in real terms. Therefore, in order to secure additional income, the Fourth Labour Government decided to increase tertiary fees substantially to \$1,250 per annum in 1990 and \$1,300 in 1991 (Boston, 1992b). In an overview of the policies of this Fourth Labour Government, Holland and Boston (1990:9) argued that: "Labour's main legacy will be its contribution to changing the policy agenda and moving the fulcrum of political debate towards the centre-right." Its most significant policy changes were enacted in the 1989 Education Act; the subsequent amendments to the Act continued the trend set here.

This Treasury document, while not Government policy, was nevertheless very influential. What it clearly demonstrated was the significant philosophical shift involving education. It is relevant here because these philosophies provide the backdrop for subsequent policies toward international education and because they show the overwhelming market-driven monetarist conception of export education.

Business Roundtable: Reforming Tertiary Education in New Zealand

Another influential document at this time was from the New Zealand Business Roundtable [NZBR] (1988), entitled *Reforming Tertiary Education in New Zealand*. It was influential inasmuch as it expressed more acutely the notions expressed in Treasury's advice to Government. It argued that:

Essentially, we regard the best strategy for reform as one which subjects the whole range of tertiary education institutions to the opportunities and constraints provided by a decentralised competitive market for their services, while funding users of these services (to whatever extent desired) by a system of targeted entitlements financed, at least in part, by the Government (NZBR, 1988:v).

It argued that important directions in tertiary education should include more effective freedom of choice, more effective skill formation systems, and a greater emphasis on core social values that are consistent with socialisation in a society of increasing liberalism and diversity. It argued for efficiency and equity, by way of competition, less government

intervention (either directly or through the University Grants Committee), lowering levels of subsidies, and user-pays.

With regard to international students in New Zealand at that time, it argued that they study in New Zealand because of the low fee arrangements and that “standards are acceptable...by comparison with alternatives, which may be very inadequate (NZBR, 1988:26).” It argued that, at that time, New Zealand taxpayers were subsidising foreign students for at least \$15 million annually and that restricting admission to particular courses (such as commerce and engineering) was tantamount to discouraging the development of tertiary education exports. From there, it then argued for the introduction of full-cost fees. The tenor of its document is expressed most fully where they write:

Only where organisations can compete both for finance (and other inputs) and for clients in relatively free markets can their members face true incentives to meet their clients’ (in this case, students’ and society’s) needs in the most efficient manner, and to respond innovatively to changes in the broader economic environment. For this reason, we would argue that facilitating private sector competition in the provision of tertiary education would be a natural part of any reform process. We would also advocate a review of the necessity of retaining state management of the existing, publicly funded tertiary institutions (NZBR, 1988:62).

This was another significant and influential treatise for the Government. It was also subsequently heavily criticised (Butterworth and Tarling, 1994; Grace, 1990; Haworth, 1994; Sharp, 1994). Butterworth and Tarling claimed that the report was “high-flown [with] unsupported claims” (Butterworth and Tarling, 1994:139). Not all of its recommendations (such as universities paying full rental on their properties) were undertaken, but what this document expresses is the pervasive neo-liberal philosophy, amongst some sectors in any case, which paved the way for full-cost fees for international students and the entry of private industry into the international education market.

The Hawke Report

Shortly after the Business Roundtable's publication came the Hawke Report (Hawke, 1988), written by the Working Group on Post Compulsory Education and Training for Cabinet Social Equity Committee and chaired by Professor Gary Hawke of Victoria University. The Report recommended "a considerable degree of decentralisation" (Hawke, 1988:6), an improved funding system and an increased reliance on non-public financing; a central structure, which would necessitate the abolition of the University Grants Committee; an appropriate system of national educational qualifications; and a distinct research funding system. Butterworth and Tarling's (1994:137) assessment is far from flattering:

The [Hawke] report – Treasury designer chic locked in a death struggle with the English language...affirmed devolution whilst providing for highly centralised structures; asserted teaching and research were interdependent, but proposed separate funding for each function; stated that Councils 'must reflect the community' but reduced them in size; claimed that there should be no barriers to entry, but supported charging higher fees.

Flattering or not, the Hawke Report, drawing on the ideas expressed in the Treasury reports the year prior, was also influential. Some of its recommendations found resonance, and reality, in the reforming 1989 Education Act. The 1989 Education Act and its subsequent amendments (notably in 1990) put into legislation much of the philosophy set out by the Treasury's briefings and the general philosophies espoused by the Business Roundtable and the Hawke Report.

The 1989 Education Act and its Amendments

The Education Act 1989 was designed to impose a unified approach to the accountability and governance of all public tertiary institutions. It gave a similar level of autonomy to polytechnics and teachers colleges as had traditionally been held by universities, while also introducing new regulatory funding and accountability provisions across the entire sector (Boston, 1997). As section 160 of the Education Act (via the Education Amendment Act 1990) expresses it:

The object of the provisions of this Act relating to institutions is to give them as much independence and freedom to make academic, operational, and management decisions as is

consistent with the nature of the services they provide, the efficient use of national resources, the national interests and the demands of accountability.

This is significant, because while tertiary institutions must comply with various codes and bodies (as noted below), they are relatively autonomous. In this context, that means they can make their own decisions about the enrolment of international students (i.e. how many, which type etc.) without necessary recourse to central government policy. With this relatively autonomous governance, any issues pertaining to quality control, for example, rest firstly with the particular institution.

Sections 9 and 10 of the Education Amendment Act 1993 state that no foreign student can be enrolled at an institution if it will displace a domestic student. In section 228 in the Education Amendment Act 1990, it states that no foreign student can continue to be enrolled in a course of study or training unless they have paid an amount to the Council. This amount, as noted in subss (a), should be the Council's best estimate of

- (i) The cost to the institution (including the institution's marginal administrative and other general costs, and the appropriate portion of any initial or start-up costs of the course) of providing tuition in the course for one student, in the case of a course in which no domestic student is enrolled;
 - (ii) The marginal cost to the institution (including the institution's marginal administrative and other general costs, and any marginal initial or start-up costs of the course) and of providing tuition in the course for one student in addition to the domestic students receiving tuition in the course, in every other case; and
- (b) An amount fixed by the Council that is not less than an amount that in the Council's opinion is an appropriate reflection of the use by one student receiving tuition in the course of the capital facilities (if any) whose provision at the institution is necessary by virtue only of the institution's provision of tuition to foreign students in addition to domestic students.

Recent changes in the funding of tertiary institutions, as suggested by the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC) and in potential legislative changes (see Chapter Four), are intended to bring tertiary institutions' policies in line with Government intentions, and therefore circumscribe this autonomy to a further degree. Already, under the Education Act, a representative Council governs Tertiary Educational Institutes [TEIs]. TEIs then are regulated and accountable at several levels: under the Education Act, to the Secretary of Education, to the Minister of Education, under the Public Finance Act 1989

(and other policy instruments) to prepare statements of objectives, other performance indicators, Statements of Service performance, Annual Reports, annual financial statements, and reviews by the Audit Office (Boston, 1997). The Council's role then is one of governance rather than management *per se* (Boston, 1997).

The tertiary education sector therefore *is* a regulated sector, particularly in issues of governance and institutions' policy-making. However, the measurement of its quality control falls under a broader area than just governance and may be measured better by practice rather than policy. This has implications for policy decisions and the quality control of the education and services delivered to international students.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge these areas because, as is argued throughout this chapter and the next, despite the regulatory framework in place, there is scant attention given specifically to international students and to show that regulation of this kind is not enough in itself to ensure high-quality and adequate provisions for international students in universities. More broadly, it can be argued that neo-liberal socio-economic policies have been blind to cultural issues because of their methodological individualistic presuppositions.

The Fourth Labour Government passed the Education Act into legislation; its ideas drawn from philosophies espoused at the time by Treasury, amongst others. However, many of the amendments to the Education Act, including the amendment that allowed a significant increase in full-fee paying students, were passed into legislation by the National Government, which came into power in 1990.

TERTIARY EDUCATION POLICY UNDER NATIONAL (1990-1999)

The changes brought about in education by the election of the National Government in 1991 were part of more sweeping changes in social policy in general. Boston and Dalziel (1992a:viii) argue that:

Rather than fostering justice and social compassion, National's policies have generated greater inequality and growing poverty. Indeed, not since the Great Depression has New Zealand witnessed such evidence of social deprivation and hopelessness, nor such levels of unemployment.

Boston and Dalziel (1992a) question key aspects of National's social policy, in particular their cuts in social expenditure, welfare benefits, and the changing modes of delivering social assistance. They argue that considerations of human need and social justice were sidelined by National's policies in favour of the pursuit of efficiency, self-reliance, a fiscal balance, and a more limited state. They argue that fiscal considerations have dominated all other considerations, with resulting inequitable policies, such as in tertiary education. Effectively, Boston (1992a) argues, this National Government abandoned any commitment to the welfare state.

Lower Subsidies, Higher Fees

The National Government's changes to tertiary education policy in New Zealand were also significant. In 1991, the National Government changed tertiary education policy, not only from changes made by the fourth Labour Government, but further than the National Party itself had intimated in either their electioneering or their policy manifesto. The National Government continued the withdrawal of state funding that the previous Labour Government had started, which involved real per student funding cuts, alongside bulk funding, devolution, and fee levying powers to institutions, forcing institutions to make up the deficit. The National Government reduced the entitlement to Study Right Assistance (part of a policy guaranteeing 'every school leaver access to tertiary education and training as of right') from four years to three years; abandoned the objective of very low fees for those eligible for Study Right and therefore unrestricted entry to tertiary education and training for all school leavers; and substantial cuts were also made to student allowances (Boston, 1992b). National also abolished the nation-wide fee scheme that the previous Labour Government had introduced, hence meeting its election promise to abolish fees, and gave institutions the power to charge their own fees.

The National Government, encouraged by both Treasury and the Business Roundtable, promoted corporatisation of the universities and increased competition with private tertiary institutions. Under this agenda, state-owned institutions would purchase assets, or at least pay full rentals, and pay the dividend to the government. (However, the institutions successfully opposed this particular agenda and proposal for a capital charge). Funding would depend on full-cost recovery from students, some of whom would be state

subsidised, while other funding would be from private research, industry, or overseas students. While its reformers championed these changes for 'democracy and economic performance', others were less certain of its merits. As Kelsey (1993:92) argues:

Others with less faith in the market's valuation of critique and of knowledge as a good in itself viewed the prospect of a tertiary curriculum dictated by market demand and accountable to an increasingly elite clientele of fee-paying students as fundamentally subversive of what little academic freedom and critical analysis the country's tertiary institutions currently managed to produce.

Between 1990 and 1995, the National Government funding per funded tertiary student fell by 6.7 percent; the shortfall was met both by student fees and by externally generated research income, from public and private sector sources (Kelsey, 1997). Kelsey (1997:267) argues that "[e]ducation and training policy was unco-ordinated [sic] and [p]iecemeal". Similarly, Jonathan Boston (1992b:204-5, my emphasis) suggested (the time of writing being ten years ago) the following consequences:

As far as the universities are concerned, enrolment patterns will doubtless vary according to the average cost of their courses, the composition of their student populations, and the extent to which they are dependent on students from outside their region....*[T]he new tertiary education policy demonstrates how decision making which is driven largely by a combination of fiscal imperatives and politically motivated manifesto commitments (which, in any case, were not fulfilled) can result in poorly designed policies.*

It was in this environment of fiscal imperatives that fees increased for domestic and international students alike, that full-cost fees were introduced for the latter, and education ostensibly was seen as a private commodity rather than a public good.

Trade Imperatives and Fiscal Necessities

As Boston's (1992b, 1999) overviews of tertiary policy demonstrate, there were significant fiscal imperatives by tertiary institutions to enrol international students. The changes Boston outlines here were the thin edge of the wedge as the National Government (1990-1999) continued the practice of the previous Labour government in reducing the real value of EFTS subsidies, although the actual quantum of EFTS funding went up due to an increase in student demand. There was also a greater need to attain funding from other sources, such as international students.

Between 1987 and 1999, there were five major reviews of tertiary education funding in New Zealand (Boston, 1999; cf. Patterson, 1986) and, with the establishment of the Tertiary Education Commission, which itself resulted from major reviews of tertiary education in New Zealand, the ongoing debates and reviews are set to continue. Remarkably, however, in the four reports of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC, 2000; TEAC, 2001a; TEAC, 2001b; TEAC, 2001c), only one report (TEAC, 2001c) mentioned international students, and that was only for one page out of 197 pages. This is despite the significant financial and social effects of international students on the tertiary sector. Chapter Four comments further on the role of TEAC in recent educational policy.

In the early 1990s, a new national organisation, New Zealand Education International Limited (NZEIL) was established to foster the development of export education. It was supported by membership subscriptions and then later by government funding. NZEIL and its successor Education New Zealand maintain a primary focus on marketing and advocacy. Simultaneously, sector groupings in the tertiary and language school areas used their national secretariats to coordinate the marketing of export education. Recently, regional groupings of providers have also become active (such as Study Auckland, Study Manawatu etc.) Essentially, these organisations are *trade* organisations; they demonstrate, in comparison to the earlier days of international students in New Zealand, the clear shift toward export education from aid to trade.

The fact that the trade imperatives from the National Government and the fiscal imperatives from the tertiary institutions used both international students to ease their financial woes and meet their budgetary requirements was more coincidence than good planning. Although, there was also increasing demand for an overseas education from international students. Nevertheless, the recruitment and subsequent pastoral care and teaching of international students must be seen within this fiscal and extremely competitive environment, an environment which has been engendered through the market-oriented nature of funding and service provision by tertiary education institutions (Boston, 1999).

CONCLUSION

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, poorly designed policies are the norm in international education policy in New Zealand. The ad hoc approach to international education through foreign policy was mirrored by an equally ad hoc approach through education policy. To tertiary education policy, international students were like unwanted appendages; the part that international education played in education policy decisions was well below the increasing financial benefits that international students brought to New Zealand, not to mention the increasing numbers of international students on campuses.

The reforms in the tertiary sector brought about by neo-liberal Governments from 1984 onwards were significant. It was during this period that there was a very significant rise in the number of international students in New Zealand and the efficiency of the market in the education industry was proclaimed loudly. The philosophical and political shifts of this period mark not only an ostensible shift from aid to trade in international ('export') education, but also a shift toward the *fiscal necessity* of international students for education providers and the Government alike.

The public policy and education policy changes of this period were substantial and significant. It was a period of political reform. The withdrawal of significant funding from universities necessitated increased fees for domestic students, as well as a seeking for funding elsewhere, in particular through the recruitment of increased numbers of international students. That was the economic necessity of international students. There was also a substantial philosophical (and therefore political) shift in the notion of education in this period: education went from being a notion of public good to private gain. Such a notion of education sat uncomfortably with humanitarian or altruistic forms of education. New Zealand's economy was also reformed during this period: it was neo-liberal and *laissez-faire*; it was privatised and deregulated; and its trade barriers came down and it was open for business. Hence, there was a political necessity in recruiting international students.

Yet, despite these significant changes, international students as a body of people (cum *consumers*) were notably absent from policy development; they were profoundly affected by it, yet they were not involved in the specifics of it. These political, economic, and

educational reforms in New Zealand took place largely without recourse to their consequences. In the policies of the period 1984 to 1999, international students were notable by their absence and the quality of their education and experience was a secondary concern. This changed with the election of New Zealand's fifth Labour Government in 1999. Quality was back on the agenda.

QUALITY CONTROL?

GOVERNMENT POLICY FROM 1999 TO 2002

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter noted the absence of international students in tertiary education policy and reforms, from the 1989 Education Act (and its philosophical antecedents) onwards. It illustrated the philosophical underpinnings of the shift toward trade in 'export' education (that is, here, bringing full fee-paying foreign students to New Zealand for their education). Substantially, in this regard, nothing changed with the election of the Labour-led Coalition in 1999, although being a Labour-led Government (albeit one modelled on Blair's Labour Government in Britain) the broad political philosophies differed from the previous National Government.

There are significant trends in this first term of this Labour-led Government (which was re-elected in 2002) in relation to the international education industry. This Government has proposed significant reforms in the tertiary sector in general in New Zealand, particularly with regard to its governance and funding. Moreover, it has also fore-grounded a discourse of 'quality' in export education. This discourse is one based on philosophical precepts rather than primarily on practical necessity. Here 'quality', as defined by the Code, is both remarkably vague and yet remarkably marketable. Yet while this is the primary document that outlines the Government's agenda, it is not the only document. Other central documents include the reports of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC 2000; TEAC, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c); the 2002 Tertiary Education Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2002b); the 2001 Export Education Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2001a); and the 2002 *Tertiary Education Reform Bill*. Along with the Code, these are summarised and critiqued in this chapter.

However, this is not simply an exercise in policy criticism. These documents, following on from arguments made in previous chapters, demonstrate the *continued* separation of the

tertiary and export education sectors in New Zealand and by implication a distinct lack of concern about the needs and experiences of international students in formulating policies that affect them. While the Code of Practice did not affect any of the returnees in this research (who had all returned before it was enacted), it nevertheless will have a significant affect upon the expectations (and therefore the experiences) of current and future international students in New Zealand. Whether the export education industry can adhere to the definitions of quality imposed upon it remains to be seen; yet here too is a significant factor in policies in this period, namely the remanagerialism of risk. Whilst the State may define quality, the industry – particularly when considering the Code alongside the levy on the industry – needs to ensure/insure its own quality assurance, for they have been given the responsibility to do so and the risks inherent in that.

THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

In October 2001, the *Education Standards Act* was passed into law. Amongst other things, it enacted the *New Zealand Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students*. In the *Education Standards Act* (2001) it states (Part 1, S238E)

- (1) “A provider may enrol a person as an international student or continue to have an international student enrolled, so long as the provider is a signatory to the code.
- (2) A provider must not enrol a person as an international student or continue to have an international student enrolled, or provide educational instruction for such a person, if –
 - a. The provider is not a signatory to the code; or
 - b. The provider is removed as a signatory to the code under section 238G; or
 - c. For any other reason provided in the code, the provider ceases to be a signatory to the code.
- (3) A provider that is suspended under section 238G may continue to have international students enrolled and may provide educational instruction to only those students to the extent permitted by the review panel under that section.

The legislation also puts into place provisions for sanctions, as given under the International Education Advisory Authority (IEAA). These sanctions include that the provider may be removed as a signatory to the code, or may be suspended for a specified period. The sanctions may be put in place according to section 238F(e), where the IEAA will investigate and determine complaints from international students about alleged

breaches of the code after all internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and refer appropriate cases to the review panel.

The Code, in itself, is not new. However, its regulatory powers and wide-sweeping mandate are new. It brings to the fore-ground the notion of quality, not only as a regulatory mechanism, but also as a marketing tool. Traditionally, New Zealand has been a favoured destination for international students because it is relatively cheap than other countries. New Zealand traditionally competed on price rather than quality *vis-à-vis* many of the higher quality American, Canadian, British, and Australian options; through ease of access to Permanent Residents (potentially to be changed in legislation; see below); and through recognition of New Zealand qualifications in many supply-countries. However, with this Code of Practice, and its use as a tool for marketing promotion, quality is brought to the fore.

The Code took effect from March 2002, after which education providers had six months to comply with its guidelines. As noted, part of the Code includes an International Education Advisory Authority (IEAA), which again is not new, but has wider powers. The Code is divided into eight sections: marketing, recruitment, and enrolment of international students; contracted agents; contracts and indemnity; welfare; students aged under 18; grievance procedures; applications and monitoring; and administration (Ministry of Education, 2002a).

Of the areas pertinent to tertiary institutions, student support is of paramount importance. Section 13 of the Code states that signatories must provide support services to international students, which include an orientation programme appropriate to the type of institution, assistance to students facing difficulties, and advocacy procedures. Furthermore, they should provide advice and information on accommodation, driving laws and road safety, courses, and welfare facilities. In the Code, issues of accommodation welfare apply only to students under eighteen. While this is important for those students under eighteen, it is regrettable that guidelines are not suggested for students over eighteen, as it is issues of accommodation that are often most central in students' dissatisfaction (cf. McGrath and Butcher, 2001).

There are two notable aspects about the timing of the Code. The first is that it has taken fifty years in order to have a mandatory code enacted. When international student numbers were smaller and when the dominant provider was a unified state, it was not necessary to have a code: fewer students meant that there were fewer needs to be addressed. The second noteworthy aspect is that the Code, under a business model, takes on a different agenda to what it appears at face value. At face value, it is designed with the welfare of the students in mind. However, while the welfare of the students *is* an aspect of the Code, that is arguably not its primary purpose. Nor is its primary purpose to regulate an industry. It is a code designed to retain and attract the *business* of international students. It is useful as a marketing tool. It is a tool for quality assurance, but a tool not so much for the benefits of students as for the benefit of those in the industry. This is evident from the following points.

The new Code of Practice has more impact on primary and secondary schools and private institutions than on tertiary education providers, particularly with regard to ensuring appropriate accommodation standards and in other areas of pastoral care. While the Code of Practice looks good on paper, it may be less effective in practice. The most significant concern is that it assumes too much on the part of the international student, in particular that they will choose to make a complaint if they feel there is cause to. It places the responsibility of complaint – and, by implication, restitution – on the student.

The Code may be a form of quality assurance for the industry, but with no peer assessment or external measurement (that is, outside government regulation), the responsibility for this quality assurance falls to the international students' themselves. In so doing, it assumes (a) that the students will correctly identify areas of poor quality; (b) that they will articulate clearly and to the appropriate individuals their concerns; (c) that they will be listened to and their concerns will be acted upon; (d) that they have an understanding of the mechanisms and structures within an educational institution (i.e. those who govern and establish quality control procedures); and (e) that they will use the time and energy to make a complaint despite the fact that their primary purpose in New Zealand is to study. Students may also be reluctant to make these complaints for reasons ranging from not wanting to 'make a fuss', to being afraid that their visa may be repealed, to not having sufficient language competency.

In addition, the demands placed on education providers by this Code are significant. Effectively, the Code is asking providers to exercise services for which they do not have the resources. Furthermore, the levy under Supplementary Order Paper No. 264 (now, SOP No. 25; see below) incurs a further, and as yet undetermined, cost on educational providers. The administrative effort needed in order to comply with the guidelines of the code, not to mention the extra financial costs, which are themselves been passed onto the students, has made the code a contentious issue in the industry (cf. ISANA, 2002; Peddie, 2003).

Are the concerns that have prompted the code, and have surrounded its implementation, valid? A 2001 report by the IEAA suggests that this is so; it makes interesting reading. It highlights ongoing concerns about the pastoral care of international students. The IEAA report identifies some critical areas. These areas include: the refund of fees to students who withdraw from their courses; the failure of the education provider to have proper regard to the terms of contract with the students; the lack of provision for the pastoral care needs of international students; the lack of orientation specific to international students; the failure to use appropriate internal dispute resolution procedures; and the responsibilities resulting from representations made by agents (IEAA, 2001).

This IEAA report is not sufficiently robust in terms of its breadth or depth of analysis and it does not deal with public tertiary education providers. Further, it is notable that its complaints are exclusively about PTEs. The constitutions of these private providers are less circumscribed by the State than public tertiary institutions and many charge significantly higher fees for international students than even public institutions. Furthermore, the experiences of international students in PTEs and the practices of PTEs are significantly under-researched and PTEs are notable by their absence in advocacy groups such as the New Zealand branch of international student advisers (ISANA: International Education Association) and the principal export education industry body, Education New Zealand (cf. Butcher, 2002).

However, while the IEAA report illustrates the particulars and relevancy of the *Education Standards Act*, it is relatively insignificant compared to other official documentation. One set of official documentation, while not official government policy, which was highly significant and influential, were the reports from the Tertiary Education Advisory

Commission [TEAC]. In 1999, the Government established TEAC to advise and suggest reforms to the tertiary sector in New Zealand by way of four reports, written between 1999 and 2001. The TEAC reports respectively highlight issues particular to the vision, system, strategy and funding framework of the tertiary education system in New Zealand.

THE TEAC REPORTS

In their first report, *Shaping the System*, the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC, 2000) argued in favour of developing tertiary education policy to encompass a broad definition of the knowledge society, encompass all formal and non-formal learning, and be learner-focused. It proposed that the Tertiary Education Strategy [TES] should have strategic direction, be viewed coherently as a whole, and respond to the needs of society and providers alike. It also proposed for more Government engagement with the TES, while, at the same time, retaining principles of autonomy and flexibility within the TES. Significantly, it proposed that all publicly funded or regulated tertiary education providers should be required to define and produce an agreed public statement of their distinctive character and contribution to the whole sector.

There are differences between these suggestions and those made over a decade earlier in the Government reports of that time, encapsulated in the *Government Management* report noted above. Those differences include the increased role of Government in the TES; the increased regulation of the TES; and that the TES should be inclusive and cohesive, rather than competitive and fragmented. The other three TEAC reports continued these themes.

In their second report (TEAC, 2001a), TEAC recommended, *inter alia*, the creation of an intermediary body, the Tertiary Education Commission and, following on from its first report, the application of a system of functional classifications of tertiary education activities, the strengthening and expansion of charters, and the introduction of profiles of providers' activities as the basis for funding.

In their third report (TEAC, 2001b), TEAC recommended, *inter alia*, that the priorities of the tertiary strategy should be on building quality learning while maintaining high participation, enhancing tertiary research quality and linkages, and developing the competencies, attributes and environment for a distinctive knowledge society. TEAC

(2001b) recommended that this strategic approach be given effect through a desirability test, which will assess whether a provider provides sufficient net benefit through its relationship to the national strategic goals and priorities, the enhancement of economic efficiency and effectiveness across the TES, and the assistance in the appropriate differentiation and specialisation across the system. TEAC (2001b) further recommended that public funding be reduced, withheld, or removed from those proposals or activities which fail the desirability test and that the Tertiary Education Commission [TEC] play a key role in evaluating the performance of the TES.

Drawing together the funding themes of the first three reports, the fourth and final report of TEAC (TEAC, 2001c) recommended, *inter alia*, the development of a Single Funding Framework; the separation of funding for tuition and research; and the development of mechanisms to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the system.

It is in this final report that international students get the most mention (two paragraphs worth). TEAC's (2001c:142) comment here, particularly in light of its recommendations, is worth noting in full:

The country as a whole gains significantly from the export-education industry. For instance, the government would gain \$125 million in GST alone from a \$1 billion dollar industry. The increase in foreign exchange earnings will advantage not just the education sector – it will also advantage other sectors of the economy that provide services to international students. Providers can use the income generated from export-education activities to invest in their ongoing development – for example, by improving their facilities and increasing their staffing. Teaching and learning programmes can be enhanced by the participation of international students. Staff benefit from international linkages, and from achieving greater competence in cross-cultural training.

However, the lack of attention given to international students in the TEAC reports is notable. Kelsey (personal communication, September 2002) argues that:

The TEAC reports did not want to address international students for a number of reasons: the process was shambolic and they had problems dealing with the 'core' questions; international students involved difficult political questions; it would have highlighted the fiscal objectives of the institutions and the government and required some action on matters of quality, support etc. that would have been unpopular with both constituencies, and they were desperate to avoid dealing with the GATS question, which I had kept raising with them.

She argues further that,

TEAC was given a minimal budget. Instead of a body of independent experts, the Commission comprised stakeholders from within the current market-driven system. This included representation from the private sector whose share of the tertiary budget had increased from \$7 million in 1998 to a projected \$155 million in 2001. Few commissioners had any expertise in tertiary education policy.... TEAC's reports did nothing to inspire confidence that it had a clear vision, let alone a strategy to implement one (Kelsey, 2002:108-9).

This final TEAC report, which is significantly longer than previous reports and, judging by the more regular occurrences of 'minority views' than other reports, was also more contentious, continues the argument of a combination of private/public funding for the tertiary education system; case in point: "[p]art of the ongoing challenge facing the tertiary education system will be to find more ways to reduce its dependence on government funding" (TEAC, 2001c:140).

The role of international students within this recommended new funding framework is only in the sense of a further source of funds. There is no mention of the financial costs of international students, nor secondary costs related to issues of specific quality control and welfare issues of international students. Indeed, it would seem that this particular report recommends, albeit implicitly, that in order to resolve their difficult financial situations, universities should "active[ly] pursu[e]...*alternative sources of funding*" (TEAC, 2001c:154, my emphasis). Some of the comments in this final TEAC report echo those made by Treasury (1987b). One example suffices:

If the government is to increase its *investment* in tertiary education with confidence, it needs to know the expected outcomes and to be assured of an *adequate return*. The Commission believes that the national strategic goals and tertiary education priorities are an appropriate basis for *steering future public expenditure*. It also believes that the new funding framework would provide the government and taxpayers with greater confidence that any additional investment of *government funds will be well spent and will deliver beneficial outcomes* (TEAC, 2001c:157, my emphasis).

Tertiary education then appears to remain ostensibly within an economic paradigm, albeit one that is more State-regulated than it once was. Drawing on these TEAC reports, and its own policy preferences, the Labour-led Government then produced a five-year Tertiary Education Strategy.

THE TERTIARY EDUCATION STRATEGY 2002

In 2002, the Ministry of Education released its five-year Tertiary Education Strategy based, in part, on the reports of TEAC. Its six strategies are: strengthen system capability and quality; contribute to the achievement of Maori development aspirations; raise foundation skills so people can participate in a knowledge society; develop the skills New Zealanders need for a knowledge society; educate for Pacific Peoples' development and success; and strengthen research, knowledge creation and uptake for

our knowledge society (Ministry of Education, 2002b). In its introduction, it comments:

[A]t present our tertiary education system lacks a clear and shared strategic direction. Policies over the past decade have centred on raising participation rather than on building capacity. They have not rewarded quality. They have encouraged and rewarded competition rather than collaboration. They have focussed on individual institutions rather than on the capacity that the system as a whole requires (Ministry of Education, 2002b:5).

This *Strategy* report coincides with significant reforms in the tertiary education sector, including:

- The development of a tertiary education strategy and related *Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities*;
- The introduction of charters and profiles for all tertiary organisations;
- The establishment of the Tertiary Education Commission, which will negotiate charters and profiles, allocate funding and facilitate the building of the capability and relationships in the tertiary sector;
- The introduction of an assessment of strategic relevance to determine charter and profile alignment with the *Strategy* and therefore funding;
- The development of an integrated funding framework;
- And a better integration of the Industry Training system, Adult and Community Education and Training Opportunities and Youth Training programmes within the wider tertiary sector (Ministry of Education, 2002b).

The *Strategy* argues that for New Zealand's economic transformation it will be necessary to reinforce existing strengths (amongst which they list 'export' education), build upon these strengths, and create new strengths (Ministry of Education, 2002b:11). Of the seven objectives under Strategy One ('Strengthen System Capability and Quality'), the fourth objective is: "*sustainable growth of export education capability centred on a reputation for quality teaching and pastoral care*" (Ministry of Education, 2002b:24, my emphasis). Here, again, is the foregrounding of 'quality' in official discourse and, implicitly, as a tool for marketing.

The *Strategy* says nothing further on this than is already presented in its earlier document, *Export Education in New Zealand: A Strategic Approach to Developing the Sector* (Ministry of Education, 2001a). Despite this, however, the objective does note the necessity for *sustainable* growth and the related importance of an industry *capable* of delivering *quality*. The *Code of Practice* addresses some of these issues, particularly regarding the quality of pastoral care provisions for international students, although it still has some significant omissions, as noted above (cf. Peddie, 2003) and includes no regulatory framework or guidelines for the *sustainability* of the industry.

The *Tertiary Education Strategy* fails to address in any detail how international students fit into that strategy, nor how the sustainability or quality of the export education industry will be measured and regulated. Instead, it addresses the reader to look at a separate document, published a few months earlier: *Export Education in New Zealand*.

EXPORT EDUCATION STRATEGY 2001

In 2001, the Ministry of Education published its strategy for export education, *Export Education in New Zealand* (Ministry of Education, 2001a). This report defines export education as "a transaction across borders involving the provision of education services in exchange for financial consideration" (Ministry of Education, 2001a:11). It identifies four types of export education: consumption abroad (where the student moves to the country of supplier to receive education); cross-border supply or distance education (educational service is provided across borders, but without the movement internationally or either student or teacher); commercial presence (the provider establishes a presence in the

country where the student resides); and presence of natural persons (the educator moves to the country of residence).

The report identifies the period 1997-99 as a stagnant time in New Zealand's export education industry, brought about predominantly by the Asian economic crisis at that time. The sector responded to this stagnation by seeking to revive the historically rapid growth of the industry by better coordination and intensive marketing. Since that time, export education has not only reached pre-1997 levels, but has surpassed them: the industry reached \$1 billion of New Zealand's GDP by 2002. In light of this growth, the strategy report asks three questions: "Are there practical and desirable limits to growth in the industry? Do we have objectives for the industry beyond the immediate foreign exchange? And how can we get greater value from growth?" (Ministry of Education, 2001a:12). It further comments:

Put in stark terms, New Zealand could take a mass recruitment approach to export education with low coordination in terms of policy, planning or skill development. This approach would stretch our capacity and risk damaging the positive features which we are building our reputation on. Or we could take an approach pitched at providing quality services, underpinned by systems and principles which support sustainability and ongoing improvement, and which help us to increase the value derived from our activity across a number of areas (Ministry of Education, 2001a:12).

The expressed vision of the industry is: "[a] sector providing sustainable, high quality international education and support services, thereby producing a range of economic, educational and cultural benefits for New Zealand" (Ministry of Education, 2001a:13). It seeks to do this by:

- Appropriate investment and management of services and facilities;
- Measures to ensure consistently high quality educational and support services;
- Excellent pastoral care and a community and physical environment in which the students are safe and happy;
- A commitment to a higher level of action and purpose (i.e. balancing competition and cooperation);
- A strategic and innovative approach to developing the industry;
- And sound research to underpin this development.

It also lists various costs and benefits of the export education industry. Under societal benefits, it lists: increased foreign exchange earnings; economic benefit to non-education sectors through associated spending; and creation of internationally based skills and relationships. The potential costs it identifies are noteworthy:

- Potentially adverse impact on domestic students;
- Issues of quality of service and value for money for international students;
- Issues pertaining to the vulnerability of young people;
- Issues of efficiency and effectiveness in an industry characterised by a large number of small participants;
- Issues relating to investment, business planning, and programme management skills;
- And issues resulting from different levels of participation between institutions along regional, socio-economic, and ethnic lines (Ministry of Education, 2001a:14).

To measure the costs, the report identifies key indicators:

[B]alanced national growth in student numbers; growth in revenue absolutely and in terms of value relative to activity; enhanced, successful participation by providers which are smaller, regional, more ethnically mixed, and/or reflect low SES communities; quality of business planning and programme management in institutions; educational and other impacts on domestic students; enhanced teaching skills; and student, teacher and community satisfaction (Ministry of Education 2001b:61).

While this report clearly identifies that the Government has recognised the pastoral care issues of international students (albeit within a marketing framework of reputability), and indicates that the Government, through its various agencies, codes and legislation, will be taking a relatively more active role in the industry, its indicators, aspirations, and intentions are lacking an aspect: they are intangible and rhetorical. There is also a risk that the increased involvement of Government, rather than further regulating the industry effectively, will instead add levels of unnecessary and cumbersome bureaucracy. Nor is there any comment on, for example, *how* the indicators will be measured, *what* areas will be specifically researched (excepting the student satisfaction survey), *what* the outcomes (if any) will come of this research, and *how* the industry will maintain *sustainable* growth (or indeed *measure* it, given that its meaning is not defined clearly).

Furthermore, these 'costs' may not take into account definable costs to the institution, nor do they address the impact on individual teachers, some of whom spend disproportionate amounts of time on assisting international students with no additional recompense (Kelsey,

personal communication, September 2002; McGrath and Butcher, 2001). The 'benefits' of international students may also be simplistic, in not reflecting how this actually operates in schools of different deciles, locations, size of international student intake, and competing demands and so forth.

Again, it is noteworthy that this export education strategy has been developed separately from the tertiary education strategy, despite the fact that they are intimately linked. There is no mention, for example, of what role or significance (if any) international students will have in a university's profile and charter. Furthermore, despite it being termed a strategy, there is no clear guideline as to where the industry might be in say five years time. There is a strategy, but there appears to be an absence of strategic *direction*. Notwithstanding the absence of direction, the TEAC reports and the *Tertiary Education Strategy* in particular formed the background and ideas presented in the 2002 Tertiary Education Reform Bill.

TERTIARY EDUCATION REFORM BILL 2002

The TERB, drawing on the TEAC reports, amongst other things, sought to reform the industry to be more strategic, more cooperative and collaborative, and encouraged a focus on excellence, partnerships, and better-managed institutions and providers (TERB, 2002:1). It also strengthened the quality assurance mechanisms of NZQA with the ability to institute more effective early intervention processes and to set conditions on recognition for registration, accreditation, and course approval.

It puts in place many of the recommendations of the TEAC reports for the sector in general. In the original TERB, there is a notable absence of anything specifically pertaining to export education. In part, addressing this omission, and in responding to concerns raised by the industry about the Code of Practice, a Supplementary Order Paper (No. 264) was introduced in Committee in April 2002; further Supplementary Order Papers were introduced in October of the same year.

Supplementary Order Papers to the Tertiary Reform Bill

On 23 April 2002, the Minister Responsible for Tertiary Education, Steve Maharey, introduced Supplementary Order Paper (SOP) No.264 to the Tertiary Reform Bill. The crux of SOP 264 was the introduction of an “export education levy on providers who receive tuition fees from international students enrolled with them” (s238H(a)). SOP 264 stated that regulations under this section must set the levy payable by providers, prescribe when the levy be paid (in part or full), the period to which it relegates, designate the agency to administer the levy, and otherwise provide for the collection of the levy.

The purposes of the levy include: the development, promotion and quality assurance of the export education industry, including professional and institutional development; marketing; implementation of scholarship schemes; research and resource development; support of other bodies engaged in the development, promotion or quality assurance of the industry; the administration and audit of the Code; and the general administration of the levy and its associated purposes. SOP 264 also extends the definition of an international student to those who are studying in New Zealand for less than three months (personal correspondence with Lester Taylor, August 2002; Ministry of Education, 2002d).

As is noted below, SOP 264 was highly controversial within the export education industry. However, in October 2002, Maharey proposed a series of further amendments to the TERB through four SOPs (No's. 21, 24, 25, and 26). The effect of these SOPs was the division of the TERB into two bills: the Education (Tertiary Reform) Amendment Bill and the Industry Training Amendment Bill. These SOPs replaced SOP 264.

The relevant SOPs here are SOP 25 and SOP 21. The substantive amendments proposed in SOP 25 include: the movement and amendment of the purpose clause to reflect the fact that the scope of the Bill has been extended to include matters relating to international students generally, some of whom may be outside the tertiary sector; a requirement that courses of less than three months duration that are offered to foreign students be quality assured, unless they are exempt by the NZQA; and a requirement on the Minister to review the export education levy by 1 March 2006. Notably, SOP No. 25 provides for the imposition of an export education levy, although not before 1 January 2003.

SOP 21 amends the definition of domestic student where it appears in the Education Act (ss. 2(1) and 159(1)). The effect of these amendments to Part 1 (Rights to Primary and Secondary Education) of the Education Act 1989, is that regulations may be made that impose criteria which permanent residents must satisfy before they are entitled to be classed as domestic students. In so proposing this amendment, the Government is attempting to tighten the net for overseas students who study in New Zealand as 'domestic students', due to their permanent residency status.

In brief, then, the two significant developments from these SOPs are the introduction of a levy on the export education industry, and a change in classification for permanent resident students. These developments appear to be largely responsive to demands of the industry (i.e. education providers) to be consulted on legislation. Ironically, however, the legislative nature of supplementary order papers means they bypass customary public consultation. This is particularly ironic given the contentious nature of the content of these SOPs, but, as argued further below, it is not surprising; rather it is reflective of the Government's approach to the export education industry.

Responses from the export education industry

This Levy, first proposed in SOP 264, and then proposed in SOP 25, met with significant opposition from the export education industry.

Education New Zealand

In their submission on SOP 264, the principal export education industry body Education New Zealand Trust supported the purposes related to industry development, but did not believe that policy development should be met by the levy. It recommended that the levy be matched dollar for dollar by Government contributions and that the industry be consulted as to the size of the levy, its method of calculation and other administrative matters. In its submission, Education New Zealand supported the redefinition of international students (Education New Zealand, 2002).

ISANA NZ

ISANA NZ (International Education Association) also opposed SOP 264 in its submission to the Select Committee (ISANA, 2002). Unlike Education New Zealand, they opposed both the redefinition of international students as well as the levy. ISANA NZ argued that by extending the definition of international students to those without student permits (that is, those in New Zealand for fewer than three months) it would determinately affect the effectiveness of the Code of Practice. Furthermore, changing the definition would not affect the private providers who are not registered with the NZQA and who are not currently affected by the Code. They further suggested that changing the definition of international students, and by implication increasing the number of providers who will have to adhere to the Code, would only add increasing bureaucracy. They suggested that there were probably better ways to deal with providers of short courses who enrol international students, but are perceived not to provide adequate social support. They did not specifically suggest what those better ways might be.

ISANA NZ opposed the levy on the grounds that a levy on providers may be passed on by way of increased fees to international students, many of whom may not be able to pay the extra cost, and that it may be seen as a 'money-grabbing' exercise. They suggest that the amendments as set out in SOP 264 be addressed from Government tax income rather than a separate levy.

In common, both of these submissions opposed the levy, and therefore also the responsibility, being placed solely on the export education industry bodies and education providers. It is this shift of responsibility that is the most significant aspect of these SOPs.

The significance of SOP 264/SOP 25

This levy, now under SOP 25 (replacing the levy regulated for under provisions for the Code of Practice) is significant for several reasons. It specifically devotes a levy to the international education industry, although the TERB has levies set out for the general industry in Part 5 of the Bill. Furthermore, and significantly (and contentiously within the industry), it is a levy paid for solely *by* the industry. As noted in the submission by the Education New Zealand Trust, the country receives a gross total of \$1.14 billion in

international education fees, only \$400 million of which is in the form of tuition fees (Education New Zealand, 2002). The country also receives social benefits from international education.

Here, the Government has legislated *inter alia* for measures of quality assurance, yet is not prepared to directly fund quality assurance mechanisms. In one respect, it has recognised an issue that needs to be addressed and then given it to the industry to solve. This, however, fits with the neo-liberal strategy of distributing social risks by devolving the costs associated with them; in this case of international education, providers insuring themselves (the industry) against malpractice.

The Code of Practice, amongst the other audits that institutions must undergo, demonstrates the “remanagerialism of risk” in the neo-liberal environment: “In this process, the entities to be audited are transformed: they have to be made “auditable”, producing a new grid of visibilities for the conduct of organizations and those who inhabit them” (Rose, 1996:55). Furthermore, these ‘audits’ demonstrate the privatisation of risk. As Rose (1999:174-175) argues:

Organizations and other actors that were once enmeshed in the complex and bureaucratic lines of force of the social state are to be set free to find their own destiny. Yet, at the same time, they are to be made responsible for that destiny, and for the destiny of society as a whole, in new ways. Politics is to be returned to society itself, but no longer in a social form: in the form of individual morality, organizational responsibility and ethical community.

Under this politics, variously called “advanced liberalism” (Rose, 1996), “neoliberalism”, or “post-Keynsianism” (O’Malley and Palmer, 1996), the rationale of the government is no longer to spread risk/loss over larger pools of people, as it was in the social welfare era, but instead now it emphasizes disaggregating risk and placing more responsibility on individuals and companies for bearing risk (Simon, 2002). In this context, the educational institutions are bearing the risks of the economy of export education; the Government has made clear that it expects the industry, as an entity, to take control of the sector (Clark, 2002; Mallard, 2002). Risk management here, then, is a form of governance, and a form presented to the sector, and educationalists in a *positive* manner. As Pat O’Malley (2000:27, emphasis in original) argues:

Everyone now is to make an enterprise of their lives. This new credo goes beyond the belief of classical liberalism that people be exposed to risk in order to generate greater independence and responsibility. In many respects, it overturns the equally venerable command to avoid ‘unnecessary’ risk, as was the stricture on the nineteenth-century masses. Rather, it requires individuals to embrace risk positively...to become entrepreneurs and petty capitalists in their own right.... Risk, now, is not *the problem*, as under the welfare state. Risk now is the *solution* to all manner of problems from ‘welfare dependency’ and bureaucratic unresponsiveness, to national economic inefficiency and the scale of state expenditure.

Notably, these policies continue a trend set back in 1987. A notion of this was set out in the first *Government Management* briefing to the incoming Government in 1987:

Certainly there is a role for government in providing leadership, in explaining clearly the need for changes in many of our institutions and other social arrangements and in co-ordinating policies for change. *In the final analysis, however, the responsibility of deciding whether to accept change and to proceed to the construction of new, superior societal arrangements lies with individuals* (Treasury, 1987a:5; my emphasis).

These SOPs are significant for a further reason. Namely, they demonstrate that the export education industry continues to be treated separately from the education industry in general in New Zealand. The very fact that these SOPs deal specifically with international students is commendable in itself, but it does bear asking why something specific to international students of this kind is not in the original TERB? While it could be argued that pressure from industry groups was a factor in their late inclusion into legislation, it can also be argued that it was a further step toward shifting the risk *and* responsibility of international students onto the institutions. The Government recognised the tricky political questions inherent in export education, as well as the apparent contradiction between the fiscal questions of export education and the official discourse of a ‘knowledge economy’, where, it is implied, knowledge has a value beyond (but including) economic growth. As Jane Kelsey argues (personal communication, September 2002):

There is no educational philosophy in the internationalisation strategy at all – which is where the conflict between the nation building role of education espoused by the current [Labour-led] government [in 2002] and the export industry come into direct conflict. This conflict is a primary reason why there is no debate.

Peters (2001) argues that this discourse of a 'knowledge economy' is part of the greater discourse of 'postmodernity'. He argues that "[p]ostmodernity as a neoliberal project is anchored in...individualism.... [I]t represents an extreme form of economic rationalism that restructures science, technology, and education as the future leading economic sectors and basis for national competitive advantage in the global economy" (Peters, 2001:129). Effectively therefore, these recent changes toward quality and so forth by this Labour-led Government are largely (although not entirely) superficial. The substance of *export* education policy in New Zealand remains: the *trading* of international education, the absence (in substance) of the Government in the sector, and the distribution of attendant risks (and responsibilities) placed on the industry by the Government.

CONCLUSION

Both this chapter and the previous chapter have demonstrated that the ideological and economic environment into which recent international students have arrived, being recruited, being taught, and being given pastoral support, is one in which they are valued primarily for their economic benefits and notably ignored from broader reforms in education policy. Yet, there is another dynamic in play, such that even their true economic value is not being appreciated, otherwise it would be expected that attention would be given much earlier to issues such as their pastoral care. There appears to be an assumption that New Zealand can get away without valuing international students beyond their dollar value. One possible explanation is that neo-liberalism has become such a pervasive interpretative framework – an economically-oriented version of methodological individualism – that it is 'right' to evaluate people primarily in terms of their dollar value, to the extent that non-economic dimensions of international students are not appreciated even where it becomes an economic imperative that this occurs (in order to retain international students as a source of foreign exchange). The neo-liberal undertones of the codes and supplementary order papers, particularly where they indicate quite clearly that the Government *wishes* to remain absent from the export education industry, would tend to support this view.

The Code of Practice, and the other mechanisms for quality control are more of an indication of the philosophies of this Labour-led Government than recognition of a pressing need for quality control at this present moment. In line with its different policy positions, at least compared to a National-led Government, this Labour-led Government is simultaneously letting the market control the industry, while putting in place broad regulatory guidelines that it should follow. In this way then, the Government is retaining nominal control over the industry. One of its key control mechanisms, as highlighted in the final TEAC report (2001c) and in the TERB, is funding: effectively, the Government will withhold funding from education providers who do not broadly adhere to its philosophies toward education (such as, for example, a shift toward greater cooperation in the industry and less competition).

The foregrounding of the discourse of quality by this Labour-led Government is a further indication of its philosophy, rather than a form of practice *per se*. Quality here is a philosophical precept. It is an ill-defined concept, which is used as a marketing tool and can be easily re-defined in response to varying market currents. Three questions can be asked of this quality to demonstrate its amorphous nature: How do we manifest quality? How do we measure quality? And what is the involvement of students (i.e. the clients) in the measurement of day-to-day quality? The answers to these questions could be sought in the aforementioned policy documents, but even in these, quality is ill defined. Quality can be manifested in a policy document (whether that be the policy of a Government or the policy of an institution) and still have no relationship with what *actually* occurs.

If quality were to be measured, for example, by the number of complaints (or lack thereof) laid with the IEAA, the response could be an indication of good quality pastoral care and provisions, when in fact it may simply represent a reluctance on the part of students to lay complaints, for the reasons outlined above. If the measurement of quality is solely on the basis of documentation (such as policy documents, audits of documents, 'official' statistics), then this is not measuring *quality* of services at all; it is merely measuring quality of record keeping and procedure.

Furthermore, quality, as a marketing tool in the export education industry is not primarily to do with the *quality of the delivery of education*, rather it is to do with *quality of lifestyle*, namely that New Zealand is free from terrorism, clean and green, slow pace of life, and

peaceful and so forth. Marketing slogans and images illustrate these positive lifestyle traits. Any mention of grade point averages, pass rates, and career success stories of graduates is secondary. The notion of a 'world class in New Zealand' degree (to use the official marketing slogan) is not an attempt at competing against the 'quality' providers of the Ivy League or Oxbridge Colleges; rather, it is an attempt at marketing a lifestyle. Here, then, is not so much the control of quality as the marketing of quality. Here, then, is not so much the policy and practice of quality, as the propagation and promotion of *perceptions* of quality. Yet this quality provokes certain expectations from international students that their experiences will equal the quality provisions defined in the Code.

Whilst the previous two chapters have shown the policy background into which international students arrive and how they in turn affect expectations and experiences, the next chapters deal with perceptions of – and about – these students. This overview of tertiary education reform in New Zealand has demonstrated that international students played an insignificant role in its development. In recent years in particular, international students have been valued for their economic benefits, not for their social benefits. In this mind-set, they belong in the account ledger, but not in the community. Not only are there strong ideological and economic factors in play, but also there are significant social forces. It is the intersection of these three, and their impact on the perceptions of and about international students, that are addressed now.

WORLDS OF PERCEPTION:

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between policies and perceptions is complex. The previous chapters have shown how the perceptions about international students and the perception of quality (as a marketing tool and official discourse) have heavily influenced policy. However, perceptions work both ways. The previous chapter highlighted the political perceptions of international students. This chapter goes a step further and highlights *social* perceptions of international students. It also introduces perceptions *by* international students. It provides both a historical overview of Asian immigration to New Zealand and an overview of contemporary perspectives. Above all, it introduces the perceptions of the returnees of this research, of when they were students in New Zealand. Furthermore, this chapter highlights and demonstrates the *process* of re-entry, which is both historical and perceptual: it is informed by historical antecedents and contemporary perspectives, for students' New Zealand experiences affect and inform their re-entry process.

To that end, there are at least two aspects to the notion of 'belonging', as explored in this thesis, from this chapter onward. There is belonging *ontologically* and belonging *socially*. The first is not necessarily related to place (although it is not excluded from place either). Its ontological security derives from perception (of oneself and by others, *viz.* Said's *Orientalism*), a notion of community (*viz.* Anderson's *Imagined Communities*) and a sense of settledness or 'home'. Belonging socially, on the other hand, relates intricately to the negative notions of exclusion, discrimination and racism. That is, those who belong are *not* excluded, discriminated against, or the targets of racism. Indeed, some may be the perpetrators of these negative behaviours. These are not two distinct behaviours: one affects the other.

To illustrate the connection between these two notions of belongingness, Giddens (1993:36) is appropriate here:

The notion of ontological security ties in closely to the tacit character of practical consciousness – or in phenomenological terms, to the ‘bracketings’ presumed by the ‘natural attitude’ in everyday life. On the other side of what might appear to be quite trivial aspects of day-to-day action and discourse, chaos lurks. And this chaos is not just disorganisation, but the loss of a sense of the very reality of things and of other persons.

Further chapters expand further on this notion of displacement; this chapter deals with belonging, the ‘tacit character of practical consciousness’, as it is perceived: do the students perceive that they belong? These perceptions are not divorced from reality: there are tangible indicators that these students do not belong.

An important aspect of belonging is whether it is *perceived*; the reality may be different, other people's perceptions may be different, but, in the minds of international students, if they perceive that they belong, then those perceptions will, in turn, shape their perspectives and experiences. International students, being temporary migrants, face these issues of belonging more profoundly than other migrants. To put it bluntly, international students largely come to New Zealand not to settle, but to study. Their motives are different.

In later chapters, this thesis looks at the means through which international students seek to belong; that is, what actions they undertake to seek out and/or to settle in a place of belonging, and what actions make some of these students transnational, whether they are in New Zealand or in their countries of origin. However, this chapter is concerned with the environment in which they do this 'seeking'. This chapter is less concerned with their actions and more with their perceptions. Belonging entails recognition (cf. Calhoun, 1993) and this recognition is informed by perception, both self-perception and perception by others.

While other chapters deal more specifically with notions of ontological security (especially Chapter Seven), this chapter deals with social belonging, or lack thereof. The New Zealand that students arrive into has a history of perceptions about Asian peoples and the perceptions of yesterday are the antecedents of the perceptions of today. Historically, the Asian population in New Zealand were not welcomed: Asians did not fit into the conception of the 'new world' of New Zealand's colonisers (McKinnon, 1996; Fleras and Spoonley, 1999; cf. Gibbons, 2002). New Zealand has always employed selective

immigration and particularly so when it comes to Asian peoples in general and Chinese in particular. Still today there are (mis)perceptions about and resentment against the Asian community in New Zealand which, in recent years, has grown significantly (Trlin et al, 1997). While New Zealand might be a 'new world' for Asian students, it remains one with 'old world' perceptions.

The significant growth in the number of Asian students in New Zealand has corresponded with an equally significant growth in the number of Asian migrants in general, to the extent that Asian migrants now form one of the largest immigrant groups to New Zealand and have contributed significantly to the ethnic diversification of New Zealand society. While Asian students are not migrants *per se* (in that they intend to return to their countries of origin, at least according to their visas), the significant Asian population in New Zealand nevertheless shapes the perceptions about Asian peoples in New Zealand and the perceptions and experiences of Asian students here. It also affects their decision of where in New Zealand to study.

While the previous chapter analysed the social and ideological context and interaction as demonstrated through tertiary education policy and the ideological drivers behind the attitude toward international students, this chapter analyses *social* contexts and, in particular, interaction with 'domestic' students. Other students can also perpetuate exclusion. Many of the returnees in this research said that they had great difficulty engaging with Kiwi students; this difficulty in host-sojourner interaction is evidenced in other research of this nature (cf. Ward, 2001; Ward et al, 2001).

As international students may choose to remain in their own enclaves, so Kiwi students may also choose to be exclusionary, although for different reasons. In the student *body politic*, Kiwi students are the dominant group, adhere to the dominant discourse and thereby have the power to use this domination to exclude. Arguably, this exclusion is the result of ontological insecurity: as international students are perceived to be more threatening, the discourse of difference and racism becomes increasingly fundamentalist and exclusionary. This is evident in New Zealand and at every recent General Election as issues of immigration threatens notions of homogeneity (Trlin et al, 1997; cf. James, 2002).

A particular discourse, such as racism, can become so deeply embedded in habitus and structures, that these structures appear to take their own course; human agency is not divorced from the process, but rather involved, adhering to the discourse without questioning it. As Bourdieu argues, “[t]he habitus entertains with the social world that has produced it a real ontological complicity, the source of cognition without consciousness, intentionality without intention, and a practical mastery of the world’s regularities which allows one to anticipate the future, without even needing to posit it as such” (Bourdieu, cited in Bouveresse, 1999:52-3). Further, Calhoun (2000:713) argues that habitus is “the meeting point between institutions and bodies. That is, the basic way in which each person as a biological being connects with the sociocultural order in such a way that the various games of life keep their meaning, keep being played.”

This racist discourse, an adherence to a neo-liberal ideology, and the connection between the individual and the socio-cultural context of ideologies and ideologues, are all part of this *habitus*, part of the contemporary environment into which international students arrive, and part of the history that informs it.

PERCEPTIONS OF ASIAN PEOPLES IN NEW ZEALAND

Since the mid-1930s, New Zealand’s national identity was constructed around the mono-cultural, interventionist and centralised welfare state (Kelsey, 1997). With the election of the fourth Labour Government, 1984 was a watershed year for New Zealand policy as it was for New Zealand’s national identity. Pakeha New Zealanders particularly felt this crisis of identity. They responded in two ways: nostalgia and xenophobia (Kelsey, 1997). Fleras and Spoonley (1999:150, 151) have argued that:

New Zealand at the turn of the millennium is experiencing a crisis of national identity. It seems to have lost that cocky assurance of who it is, why it exists, where it stands in the global scheme of things, how it should relate to its neighbours, and where it should be going....No longer could New Zealanders define themselves as a staunchly White oasis in a sea of 'brown' and 'yellow' faces. Like it or not, New Zealand's national identity was being contested because of these major shifts and the reality of a culturally diverse New Zealand.

While the events of significant economic and social change from 1984 onwards threatened New Zealand’s apparent homogeneity and national identity, the xenophobic response of

Pakeha New Zealanders did not develop overnight. New Zealand has always struggled with being a nation of many colours, as Sedgwick (1984:62) has argued:

The development of the Chinese community has taken place, by and large, in a context which has desired to comprehend neither the process nor the necessity of its existence. This in itself has ensured the maintenance of inaccurate stereotypes and aided in persistent attempts to discuss and legislate against Chinese residence in the absence of meaningful communication with the community.

If we were in any doubt of his claims, we can read a memorandum from the Department of External Affairs ('Immigration into New Zealand's International Problems NZNA, PM 323/3/18 Pt.1), written in 1953:

Our immigration is based firmly on the principle that we are and intend to remain a country of European development. It is inevitably discriminatory against Asians – indeed against all persons who are not wholly of European race and colour. Whereas we have done much to encourage immigration from Europe, we do everything to discourage it from Asia. (cited in Brawley, 1993:36)

New Zealand was, and remains, a country of selective immigration (McKinnon, 1996; Fleras and Spoonley, 1999), albeit one that is less selective than it was before 1986 and no longer based on explicit racial grounds. The first settlers to New Zealand arrived here for many reasons, but one reason was to build a better Britain: to create something of antipodean paradise. Many of the settlers' ancestors have sought to 'reforge' this paradise ever since (Belich, 2001). However, plans of paradise were disrupted, by Maori and by other immigrants, who, importantly for the colonists, *were not white*.

Arrival of Asian peoples to New Zealand

Asian peoples first arrived in New Zealand shortly after the first wave of European colonists, in the 1860s, to dig gold (Palat, 1996). In 1881, they constituted only just over one percent of the population (Palat, 1996). These migrants were both temporary and male (Ip, 1996; Palat, 1996). Twenty years after the arrival of the first Asian immigrants to New Zealand, the New Zealand government enacted the first of a series of restrictive immigration laws. These included the Chinese Immigration Act (1881), which restricted entry to Chinese, and later, the Immigration Restriction Act (1899), which was significantly aimed at non-European immigrants (McKinnon, 1996). Similar acts were

enacted between 1888 and 1896 (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999; McKinnon, 1996; Spoonley, 1997). Between 1879 and 1920, politicians introduced to the House of Representatives twenty Bills designed to restrict economic activity and immigration of Chinese (Moloughney and Stenhouse, 1999). Overall, the discriminatory Parliamentary Acts from 1881 to 1920 saw a decline in the Chinese population from 1907 to its lowest level of 2,147 in 1916 (Ip, 1996). Ultimately, Chinese were not granted citizenship until 1951 (Spoonley, 1997). New Zealand was the last of immigrant-receiving countries to abolish racially biased immigration policies and legislation (Ip, 1996; Palat, 1996).

When this 'novel' world of Asian migrants entered this 'new world' of colonists, they disrupted the "simulacrum of the old world [the colonists] had come from" (Gibbons, 2002:8). As accounts of Asian migration to New Zealand have shown (Belich, 2001; Ip, 1996; Spoonley, 1997), this disruption was keenly felt and rarely welcomed. It is important to recognise this social history of stereotypes in New Zealand against Asian migrants, because, while Asian students are not migrants *per se*, the New Zealand public tends not to make such a clear distinction. The differences, being phenotypical, are noticeable. Whether the attitudes have changed is not so much the issue, as the fact that whatever the attitudes are today, they have their roots in the prejudices of the past. The sentiments of today have their antecedents in the anti-Asian sentiments of yesterday.

Recent arrivals of Asian migrants

Since 1986, the number of Asian peoples migrating to New Zealand is the first wave of migration dominated by people non-kin to the domestic population since the displacement of Maori by Pakeha in the 1850s (McKinnon, 1996) and the Pacific peoples in the 1950s. From 1985 to 1995, the number of Asian migrants increased five-fold, many of them as business migrants, a proportion of whom would not settle in New Zealand, but rather would use New Zealand for the acquisition of educational qualifications and citizenship (Ongley, 1996). Between April 1989 and March 1994, the net migration gain from North, Southeast, and South Asia (of 44,100) was four times that of the gain of the early 1980s and twice that of the gain during Labour's restructuring initiatives (Bedford, 1996).

Asian peoples accounted for 50 percent of those approved for residence in 1993 and 60 percent in 1995, reversing trends of a decade earlier when Europeans and North Americans had accounted for 61 percent of all permanent residence approvals (Bedford et al, 2000; Trlin, 1997). Trlin (1997) shows that in 1993 North Asia and the combined regions of North, South and Southeast Asia accounted for almost half of all persons approved for residential approvals into New Zealand; they were most strongly represented in the Business Investment Category (79 percent) and the General Category (58 percent). By the 1990s, Asian nationals comprised 61 per cent of the total net gain of all non-New Zealanders. Overall, residence approvals jumped sharply from 28,447 in 1993, to 42,600 in 1994, to 54,800 in 1995 (Trlin, 1997). Between 1991 and 1995, the net migration rate of Asian peoples to New Zealand virtually doubled, predominantly from North Asia (McKinnon, 1996; Vasil and Yoon, 1996) and by 1995, Asian peoples accounted for 60 percent of those approved for residence (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999).

Between 1 January and 31 December 1995, New Zealand's population underwent its largest percentage increase for the calendar year since 1974, of 1.85 percent. During this year, the net gain through migration exceeded the gain through natural increase for the first time since the early twentieth century (Bedford, 1996). Of the 553,000 arrivals from Asian countries in 1995/6, three quarters were from countries in East Asia; in the same year, East Asian peoples accounted for 73 percent gain in terms of net migration, most of these for permanent and long-term settlement (Bedford and Lidgard, 1997).

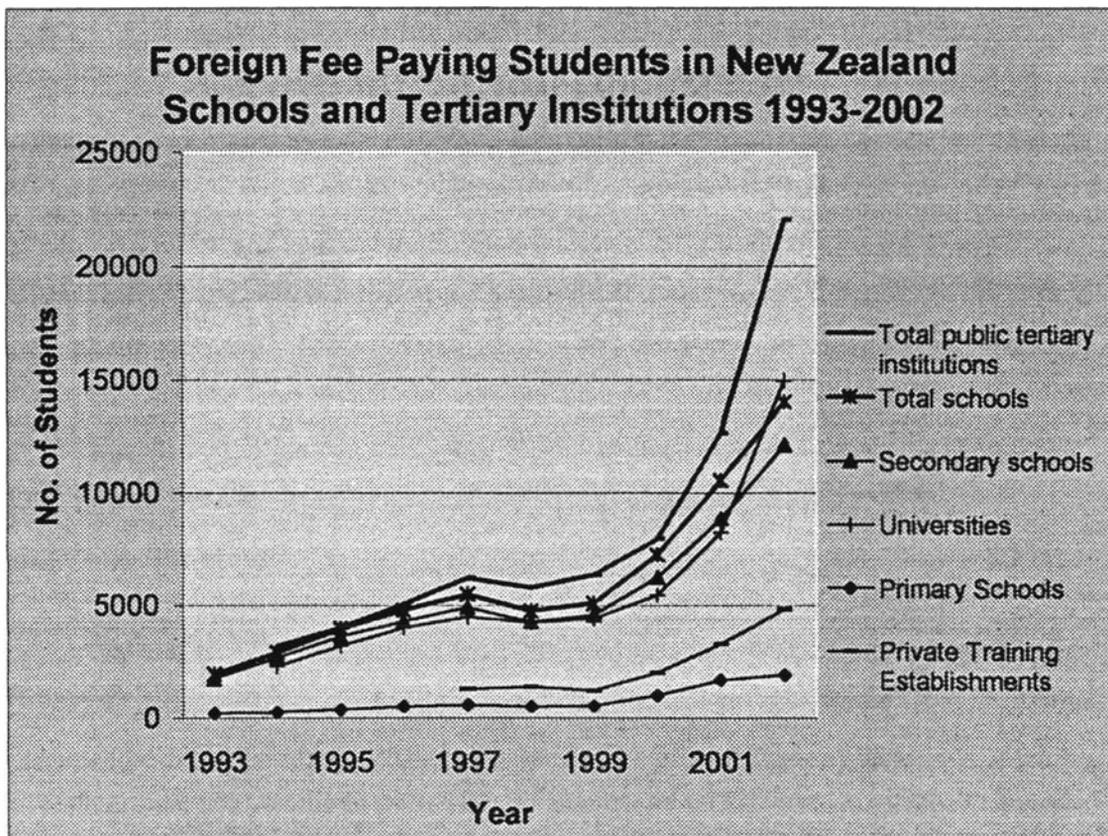
In 1995/6 citizens of China (as opposed to Taiwan or Hong Kong) constituted the largest contribution of any Asian country to net migration gains in New Zealand (Bedford and Lidgard, 1997). During 1995, within the Asian intake of 39 percent of the net gain of 59,500 non-New Zealand citizens, migration from citizens of China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan made the major contributions respectively (Bedford, 1996). Fifty-six percent of the Permanent and Long Term migrants gain of 42,600 for 1995 were accounted for by citizens of Asian countries (Bedford, 1996). In 1997, Asian peoples contributed 37,000 people to Auckland's growth, which represented three-quarters of the region's growth (Ho et al, 1997).

Arrivals of international students

There are similar growth rates in the number of international students arriving in New Zealand. In primary schools, there was an increase of 384% of full-fee paying students between 1993 and 2000. Eighty-five percent of these students came from Asia and over half from South Korea. In secondary schools, during the same period, there was an increase of 258% of full-fee paying students, although there was a significant slump during the Asian economic crisis from 1997 to 1999. Over 90% of these students in secondary schools come from Asia, with China being the single largest source country (there was a 284% increase of students from Mainland China alone between 1999 and 2000) (Ministry of Education, 2001b).

In public tertiary institutions, there was an increase from 3,945 full-fee paying students in 1994 to 11,498 full-fee paying students in 2000; between 1999 and 2000, there was a 34% increase in the numbers of FFP students. In 2000, almost 80% of these students were from Asia, with China again being the leading source country, with a 302% increase in the number of students from China between 1999 and 2000. Conversely, there was a drop of full-fee paying students from Malaysia over the period 1997-2000, from 37% in 1999 to 14% in 2000 (Ministry of Education, 2001b). This growth can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Foreign Fee Paying Students in New Zealand Schools and Tertiary Institutions 1993-2002



Universities accounted for the largest proportion (65%) of public tertiary full-fee paying students in 2001. The change of status of Auckland University of Technology (from a polytechnic, as the Auckland Institute of Technology) accentuated this proportionate growth of international students in universities. A similar effect will occur with the merger of the Auckland University of Technology with UNITEC Institute of Technology in 2003/4. Of those public tertiary institutions enrolling full-fee paying students at greater than six percent of their total roll, UNITEC Institute of Technology had 17% FFP students, Lincoln University had 15%, the University of Waikato had 11% and the Auckland University of Technology had 10% (Ministry of Education, 2002c).

By way of comparison, the rate of increase of 'domestic' students in Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) in 2001 was 6.9 percent compared to a 49.6 percent increase of international student enrolments in the same year. Overall, this contributed to the highest growth rate in the number of enrolments in formal programmes of study in TEIs since

1995, with an increase of 4.7% enrolments from 2000 to 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2002e).

While there is no direct data available on the regional distribution of FFP students in public tertiary institutions, a breakdown of the main campus location of institutions shows that between 2000 and 2001 there was a 71% growth in Auckland compared to a 58.9% growth nationally (Ministry of Education, 2002c). Research commissioned by the North Shore City Council in 2002 showed that in the decade 1992-2001, North Shore City had a higher growth rate of public FFP students (at primary, secondary and tertiary levels) than Auckland City. The large Asian migrant population on Auckland's North Shore is a factor in this growth and in the particular demography of international students in North Shore City (Butcher, 2002).

There is an incomplete picture available for the number of full-fee paying students in the private training sector and in the data available in relation to private training establishments (PTEs), including English language schools. This is largely because, while the Ministry of Education receives statistical returns from PTEs in the same way they do for public education providers, this only represents a minority of PTEs (those who receive tuition subsidies from the Ministry of Education and/or are recognised for student loans and allowances) and therefore does not include most English language schools.

All other PTEs registered with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) are sent a questionnaire by the Ministry of Education. Although, despite a good response rate, only a third of the providers reported no foreign students at the time of the survey, which took place during one-week in July. This reflects both the nature of the provider's business (offering a number of short courses) as well as the way in which the data is requested (Ministry of Education, 2002c).

Nevertheless, July 2001 statistical returns showed that for both funded and un-funded private providers, there was a 64% annual increase in the number of FFP students in both 2000 and 2001. The majority of FFP students in the private training sector were of Asian citizenship (83% in 2001); and the most common country of citizenship for these students was China (37% of all students in PTEs). There was an increase of Chinese student

numbers from 580 students in 2000 to 1,206 students in 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2002c).

Data collections for English Language providers are undertaken by Statistics New Zealand as part of its reporting on New Zealand's balance of payments. Figures are based on a 'census' of 90 English language providers in 1999 and a 'survey' of 49 English language providers for the year ended 30 June 2002 and the year ended 31 March 2001. This data shows that there was a growth in the number of FFP students in English language providers from 15,718 in 1999 to 26,203 in 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2002c).

Students' reasons for studying in New Zealand

While the previous chapter showed that Asian students arrived in New Zealand because, in the earlier days of the Colombo Plan at least, they were afforded the opportunity to come, more recent students have studied in New Zealand largely for different reasons. Asian students' decision to study in New Zealand is informed ostensibly by the goal of attaining cultural capital. Giddens (1991:5) argues that:

[t]he more tradition loses its holds, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options...[B]ecause of the 'openness' of social life today, the pluralisation of contexts of action and the diversity of 'authorities', lifestyle choice is increasingly important in the constitution of self-identity and daily activity.

As shown in later chapters, lifestyle choices as factors in self-identity become particularly important for the re-entering international student. The returning student has encountered a pluralisation of contexts, contexts that they encountered in making the lifestyle decision to study abroad in the first instance. One significant life decision that is influenced by this 'dialectic interplay' is the decision to study abroad, and today, more than the first international students to New Zealand, there are a diverse 'pluralisation of contexts of action' and a 'diversity of authorities' to inform or direct this decision and the other multitude of decisions inherent in it.

This cultural capital, while valuable in itself, is more valuable when it can be converted into economic capital: an overseas degree becomes a stepping-stone to greater opportunities in a multitude of avenues. Bourdieu's sociology provides a helpful analysis of the dialectic interplay between the human agent and the structures that influence that agent and of which that agent is a part. It does not deny that market forces (in this context) in the form of attaining cultural capital (in the form of an overseas degree) are a significant influence in a decision to study abroad. Nor, however, does it ignore the individual agent's ability to act within a range of possibilities; that is, their actions are not *determined* by the structures around them, even if those structures are highly influential in their decision making.

Asian students' decision to study overseas will undoubtedly influence their lifestyle decisions, affect their ontological security and actively alter the convertibility of their cultural-intellectual capital into economic capital. In this context, then, New Zealand is one of many 'players' in the field; an overseas education is, unequivocally, a means to an end. Students choose New Zealand above other countries for a plethora of reasons and sometimes by default, but their decision to study in New Zealand is not because of some inherent quality that New Zealand possesses.

While factors such as its lifestyle and relatively cheap education are important, they cannot be isolated from broader structural, ideological and social forces. These forces include a dominant discourse that restricts higher education of certain ethnic groups (such as Malaysian-Chinese in Malaysia) and discourses that encourage, through fear and ontological and social insecurity, the flight of large numbers of people to other countries (such as in Hong Kong). For some students then, the attainment of cultural capital, in the form of an overseas degree, is not so much an option as a necessity.

The cultural capital of a degree is a resource for individual and collective actors, which, while intangible (in one sense) serves as a door-opener (Faist, 2000). It is also a symbolic strategy of identification (Bourdieu, 1991). Bourdieu's notion of multiform, convertible capital is a useful framework for analysis here. While the economic capital of an overseas degree, in the form of fees paid, for example, is obvious, the cultural capital of an overseas degree may be less obvious, but it is no less important. Equally, if not more important, is the *convertibility* of this cultural capital.

Cultural capital may have restricted use if it cannot be converted into economic capital. It is this convertibility of capital that is a strong impetus for international students, in the choices of courses that they make both in terms of disciplines and where they study and in the choices they make when they re-enter their countries of origin. It is at this stage – their re-entry – that their choices, perceptions, and assumptions are tested. However, it is not the overseas degree *per se* that holds the cultural capital – it is the *use* and the *environment in which it is used* that determine its effective convertibility. Those who hold it, in an environment that recognises it, may legitimise the cultural capital. .

Calhoun (1993:71-2) argues that:

Bourdieu's sociology provides for effective accounts of the influences which objective circumstances, historical patterns of distribution of various resources, and the trajectories of different actors through social fields all have on power relations...More centrally, it gives account of the various socially determined interests people may pursue and the ways in which social structures constrain such action.

Bourdieu's sociology is unapologetically structuralist (Calhoun, 1993) and the risk in applying it is to deny human agency altogether, or, at the very least, to see human agents as pawns in a game of capital convertibility and control. However, Bourdieu does not ignore the agent's response and reaction: "[h]e wanted to show how patterns of social life could be maintained over time without this either being specifically willed by agents or the result of external factors beyond the reach of agents' wills" (Calhoun, 1993:72). Structures, 'culture', or 'modes of production' do not exist independent of human actors, nor are human actors simply products of their situations. It is not an either/or dichotomy. Bourdieu argues that agents act within a socially constructed range of possibilities, durably inscribed within them as well as in the social world in which they move (Calhoun, 1993).

As a consequence of this, when a student chooses to study abroad they are not doing so solely *because* of market forces (in the sense that the market determined their decision); however, the market (in the sense of the successful convertibility of capital) *features* in their decision. That is, they intend to use the 'market' – the choice to study overseas – to *actively alter* that particular form of cultural-intellectual capital into economic capital. Therefore, while it is important to note why students choose *New Zealand* to study in, as opposed to the many other countries in the world in which they could choose to study, that question of where to study is almost incidental. As their reasons below demonstrate, international students are using New Zealand (as international students might also use

Australia or Canada or the United States or Britain) as a *means to an end*: the acquisition of a foreign degree so that ultimately it can be converted from cultural capital into economic capital in their countries of origin, or elsewhere.

The reasons why students chose to study in New Zealand can be broadly grouped into two categories: they did not have the money to study elsewhere or they did not have the marks to study elsewhere. While these are negative reasons (that is, studying in New Zealand by default rather than by choice), they are supported by the evidence of this research. Few international students apply for just one university or just one country: they do not choose New Zealand as much as other places do not choose them. However, they do choose to *apply* to New Zealand, even if they may wish to be accepted by other countries. Having chosen New Zealand as a country, they then tend to choose the city and then the particular institution in that order. Their reasons for applying are noteworthy. This response was indicative:

I thought the States was dangerous, [the] UK was too cold, Canada was too far away, [and] Australia, I...never liked Australians, so I chose New Zealand. [Interview 4 RGS GF 080201]

Other students in this research applied to New Zealand on the recommendation of others: parents who had studied in New Zealand as Colombo Plan students; friends who had studied here; or relatives who had visited.

Once students chose the country in which they were to study (or, perhaps, to put it more truthfully, the country chose them), they next chose the city in which to study. In New Zealand, only the University of Auckland is named after the city in which it is based (with the possible exception of Victoria University of Wellington, however this is commonly known as just 'Victoria University'). This may explain why more students study in Auckland than any other city in New Zealand; they may also be able to find it on a map and may have heard of it before. Auckland can be a draw-card for other reasons as well, namely that it is where there are other international students and other Asian peoples, and it has a commercial infrastructure in place to support Asian students.

However, some students *do not* choose Auckland for exactly the same reasons. Students who feel they want to experience more of 'New Zealand' life (what they mean, they elaborate, is where there are not so many other Asian students) will choose another city. However, this is not to say that the particular universities played no role whatsoever in students' decision-making. Factors such as their promotional material, the speed and efficiency to which they answered queries and registrations (which is a significant factor), and the type of courses they offered, all entered into the students' equations. Issues over which the institutions had no control, such as whether the student's friends attended that particular university also played a part. While no students gave it as their primary reason, the ease of attaining a visa in New Zealand (with an intention of gaining permanent residency) may also feature in their decision, as was the case with Hong Kong returnees in this research.

Previous research (Edu World, 2001) has indicated that, in addition to a limit of the number of places available to certain students, as with Chinese-Malaysian students, students will choose to go overseas for a plethora of reasons. These reasons include: the high regard that overseas degrees are held in; the global acceptance and therefore transportability of an international degree; being able to study in an English-speaking environment; to benefit from a broader style of education; to gain exposure to different cultures; and to secede to family desire.

Students from certain countries have to undertake study abroad if they want to undertake tertiary study. This is certainly the case for Malaysian-Chinese students. It is possible to study at a local university, but it is extremely difficult to get in. As one student expressed it:

I was actually... prepared to go to [the] local university. I was prepared to have spent two years of form six, no social life, not going out, which is the kind...I thought we...would have to put in: two years, study day and night, no weekends, everything to get to perhaps to get a place at local university....That's the kind of...competition that we are talking about. And once you get into your local university, you are not guaranteed a place...you are not guaranteed a subject you're studying, you're not guaranteed the university that you want, so to go there.... Basically, it's already in our mind that we have to adapt. [Interview 14 RGMYKLF 130201]

Hong Kong students' reasons for coming also deserve special mention. Most of the Hong Kong students in this study were permanent residents in New Zealand although, at the time of the fieldwork (during 2001), lived and worked in Hong Kong. Many Hong Kong students came to New Zealand with their families and with the intention to stay. The watershed year of 1997 brought Hong Kong both the hand-over to China, and the Asian economic crisis and one or other or both of these tended to serve as strong impetuses for Hong Kong emigration to New Zealand.

This, in turn, meant that Hong Kong students were not 'international students' in the technical sense of the term, in that they would have paid the equivalent of domestic student fees and would have bypassed international student support services altogether. The issue surrounding permanent resident students is salient and tends to be overlooked in most research, perhaps because their economic impact is not any more significant than any other non-international student. However, they are international students in everything but name, in the sense of the particular issues they face in terms of language, pastoral care, and learning assistance. Potentially, they could face these issues to greater acuity than other international students as they will not have had to fulfill the language criteria required for international students to be admitted to a public tertiary institution. Therefore, permanent resident students tend to 'fall between the cracks', where they are neither international students (technically, at least) nor domestic students.

Previous research (EduWorld, 2001) has also suggested that the United States is seen as a destination that offers definitive outcomes, such as enhanced employment opportunities and wealth. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, is seen as a more traditional destination, of prestigious universities, high academic standards, and a strong sense of tradition. Australia, this report claimed, "was more suited for the burgeoning middle classes of Asia – a safe, affordable and close destination" (EduWorld, 2001:19). When options of study in the Northern Hemisphere had been exhausted, students would then look toward Australasia and while choosing between Australia and New Zealand tended to rest on the recommendations of others rather than any economic cost-benefit analysis; there was also a perception that New Zealand was less 'racist' than Australia. Whether their perceptions in this area matched reality is another matter altogether and one dealt with more fully shortly, but the very fact that they held these perceptions at all is intriguing.

Contemporary attitudes toward Asian peoples

Perceptions work both ways. Many non-Chinese people still cannot distinguish between Malaysian-Chinese or Singaporean-Chinese and continue to think of Chinese as a homogenous group of people who all speak the same language and all come from China (Ip, 1996). As Ip (1996:162) argues, “[w]hen the Chinese, like all other New Zealanders, can function free from prejudice and stereo-typing, they will do much to enhance the nation as a truly robust multi-ethnic modern society.” Recent media reports suggest that through explicit prejudice, the provision of a safe country is far from actuality (Mold, 2000), that Asian students are far from well-behaved (cf. Evans, 2002; Ross, 2002), and that they may be being exploited by the state (Morgan, 2002). Furthermore, new immigrants experience many difficulties facing racism and struggle to retain their cultural identity (Boyer, 1995; Yoon, 1995a)

Recent research from Trlin et al (1997), using National Business Review surveys from 1994 and 1995, identifies negative views held against Asian immigrants and Asians coming as international students. The various reasons for these negative prejudices include: that Asian peoples are a cultural or social threat; that they threaten the New Zealand identity; and that Asian international students are a threat to New Zealand students. Trlin et al (1997) identify four factors that underlie public concerns regarding Asian immigration: a sense of national identity and prejudice, socio-economic power and visibility, the politics of immigration, and the nature and outcomes of immigration politics.

Trlin et al (1997) show that a 1992 survey of 750 people found that while almost two-thirds thought Asian migrants contributed to New Zealand life, 44 percent believed there were still too many in the country. Four years later in 1996, in a TV One-Colmar Brunton survey of 1,000 people, 47 percent felt that the number of Asian peoples coming to New Zealand should be reduced (an increase from 32 percent in 1990). These perceptions and attitudes include: the suspected presence of Asian triad gangs, the exploitation of Asian women in the sex industry, the impact upon Auckland’s residential property market, ‘astronaut’ migrants, and the English language incompetence of Asian students in secondary schools and the pressure this places on resources. These prejudices highlight that, as with the Polynesian migrants of the 1970s, animosity is directed only to non-white immigrants (Bedford, 1996).

Bob Hall (1994) analysed a survey undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs as part of its Asia 2000 programme in late 1993 and early 1994, with a sample size of 600 people all of whom were above 18 years old. Respondents were asked about favourable and unfavourable perceptions of Asian peoples. The most significant favoured perception was that Asian peoples were "hard working and industrious" (as reported by 49 percent of respondents); this was followed some way behind by the perception that Asian peoples were "wealthy and affluent" (only 18 percent of respondents). The primary negative perception of Asian peoples was that they stuck to themselves, formed a society within a society, and did not readily adapt to a New Zealand lifestyle. Twenty-nine percent of people surveyed felt that Asian immigration was a good thing for New Zealand while 33 percent were more ambivalent.

According to the report's authors, the misgivings about Asian peoples were held primarily amongst the less educated and centred mainly on increased competition for jobs, and anxiety about New Zealand's culture and identity (Hall, 1994). However, Hall (1994) goes on to illustrate incidences of racist attacks by skinheads in Christchurch and New Plymouth, conflicts between ethnic groups at secondary schools in Auckland, and resentment against Chinese who were apparently flaunting their wealth. He concludes with what is perhaps too understated a comment: "[t]he level of racist attitude and abuse within New Zealand society is insignificant in comparison with some other societies, but *it is a matter that requires attention*" (Hall, 1994:116,119, my emphasis).

There are many reasons why some New Zealanders resent Asian peoples. These reasons include: an apparent flaunting of their prosperity (Palat, 1996); for despoiling the country and its environment; for threatening the tangata whenua of the Maori (Palat, 1996; Vasil and Yoon, 1996); for being wealthy and lacking commitment to their home land (Friesen and Ip, 1997); for their academic excellence, or their poor level of English (Bennett, 1998; Department of Internal Affairs, 1999; Ip, 1995); for their 'foreignness', despite the fact the Chinese have been in New Zealand since the 1860s (Ip, 1996); for displacing New Zealand students on tertiary campuses and in secondary schools (Bennett, 1998); because the new wealthy Asian businessperson immigrant does not look up to the Pakeha for support and guidance as former immigrants perhaps once did (Vasil and Yoon, 1996); and for apparently not integrating into New Zealand life and adopting the Pakeha lifestyle (Vasil and Yoon, 1996). Fleras and Spoonley (1999:157, my emphasis) view it succinctly:

Nineteenth-century racism was based on prejudice towards a seemingly backward and inferior 'race', who many perceived as a threat to the purity and nobility of the dominant 'race'. *Contemporary racism is unmistakably cultural*: Asians are stereotyped and resented as relentlessly driven people whose ostentatious displays and consumerist binges threaten to undermine the integrity of society and of its clean green image. *Blatant forms of racism have given way to more polite styles that tend to be oblique or coded in disguised terms*.

New Zealand has a further issue it must face: the place of migrants in a country founded on a bicultural axis. The discourse of 'race' and 'race relations', 'race' itself a categorisation of naming (Spoonley, 1993), foregrounds public discourse and shapes public attitudes (cf. Fleras and Spoonley, 1999). Asian students form part of this "intercultural labyrinth" (Tully, 1995); they enter into a 'new world' with 'old world' perceptions.

Perceptions by the Other Students

Returnees were asked what they thought the Kiwi students thought of them, one commented:

I didn't think they were very interested in getting to know us.... They probably thought we were very cliquish or something, hanging around in groups and being very strange [laughs] studying too hard. I guess some of them thought we were a bit bookish and studied too hard and too serious and you know not fun loving enough or something. [Interview 2, RGSGF]

Few international students said that they found it easy to mix with or relate to Kiwi students. Some sought to explain this, without prompting, on all sorts of grounds. These justifications included that: Kiwi students had already built up their friendships; the cultures are very different; the background is very different; the conversation topics are different; the Kiwi accent or colloquialisms are difficult to understand; and Kiwi students thought Asian students were dumb, not creative, didn't "study smart" and didn't know how to play. Whether Kiwi students thought these things or not is not so much the issue as that is how the international students perceived them, as suggested by this returnee:

I think it's difficult because the classmates that I have...are quite reluctant to communicate with the Asian student... They tend to group together: the Kiwi group together and the Asian students tend to group their own as well.... At that time I'm the only Hong Kong student in my department...so I find it's quite difficult to join either the Kiwi group or the Malaysian Singapore group.... Probably because I can't speak good English so Kiwi don't want to talk to me and I couldn't really understand the Malaysian Singaporean accent, so

they were quite reluctant to me to talk to them as well, so I was pretty much by myself
 [Interview HK9 RGHKF 010401]

Ward et al (2001:166), in recognising this limited host-sojourner interaction, argue:

Overseas students are more likely to have co-national friends, and on the whole, they find establishing friendships more difficult than their local counterparts. Although host nationals, co-nationals and other non-compatriot international students can provide both informational and social support, research suggests that host nationals are preferred for tangible, instrumental assistance while other students, particularly co-nationals, are more heavily relied upon for socio-emotional support.

This finding is supported by earlier research. Cross-cultural studies demonstrate that most international students have primary key bonds with co-nationals. Klineberg and Hull (1979) researched over 2,500 international students in the United States, the majority of whom (57%) indicated that their best friend was a fellow international student or a co-national. Recent research in New Zealand mirrors this finding (Ward, 2001). Ward (2002) in her study of the differences between the experiences and expectations of international students found similarly, as is tabulated below:

Expectation	% Expected	% Experienced
Understand NZ English	80	57
Express myself effectively in English	77	40
Get good grades	87	28
Form friendships with NZers	91	41
Enjoy socialising with NZers	82	52
Understand NZ social customs	82	34
Be accepted by NZers	72	37
Maintain a positive outlook	88	69
Feel stressed	31	49
Have enough money	62	51
Have no problems with my living arrangements	59	70

Similar research in Australia, notes Ward (2001) draws the same conclusions.

This is perhaps an obvious conclusion: international students will seek emotional support from those who are undergoing similar experiences to themselves, namely other international students. However, Ward et al (2001:166) go onto argue:

There are a number of factors that affect the structural components and functional outcomes of intercultural contact, and stereotypes, in particular, are known to exert a strong influence on the interactions between local and overseas students. In some situations, such as equal status contact under conditions of low threat, stereotypes may foster positive intergroup relations. However, this is not uniformly the case for interactions between domestic and international students. Research has suggested that a significant proportion of overseas students feel ambivalent about their relations with host nationals and that many perceive discrimination.

The ambivalence and perceptions experienced by the students in this research is not unique. As international students may choose to remain within their own enclaves, domestic Kiwi students may choose similarly. Spoonley (1993:4) argues

Many groups might be said to be prejudiced in a variety of ways, but when that prejudice is combined with power, then the implications are quite different. A dominant group not only holds negative beliefs about other groups but, because of the power to control resources, it is able to practise those beliefs in a discriminatory manner.

On a university campus, Kiwi (read: those of a New Zealand nationality or origin) students are the dominant group; they are the localised gatekeepers. Kiwi students can exclude an international student in a class discussion, in a group assignment, or by more subtle nuances of behaviour. Their reasons for exclusion may be quite different from the reasons for exclusion adopted by international student-based groups. While for international student-based groups there may be an element of 'safety-in-numbers', that argument may not be as stringent for Kiwi-based groups, where they are the dominant group. As the dominant group, they are in a position to exclude: they not only have the power to exclude, but they choose to use that power. To a large extent, 'international' and 'Kiwi' students exist in 'parallel universes' on a campus: their interaction is rarely encouraged or facilitated from the dominant ideologies or structures, and those students that do interact tend to do so individually rather than *en masse*. Young (1999:14), using Giddens, suggests that this exclusion is part of ontological insecurity:

[T]hat is, where self-identity is not embedded in our sense of biographical continuity, where the protective cocoon which filters out challenges and risks to our sense of certainty

becomes weakened and where an absolute sense of one's normality becomes disoriented by the surrounding relativism of value....[T]he pressing nature of a plurality of alternative social worlds, some the result of such incipient individuality, manifestly undermines any easy acceptance of unquestioned value.

Racism is both a form of categorisation and exclusion (Said, 1995; Spoonley, 1993), employed particularly when ontological security (of an individual or a group of people) is under threat. The threat here is the plurality of alternative social worlds in the form of immigration. The ontological insecurity experienced on a campus is arguably a microcosm of similar ontological insecurity experienced in the population at large. Indeed, previous research has demonstrated that at times of insecurity, immigrants are scapegoats (Trlin et al, 1997).

Combined, this ontological insecurity and the dominant discourse can prove a significant pair: one tends to feed the other. As the dominant discourse is challenged, it becomes more exclusionary, more strident, and more fundamental. At its most obvious level, it can demonstrate itself through forms of radicalism. However, if an environment has been engendered that promotes, albeit implicitly, this dominant discourse, it can be more subtle.

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT NEW ZEALAND: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT STUDENTS

There are effectively two 'worlds' of perceptions: the perceptions that students hold about New Zealand and the perceptions that some New Zealanders hold about Asian students. These two 'worlds' are not parallel universes; they react to each other. Bourdieu's notion of habitus allows us a form of mediation for the codes and discourses that constitute perceptions. There are at least two discourses, the 'official' and the 'unofficial'; the one, through text, reproduction and translation, is the notion of New Zealand and New Zealanders that informs students' conceptions about New Zealand before they arrive here, often notions of quite an idyllic setting. The 'unofficial' discourse, on the other hand, is the 'underbelly' of the 'official' discourse: it is that which is hidden from the public eye, or at least that which is never acknowledged. It does not resonate with the 'official' discourse (that is, the presentation and perception of New Zealand abroad); on the contrary, students

find that their experiences *in situ* have points of dissonance with their hitherto held conceptions.

Students' perceptions about New Zealand

The perceptions of the colonisers of New Zealand about the 'Other' (whether that 'Other' be Maori or Asian immigrants) were rooted in a 'scientific' discourse about survival of the fittest and a 'curiosity' about a 'novel' world that was not only written about, explored, and codified, but also manipulated and managed (Said, 1995; cf. Gibbons, 1998, 2002). Similarly, (to a degree) the perceptions of the 'West' – such as the 'social capital' of their degrees – are perceptions derived from somewhere. These 'predispositions' are part of the habitus which students use in making decisions. These predispositions are gathered through tradition, text, and reproduction, through what Bourdieu refers to as the "codification" of culture:

The extent to which the schemes of the habitus are objectified in codified knowledge, transmitted as such, varied greatly between one area of practice and another.... Although they are among the most codified aspects of the cultural tradition, the precepts of custom which govern the temporal distribution of activities vary greatly from place to place and, in the same place, from one official informant to another. We find here again the opposition between official knowledge...and all kinds of unofficial or secret, even clandestine knowledge and practice, which, though they are the product of the same generative schemes, obey a different logic (cited in Calhoun, 1993:79).

This 'habitus' is both an 'internationalisation' and an 'incorporation' of culture: it constitutes both perceptions and procedures (Cicourel, 1993). Bourdieu's notions of capital, habitus, and field are mediating terms in which social structure determines the time, place, and participants and the codes and competencies of discourse. They are interdependent: they provide us with an analytical framework in order to appreciate the relative independence of forms of accumulation, arenas of social endeavour, and schemes of practice and perception (Cicourel, 1993). Here, on the one hand, then are the perceptions that students held about what life will be like in New Zealand: non-racist; lots of sheep; a clean, green country; a primarily agricultural society; crime-free; like England; and nice people who were ingenious and creative. On the other hand, however, was the reality of life in New Zealand. Notably, these perceptions are perceptions also held by *New*

Zealanders about New Zealand – they constitute the official discourse propagated through advertisements and promotion overseas.

Some of these perceptions, such as that New Zealand was crime-free, were clearly unrealistic. However, the “codification of culture” (Calhoun, 1993:79), which may be better described as the codification of discourse and perception, has never been synonymous with the ‘reality of culture’. Sometimes the ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ discourses were not exclusive of each other: many students did find friendly, ingenious and creative Kiwis. However, the ingeniousness, individualism, and egalitarianism of New Zealanders – traits perceived by students – led to cognitive dissonance for many of these students. Here a ‘product of the same generative scheme’ obeyed a different logic: apparent positive traits were perceived in negative ways.

Many students expressed surprise at the slow pace of life in New Zealand: they knew the pace of life was slow, but not *that* slow. New Zealanders’ care-free nature was accompanied by their informality: students were surprised that their lecturers did not wear suits and ties and that the general populace apparently cared little for ‘label’ clothing. These students, from cities that operate twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, expressed surprise that the shops and offices shut so early, especially on the weekends. Some struggled to grasp New Zealanders’ sense of timing: while to them 9.30pm was early, for many New Zealanders it was the thirty minutes before bedtime.

There was not a great deal of difference between what surprised students and what disappointed them. Some returnees felt that New Zealand was too remote from the world and that New Zealand’s news coverage was too parochial. Students that held expectations that New Zealand was virtually crime-free and who then subsequently did encounter crime, either as a victim or as a witness, expressed disappointment, and perhaps with justification. Different working styles and education systems also led to frustrations and disappointments by some students. Some students also found that what they were promised and what they were delivered did not match up: either the university or the country was not as beautiful as its images projected overseas suggested it was.

These reactions by students can be seen as part of the disruption of their preconceptions. While they had preconceptions about New Zealand, as noted above, these preconceptions,

arguably, were part of broader preconceptions about the 'West', again, drawn from tradition, text, and reproduction. While, in part, there was cognisance with the perceptions of a green, clean, friendly New Zealand; the slow pace of life, the early closing of shops, and the nature of people themselves, caused dissonance for the students. Here, the social capital (in the form of knowledge about doing things and the way things work; cf. Faist, 2000) could not be converted; here, the received "general authoritative information" (Calhoun, 1993) was disrupted. One student expressed it succinctly:

I'm not even sure whether New Zealand, well I guess this sounds really strange, but I'm not very sure whether New Zealand is Western.... I think [that] if you mix with a certain lot of Kiwis then there is a strong influence of Maori culture, [or] at least knowledge of it, so that it's not even maybe a Pacific, maybe a Pacific, slightly more Pacific culture.... I mean some of my friends in New Zealand, I wouldn't consider them Western so then I don't think the distinction is between Eastern and Western even it's much more complicated and blurred than that. [Interview 1, RGSGF 030201].

This particular perception, not necessarily echoed by all the returnees spoken to in this research, nevertheless demonstrates the 'dialectical interplay' between the local and the global and between assumptions and perceptions. In the case of this returnee, she had assumed one thing (that New Zealand is 'Western'), but perceived another (that New Zealand is more 'Pacific'). While her response may not have been representative, it was perhaps recognition of the facts:

The Pacific, as with Asia, is not 'out there'; it is very much part of the community that is here. New Zealand is no longer simply a clone of Europe, a transplanted society of provincial Great Britain, but one that is now much more firmly, through its immigrants, locked into the Pacific and Asia (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999:xiv).

International students arrived in New Zealand holding certain perceptions about this country and its people; their education was a given. However, they also arrived in New Zealand in a particular social context which, while including a country 'locked into the Pacific and Asia', also included certain ideas and its own perceptions, themselves rooted in a view of the world where New Zealand was, ideologically at least, still a 'clone of Europe'.

Perceptions from others

Notions of belonging and feelings of ontological security will be affected by notions of the perceptions of others. To this end, how students saw others see them is significantly

important. Their perceptions, some of which were based in reality and others of which were arguably mis-perceptions, impacted their own ontological security, reflected on New Zealand society, influenced the students' study experiences, and informed their opinions about New Zealand and New Zealanders upon their return to their countries of origin.

Mahar et al (1990:5-6) argue that

The struggles between symbolic systems to impose a view of the social world defines the social space within which people construct their lives, and carry on what Bourdieu sees as the symbolic conflicts of everyday life in the use of symbolic violence of the dominant over the dominated....Symbolic struggles over the perception of the social world can take two different forms. On the objective side one can act through the representations (both individual and collective) in order to demonstrate and valorise particular views of reality. On the subjective side one can act through using strategies of self-presentation, or by trying to change categories of perception and appreciation of the social world.

As noted above, perceptions about Asian immigrants in New Zealand have long shaped the reality of the experiences of those immigrants in New Zealand. The experiences of international students have been shaped by dual 'realities': the 'reality' of their own experiences and the 'reality' of those experiences within particular social contexts, such as the campus. Returnees were not asked directly whether they experienced 'racism', the concept itself being problematic and people's perceptions of it being various. However, returnees themselves would label experiences or practices as 'racist'; that is, they were part of the 'symbolic struggle' over *perceptions* of the social world.

Experiencing racism

Returnees' self-described experiences of racism were varied. Returnees found that a drunk Kiwi was more likely to give racist comment than when he or she was sober. While the returnees spoke of a laid-back Kiwi, they also spoke of discrimination, whether through a particular attitude of lecturers, through name-calling by their European peers, or through difficulty attaining job interviews in New Zealand, apparently because of their Chinese last name.

However, there are necessary caveats here. Firstly, students tend to enter and engage with a narrow section of New Zealand culture, particularly those that constitute the academic community, so their perceptions should be extrapolated with caution. Secondly, to use examples given by returnees for this research, the perception of the student about a particular action may be at odds with the intention of the individual who acted. A lecturer too busy to see a student, in itself, does not imply a racist, or discriminatory, response; nor does a non-immediate response by the Police to a burglary indicate institutional racism. If, early on in their studies, a student had a particularly unfortunate discriminatory encounter, then that tended to jaundice the student's perception of all other encounters thereafter.

Returnees tended to identify particular experiences as being 'racist' and all similar experiences thereafter as being similarly racist. While these particular actions or experiences may not have been prolific or endemic and while caution must be read into perceptions, the sum of these returnees' experiences – their struggle for recognition and legitimation – are bounded by habitus: structures which define their social world. One student may have been called a particular derogatory name; another student may have had difficulty finding a job because of their Chinese last name; a third student may be teased or patronised because English is their second language – these experiences do not *ipso facto* suggest substantive inherent institutional racism, but they are indicative of *some degree* of racism.

These practices are not *imbued*: they are *imbedded*. It is here that the categorisation that is 'racism' finds its *raison d'être*: it classifies people according to their physical characteristics, and argues that the obvious physical differences imply other more subtle differences in everything from lifestyle to intellect to biology to behaviour and everything else in between (Spoonley, 1993). It implies inherent superiority of one 'race' over another 'race': its purpose is not to describe, but to differentiate. Racism is not 'official knowledge' in Bourdieu's sense (although it may form part, or inform, this 'official knowledge') it is, rather, a dominant discourse. Bourdieu does not deal with difference *per se*, it does not form an entity in his social theory. As an ideology, it is a pattern of social life that is maintained over time. This ideology informs particular views of reality and to Bourdieu, reproduction was what people *did*, whether it was intentional or not:

Each agent, wittingly or unwittingly, willy nilly, is a producer and reproducer of objective meaning. Because his actions and works are the product of a *modus operandi* of which he

is not the producer and has no conscious mastery, they contain an 'objective intention'...which always outruns his conscious intentions (Bourdieu, 1977:79).

While prejudices about Pacific peoples and Asian peoples obviously pre-date the most recent wave of immigration for these groups of migrants, their large numbers intensify and reproduce these negative prejudices about immigrants. These racist responses may intensify at times of economic and social change; thus, migrants are scapegoats for the suffering effects of these changes (Ongley, 1996; Trlin et al, 1997). Asian peoples in particular, because of their over-representation in entrepreneurial occupations and high-income brackets, are also resented for their material wealth (Ongley, 1996).

This encroachment of Asian peoples into what was formerly a white dominated environment has led to an anti-Asian backlash (often couched in terms of an anti-immigration backlash, but this is less concerned with the immigration of Europeans than that of Asians; cf. Trlin et al, 1997). Politicians tap into an unsettled response by the white middle-classes toward this immigration. This unsettled response is born equally out of ignorance and pride. An unsettled response that fails to distinguish, for example, between Asian New Zealanders and Asian immigrants, and a response that fails to recognize the legitimate entry of Asian immigrants into the middle-classes of Western society (Ong, 1999; cf. Miles and Phizacklea, 1984)

Nevertheless, care must be given not to over-attribute every negative perception to racism; negative perceptions may also be the result of inflated expectations, or one bad experience leading all other experiences (good, bad, or indifferent) to be seen in the same light. Similarly, the actors and the structures that perform these (perceived) actions may not be deliberately imbuing their (perceived) actions with racist undertones. Most will not (consciously) deliberately set out to be racist. However, "[t]he participants do not conceal a practice by dressing it up as something else (in the sense of disguising it), but rather render it invisible through a displacement of understanding and a reconstrual as part of other aspects of the habitus that 'go without saying'" (Mahar et al, 1990:19).

Furthermore, the accumulation of symbols and cultural and economic capital may be a double-edged sword. It may allow for economic and personal development and the betterment of opportunities, but it may also, by its very ostentatious nature, outstrip the

ability to decode and to manipulate cross-cultural meanings in foreign locations, thereby jeopardizing the social reproduction of their power abroad (Ong, 1999). For example, an Asian student who wears expensive leather jackets and drives expensive cars is likely to jeopardize cross-cultural communication and limit economic conversion of these status symbols. This will create a dissonance and resentment between him - or her- self as an international student and those in the host-country (cf. Ong, 1999).

Perceptions, in part, inform the dominant discourse of 'official knowledge', in Bourdieu's sense of the term; they also broadly inform ideas of 'Orientalism' (in a broader sense than that necessarily employed by Said, 1995); and inform and shape, broader decision-making and life decisions. This is evident in the oft-made remark to Asian students that 'you speak English very well' when, for many of these students, particularly those from Singapore and Malaysia, they have spoken English their entire lives. As one returnee expressed it:

I would say that...there are still a lot of presumptions or stereotypes... such as... international students go over to New Zealand...from a very much a society that is less developed or something like that. To a certain extent its quite true, but then for us who come from the city like K[uala] L[umpur] or [Kota] Kinabalu like this, we're not that far behind in that sense; its just that we need a place to study.... In terms of expectation...they expect us to be courteous and conservative and to a certain extent I would say that some of these presumptions are true in a sense. But then some of these presumptions or stereotypes that is no longer valid and like um most of the things what ever that they know about Malaysia or other countries they are mainly from the media which can be quite can be quite misleading at times and it doesn't give the whole truth, the [whole] picture [Interview 23 RGMYYKKM]

Perceptions, therefore, may very well be based on partial truths or mis-truths or perhaps from assumptions gleaned from a dominant discourse of racism. Levels of social interaction between the students and different social contexts allow us to critically examine the *modus operandi* of these perceptions. Two of these levels include university life and the pastoral support provided by the university itself. These levels are not arbitrary, they reflect the returnees' impressions of the University and provide a framework in which to describe these impressions.

The University Life

International students, by definition, are in New Zealand to study. However, students' experiences of university life extend beyond the classroom. Generally, those students who joined clubs on campus tended to gain more from their university experience. Likewise, students who joined clubs outside the University gained in terms of support, and, if they were multicultural clubs or organisations, they benefited through interaction with New Zealanders. Overall, clubs received much positive acclaim from students. Those students who did not join clubs expressed regret that they had not done so. In this example below, the student had found support and friendship through a group of primarily other international students.

I mean the structures that the university provided were really bad, but my brother was involved in O[verseas] C[hristian] F[ellowship] and those structures were incredible. I mean the OCF group was caring. They went out of their way to feed you...they knew that you were going to be lonely and homesick. They went out of their way to come and meet you, take you out and invite you to their house and feed you an Asian meal and lend you notes.... So that structure was amazing and church was amazing. I mean, you can try to going to church here if you're a stranger in town you'll never get the sort of hospitality that Kiwis give when you're a new student they invite you to their home and stuff; it's amazing [Interview 1, RGSGF].

The clubs and similar voluntary organisations provided important social support for these international students. As in the example above, international students tended to gravitate toward other international students. However, while some students went a step further and used these international student-based groups as a springboard (of sorts) into interaction with Kiwi students, others remained within the confines and comforts of these international-student based groups. One returnee noted this tendency and commented thus:

I mean certainly there were all these clubs which was supposed to be to be some form of help for international students, which I've always felt actually hindered international students. It was actually a disservice to international students, because they never actually gave them the impetus or the opportunity to actually adjust.... Now I'm not saying throw them in at the deep end, not in that way, but, I think also that...you start out at the shallow end [and] the deep end is just too difficult sometimes. I think that's what some of the

support groups do, especially since a lot of international students never ever make a transition out of these support groups into Kiwi society in general.... Probably an indication of this is how more and more national groups are set up: Malaysian students associations...Singapore students club; now you have the Fijians and the Taiwanese. All of them form their own little club...[this] just doesn't happen you know, this transition. So, in that sense, the support groups that we have in those aspects is actually a hindrance and by helping them in on the shallow end we also have vested interest in keeping them in the shallow end because then they can't go.... I think that that OCF is a major culprit in it.... I certainly feel that their whole OCF was possibly a greater culprit than many of the other groups.... There was this...assumption that just because they're international you've got to be different: as an international you've got to be facing these adjustments which you cannot, it means that you just [find it] too difficult to fit in and to understand the Kiwi or New Zealanders. I mean it's fine if it's the initial point of contact and it's a means of evangelism [pause], but, I mean, I think, the totality of their strategy and the emphasis on the difference, they have a vested interest in keeping that difference open so there is now a resistance toward doing more stuff with C[hristian] U[nion]. Because...there...just isn't adequate support from universities for students in general. I actually don't see...that...the support that international students needed to get was to help them adjust, but they very soon persuaded them in keeping them apart and [pause] helping them by a level of adjustment. So that was an idea and I don't see how, I mean the only way things work in universities is that I think that this person that tried to help them it very quickly translated into helping, keeping international students apart. [Interview 10, RGSGM, 080201]

Two significant issues derive from this returnee's observation: firstly, that these international-student based groups have a 'vested interest', in the sense that their *raison d'etre* would be compromised if they interacted with Kiwis; and, secondly, that international students do not get adequate support from universities. The second issue is dealt with shortly, but the suggestion that international student-based groups are being deliberately exclusionary deserves further comment.

It would be easy to suggest that these groups are being forced to be exclusionary because of a lack of proactive involvement by the Kiwi community or because of inadequate support structures by universities or for any number of other reasons. While these reasons may be a factor in the exclusionary nature of these groups, one must be careful of not over-playing the structural and ideological influence and discounting human agency altogether. International students, in this case, have their (generalised) identity in a type of

community, namely a community of difference. In noting this, however, one has to be very wary of using the descriptive category of 'international students' without recognising that within that category are as many differences as there are similarities: it may provide a useful descriptive tool, but as an analytical tool it should be treated with caution. However, "[e]ssentialist invocations of races, nations, genders, classes, persons and a host of other identities nonetheless remain common in everyday discourse throughout the world" (Calhoun, 1994:14). It is this essentialism that informs a particular view of reality, a view that dichotomises 'domestic' students and 'international' students and gives to each category characteristics and expectations. The discourse is one of difference.

International-student based groups can, on one level, be perpetuating this difference out of choice and, on another level, out of circumstance. While in choosing to perpetuate these differences, international student-based groups may be subscribing to this discourse of difference; they may also be adhering to a notion of belonging. Simultaneously, international students can root their (collective) identity in who they are not (namely, 'domestic students') and who they are ('international students'). It may be a superficial dichotomy, but it is one that provides a modicum of self-security: it is easier to remain with the known than to venture into the unknown. Remaining within groups of other international students, or, at another level, of other co-nationals, eases any experience of culture shock, delimits differences to a superficial level, and avoids, as much as possible, the inherent difficulties in cross-cultural communication.

One returnee identified two groups of international students: those who remain with those from their own countries of origin, and those who mix with everyone. His observation was astute. Returnees who fell into the first categorisation regretted that they had not mixed more with Kiwi students. Returnees who fell into the second categorisation bemoaned their peers for not mixing more; as this returnee noted:

Well those who want to join their own group; I think they...took education as secondary. I think they...more like...having fun.... I don't quite like international studies having forming their own group. I mean they are going to other countries they should learn you know the culture, there are more opportunities to learn the cultures um, but to them, besides having their own organisations, having their own their social lives, they're like nothing that they...I don't quite agree with them, I don't quite agree with them you know forming their own group [pause] well I don't know what they usually talk about, ah I don't think I want to join their group [Interview HK8]

The reasons for international students to *choose* to be apart are, at face value, appealing. Calhoun (1994:20) argues that "[i]dentity turns on the interrelated problems of self-recognition and recognition by others" and while both of these motivate the choice to be exclusionary, they also inform the *consequence of being exclusionary*.

While the dynamic between international students and domestic students is important, equally important are returnees' perceptions of the university as a whole, their notions of belonging within the university, and, as part of that, the support they perceive they do or do not receive from the university.

University support

Returnees in this research claimed that they received a large proportion of their support from outside the university structure. Within that, there was an inherent criticism of the universities for not providing enough support. It was not that the returnees (as students) would rather not have been supported by voluntary clubs and groups, but that they would have preferred this support to be *complementary* rather than *supplementary*. Returnees *perceived* that universities, to whom they had paid a significant amount of money, were inadequately supporting them.

Here, a system in the form of the export education industry, had taken on a course of its own with inadequate student support. In such a system, there is reason to believe that these returnees' perceptions had validation in reality. Almost every returnee spoken to in this research bemoaned the lack of university student support: the scope and intensity of their negativity was unexpected. To give reasons for this lack of student support would return deliberate agency to the equation, but one can return to the driving dominant ideology inherent in the classification of international education as 'trade', of a making money venture. This may seem both simplistic and naïve, but arguably the question 'to what end?' never featured: to assume that it had done would equally assume long-term planning, which, as the previous chapters have shown, is not something utilised in international education policy.

In this research, returnees' identified problems occurred with welfare support, and particularly regarding accommodation. The issue of accommodation support, or, in some

cases, lack thereof, was significant in some interviews. Some students found their home-stay situations difficult, and frequently changed home-stay providers. Other students found that, being in a hostel environment, they did not interact with the Kiwi students – or the Kiwi students did not interact with them – and nor did they participate to the same extent in the ‘traditional’ social activities of university hostels.

Returnees that have studied in New Zealand more recently have received relatively better support than those who had studied in New Zealand before them (not including Colombo Plan students) and therefore tended to provide relatively more positive responses. It is not, to be fair, that the universities provided no support at all; it is just that they were stretched in the support that they could provide. Some students found their support through departmental secretaries, or lecturers; and other students had, by choice, very little to do with the International Student Office at all. Sometimes the expectations of students of university-based support were not met; this may be both to do with unrealistic expectations by students and insufficient or inadequate delivery of support services by the University. Other times, students did not expect the university to support them; instead, they deliberately sought their support elsewhere.

One returnee expressed the problem articulately: it is not that there are a lack of support structures for international students, rather the lack of support structures for international students are indicative of an endemic problem in student support in general; this finding is supported by research (cf. Ward et al, 2001).

It’s actually a question of whether there are even good support structures for students in general and the answer of course is no... I think that that [as] international students we have the advantage of...clearly articulating that we were international and point to our differences.... That is the basis on which we have built an advocacy group and also a support group, so I would say that in many ways an international student actually has more support than most of the other students on campus.... Well, of course the other students on campus didn’t actually have the type of issues that international students face. I think certainly when you talk to [sic: about] accommodation, international students had higher expectations regarding accommodation than local students and so for them that also tended to have a priority in terms of accommodation... in terms of places in the halls and that sort of thing we tended to have priority [pause] so you’ve got an infrastructure there. I mean it wasn’t anything specific, but it was just an attitude.... I feel that it was a bit more sympathetic to international students.... I mean not that they were unsympathetic to local

students, but you knew that international students as an identifiable group had a bit more support; it wasn't in any way near enough [support], but I think in that sense we had more than local students...I don't think international students themselves actually saw that. [Interview 10, RGSGM, 080201]

By virtue of their difference - a constant defining factor - international students could demand more and expect more and those two factors will unquestionably affect their perceptions. However, arguably, they have every right to demand more and expect more, for they are paying substantially more than domestic students. Whether their expectations were ever clearly articulated or understood is debatable. However, negative perceptions about student support as given by the returnees in this research, such as staff not knowing which name was the last name, grouping all international students together irrespective of nationality or ethnic group, staff not having an adequate understanding of Asia, and not understanding basic needs of international students, are inexcusable, particularly if these perceptions are rooted in reality. It may be over-subscribing an ideology to these experiences to argue that they are rooted in a dominant racist discourse, but it would not be over-stating it to say that these experiences are rooted in a dominant view of reality (which may include a racist discourse) that includes a perception of these students as commodities first and people second.

CONCLUSION

Belonging, according to Calhoun (1993), entails recognition and recognition is informed by perception. Asian students arrive in New Zealand where they are already perceived before they act: the perceptions about Asian students today have their roots in the perceptions about Asian peoples in general of yesterday. New Zealand has always struggled with being a 'nation of many colours' and that struggle continues. It is a struggle played through dominant discourses, themselves responding to increased feelings of ontological insecurity. More than any other migrant community in New Zealand, the Chinese community have struggled for recognition; they have struggled to belong. Both public policy and the public's perceptions have discriminated and excluded Chinese migrants, often on the basis of mis-perceptions. These discourses of difference and discrimination are played out within the broader social context of a discourse of 'race',

itself a categorising tool of difference, and one that dominates public discourse and shapes and influences perceptions.

The increase of Asian students to New Zealand has paralleled, in part, the increase in Asian migrants to New Zealand; both have grown at significant rates. Nevertheless, New Zealand has still some way to go before it will be a 'meta-society' for people of all ethnicities (Bedford, 1996). A dominant discourse of racism, by its very nature, excludes others, those that it cannot exclude it tolerates; it would have no reason to tolerate those whom it accepts. This dominant discourse informs 'official knowledge'; it makes certain assumptions, which in turn shape its perceptions. Perceptions work both ways and Asian students enter with their own perceptions. These perceptions inform, in part, why they choose to study overseas, and inform, to a greater extent, why they choose to study in New Zealand and in particular cities, universities and courses.

Bourdieu's sociology is helpful in understanding the complex and yet dynamic relationship between structures and agents for, while these students make their individual choices, these choices are, to a certain extent, circumscribed for them by strategies, structures, and discourses over which they have no control. At one level, their study abroad is to attain cultural capital so that it may then be successfully converted into economic capital, yet both the attainment and convertibility of this capital can be restricted. This is particularly true for Malaysian-Chinese students, for whom it is extremely difficult to get into a local university, and for the Hong Kong students in this study, many of whom were permanent residents, having left Hong Kong at the time of the Chinese handover and the Asian economic crisis. These Hong Kong students tended to highlight the oft-overlooked area of the particular needs and characteristics of permanent residents.

Students arrive in New Zealand with certain preconceptions, but many of these preconceptions were challenged or disrupted. Many encountered, experienced and perceived an 'unofficial discourse', one which challenged their hitherto notions of 'New Zealandness' and which held certain perceptions about them. The perceptions of others about Asian students were drawn from perceptions about Asian peoples in general. However, a dominant discourse underlying these perceptions was that of racism; essentially, a discourse of difference. This discourse of difference, with its modes of exclusion, levels of assumption, and actions of discrimination, were imbedded rather than

explicit; nevertheless, this discourse shaped people's perceptions about Asian students and influenced Asian students' perceptions about others' perceptions. One social context in which this discourse can be seen in action is the University life.

Policies are the structural and ideological forces of exclusion, discrimination, and categorisation. Perceptions are often the result of and sometimes the impetus for these policies. While individuals hold these perceptions, they may also be socially endorsed in the form of a dominant discourse. Perceptions need not be based in reality, but they will affect reality(ies), including the reality(ies) of an international students life in New Zealand.

These worlds of perceptions are part of the process of a student's re-entry: their experiences in New Zealand shape, in part, their experiences and perceptions when they return to their countries of origin. The recognition of international students as people (as opposed to commodities) has not been forthcoming. Consequently, students cannot say they necessarily belonged in New Zealand, nor, as is argued in subsequent chapters, can they say they belonged once they finally returned to their countries of origin. This sense of homelessness is a significant factor in a student's re-entry, but there are other important issues they must also face, including re-negotiating their identity, their relationships, and their world views; in short, navigating the transitions of re-entry.

HOME IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY:

TRANSITIONS OF RE-ENTRY

INTRODUCTION

The experiences of international students in New Zealand and their re-entry into their countries of origin are all part of a process. As students' experiences in the host country cannot be examined without also considering broader social and structural forces, re-entry should be considered similarly. It cannot be examined in isolation; rather, it is necessary to consider students' experiences in the host country and how these experiences, amongst other factors, affect their re-entry transitions. The remaining chapters deal with the re-entry process. While Chapter Seven considers the significant notions of homelessness expressed and experienced by graduates and Chapter Eight, drawing together the returnees' own comments and the theoretical analysis used to approach them, considers preparing for re-entry, this chapter identifies key transitions faced during the re-entry process.

While the previous chapter was concerned with notions of belonging of international students in New Zealand, this chapter is concerned with notions of belonging of those students when they return to their countries of origin. This thesis deliberately does not refer to students' countries of origin as their 'home' countries, as the notion of 'home', explored more fully in the next chapter, is itself problematic in the re-entry process. Changing structures and structures that alter because of changing circumstances, can (sometimes profoundly) affect an individual's ontological security. These changes are pronounced during the re-entry process, particularly from the point where the student has returned to their country of origin.

While learning new (or re-learning old) culture-specific skills are important in (re)adjusting to a new culture, the structures and environment in which those skills are learned, relearned and developed are also important, as Giddens (1991:40) argues:

The fact that the behaviour of human beings is so strongly influenced by mediated experience, together with the calculative capacities which human agents possess, mean that every human individual could (in principle) be overwhelmed by anxieties about risks which are implied in the very business of living.... The protective barrier [basic trust] offers may be pierced, temporarily or more permanently, by happenings which demonstrate as real the negative contingencies built into all risk.

While the previous chapter examined perceptions, and the next chapter examines notions of belonging and homelessness, this chapter gives an overview of the issues faced during re-entry; issues, which, on one hand, are intensely personal but, on the other hand, are also mediated through structures and environments. These environments include the family, the workplace, the place of socialisation, as well as the social constructs of relationships and worldview.

Recognising the research on culture shock and reverse culture shock (synonymous with 're-entry'), this chapter argues that re-entry is, in part, a grieving process; an assertion that is echoed in other research (Chinn, 1987; Davidson et al, 2000; Doka, 1989a; Jordan, 1992; Martin 1986; Pirolo, 2000; Pollock and Van Reken, 1999; McGrath, 1997, 1998; Ward et al, 2001). This grieving process is not just at an individual level, but it is also undertaken in broader social and cultural contexts. 'Disenfranchised grief' is a helpful way to examine the grief within this matrix: it is a subjective experience mediated through broader structural and social contexts, contexts which may 'disenfranchise' the returnee because of dominant social norms and conventions in the country of origin.

The loss that is itself part of the grieving and re-entry process is a change in the returnee's worldview. Returnees in this research found that they no longer wholly subscribed to the worldviews of those around them, in particular on issues regarding materialism and in expectations of social advancement. In response to this, many of these returnees looked back on their time in New Zealand with wistfulness and inevitably compared their experiences in their country of origin to their experiences in New Zealand. Their changing worldviews in turn challenged the ontological security that they had placed in institutions and structures, such as their family, workplace, and church. They also challenged the expectations they had about their re-entry into their country of origin. While many returnees had expectations placed upon them through social expectations, dominant

discourses, and familial expectations, returnees also placed expectations upon themselves. One of these expectations pertained to their employment, namely that they would find employment quickly, in a good company where they would be well paid, well respected, and well treated.

Returnees also had to re-establish relationships with both family and friends. For Chinese students especially, these re-establishments of familial relationships took place in the context of the dominant discourse of filial piety, which placed certain expectations on the returnee. Many returnees found that they could not wholly subscribe to the tenets of filial piety; alongside this, they found that their independence was curtailed as most returned to living under their parents' roof.

A further consequential renegotiation that came from the returnees' changing worldviews was with regard to their religious beliefs and practices. In their countries of origin, religious belief was an integral part of life and social convention and those that changed their beliefs from the dominant discourse often faced intense opposition; those who sought social support from their (Christian) church in their country of origin also found that it was not as forthcoming as they had hoped. The processes of re-entry are complex and dynamic and those that go through it find that their 'protective barriers', whether of basic trust, prior knowledge, or bases for ontological security, are challenged and, in some cases, substantially changed.

In brief, then re-entry is a grieving process encountered through experiences of loss; it is a change in worldview, a challenge of expectations, and an *onus probandi* on experiences; it is a re-establishment of familial and friend relationships, and a renegotiation of notions of filial piety; it may also be a change in belief. In sum, re-entry can be as significant as it is disruptive.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF RE-ENTRY RESEARCH

Early theories of sojourner adjustment and culture shock concentrated on the aspects of cross-cultural contact that highlighted the problems encountered by people caught between two different cultural systems (e.g. Stonequist, 1937). These theories were reinforced by the mental health literature, which linked immigration status to psychiatric morbidity, and

by psychoanalytical literature, which emphasised loss, mourning and the hostility, anxiousness, and depressive experiences of the sojourn experience (Garza-Guerro, 1974; Hemi, 1967; Murphy, 1973; Stoller and Krumpinski, 1973). These theories were particularly applied to the study of international students; they were clinically oriented and medically modelled (Deutsch and Won, 1963; Du Bois, 1956; Jacobsen, 1963; Lysgaard, 1955; Seltiz and Cook, 1962.)

In time, the 'medicalisation' approach to culture shock was critically scrutinised (cf. Bochner, 1986) and largely rejected. Two perspectives of culture shock replaced it: one being that it was a learning experience (cf. Bochner, 1982a, 1986; Furnham and Bochner, 1982; Klineberg, 1981); and the other being that it was a dynamic experience (cf. Furnham and Bochner, 1986; Ward et al, 2001). Research over the last twenty years has emphasised two main approaches: the culture-learning approach (cf. Argyle, 1969; Bochner, 1972, 1986), and the use of psychological models of stress and coping as applied to studies of cross-cultural transition and adaptation (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Each of these will be briefly looked at in turn.

Culture and learning approach

The culture and learning approach has its roots in social psychology. Essentially, it argues that adaptation to a new culture comes in the form of learning culture-specific skills that are required to negotiate the new cultural environment. Researchers in this area have emphasised the culture-specific variables in the adaptation process, such as the general knowledge about a new culture (Pruitt, 1978; Ward and Searle, 1991), the length of residence in the host culture (Ward et al, 1998), communication competence (Furnham, 1993), quantity and quality of contact with host country nationals (Bochner, 1982a; Ward, 2001), friendship networks (Bochner, McLeod and Lin, 1977; Butcher et al, 2002), previous experience abroad (Klineberg and Hull, 1979), cultural distance (Furnham, 1983; Furnham and Bochner, 1982, 1986; Ward and Kennedy, 1993a, 1993b), cultural identity (Ward and Searle, 1991), acculturation modes (Ward and Kennedy, 1994), temporary versus permanent residence (Ward and Kennedy, 1993c), and cross-cultural training (Brislin, Landis and Brandt, 1983).

In short, this approach analyses the interaction between the individual sojourner and the social and cultural contexts into which they have shifted, and in particular the learning and utilisation of specific skills in negotiating this social and cultural shift.

Stress and coping approach

The stress and coping approach, on the other hand, conceptualises cross-cultural training as a series of stress-provoking life changes that require coping responses whilst drawing on responses that require adjustment by the individual. The analytical framework for this approach includes characteristics of both the individual and of the situation that may facilitate or impede adjustment to a new cultural environment. Researchers using this approach have examined variables such as life changes (Lin, Tazuma and Masuda, 1979), personality factors (Ward and Kennedy, 1992; Ward and Chang, 1997), cognitive appraisals of change (Chataway and Berry, 1989), coping styles, and social support (Adlemann, 1988), along with variables such as loneliness (Stone et al, 1990), homesickness (Pruitt, 1978), marital satisfaction (Naidoo, 1985), quality of relationships with both home and host nationals (Furnham and Alibhai, 1995), pre-migration stressors (Tran, 1993), and personal and demographic characteristics (Chung and Kagawa-Singer, 1993)

While there are apparent similarities between this approach and the 'medicalisation' approach, there are also major differences. The medical model assumed an inevitable pathological reaction to intercultural contact; the stress and coping approach, while acknowledging the stress inherent in transitions, emphasised the coping process and successful adaptation to the new environment. Importantly, the stress and coping approach also incorporated the social aspects of the adjustment experiences into its analysis: attention is directed broader than the individual to the wider socio-cultural contexts (Ward et al, 2001; cf. Berry, 1997).

Recognising this background to research in culture shock provides a valuable framework in which to analyse the reverse culture shock that is part of the re-entry process. It also challenges us to look beyond the individual and, in keeping with the tenor of this thesis, to the socio-economic contexts and structures in which this individual lives, works, and plays.

In so doing, it reminds us that reverse culture shock is not pathological and that the assumption that "failures on the part of the sojourner were due to the person's inability to cope or a weakness in character and that appropriate "treatment" was counselling and therapy" (Ward et al, 2001:36) is generally incorrect.

DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF

In their synthesis of re-entry research, Ward et al (2001) note that the re-entry transition takes its toll on returnees psychologically, sometimes even to a level of clinical illness. As examined in the next chapter, returnees struggle with conceptions of identity as framed in the notions of longing and belonging. A common theme in the re-entry literature is that the returnees have feelings of loss. Loss is a product of various activities and processes (cf. Miller and Omarzu, 1998; McInnes, 2001). Re-entry is also, in part, a grieving process. Returnees are grieving the loss of friends, experiences, and, to a certain extent, a way of life. Ward et al (2001:167), echoing findings of this research, comment:

Re-entry has been shown to create a range of difficulties, and many returning students clearly experience psychological distress. Interpersonal relationships, particularly those with friends, appear to suffer, and loneliness is one of the most commonly reported problems of returnees.

However, while the *individual* student faces the re-entry process most acutely, it is a process that is still undertaken in broader social and cultural contexts. One way of framing the experiences relayed by students particular to their contexts, is by using the notion of 'disenfranchised grief', which is:

[a] grief that can be defined as the grief that persons experience when they incur a loss that is not or cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned, or socially supported. The concept of disenfranchised grief recognizes that societies have sets of norms – in effect 'grieving rules' – that attempt to specify who, when, where, how, how long, and for whom people should grieve (Doka, 1989a).

Doka (1989a) argues that disenfranchised grief may exacerbate the grieving process in a number of ways and may intensify the normal reactions of grief, namely anger, guilt, sadness, depression, loneliness, homesickness, and numbness. In a grief where nobody has died, there is rarely a grieving ritual for the griever to express his or her feelings. The

feelings he lists were feelings commonly expressed by returnees – indeed, some experienced and expressed them to acute levels.

This 'disenfranchised grief' is significant: it is a subjective experience mediated through a broader context. To a large extent, the returnee goes through a grieving process. Communities may 'disenfranchise' returnees not out of choice, but out of convention; as one returnee expressed it:

I think while many are prepared for culture shock in the host country, perhaps the lack of concern for re-entry shock was a result of a lack of talk and discussion by past students either because it was a very emotional and personal thing to talk about or that it has never been recognised by the people back home. Sometimes to always be seen harping about how great things were in the host country can be mistaken for lack of 'loyalty' and love for one's own country of origin instead of a segment of the grieving process. The denial of traumatic experience at re-entry has perhaps to do with the culture (in this case I can speak only of my own) where stoicism is valued and to continue whining about the host country is seen as immature and unrealistic. The process of re-entry, which is in a way a letting go of a somewhat idyllic life into the harsh realities of working life, there is a fine line between wanting to adjust or the unconscious refusal to let go. (Pers Corr with returnee, April 2001)

This 'unconscious refusal to let go' was a trait exhibited by some returnees, as this student noted:

We have a friend who visits New Zealand every year, sometimes twice a year; it's almost that her life [pause] in New Zealand was so good that it's really hard for her to let go.... Partly, I mean it's partly the whole student life rather than just the New Zealand experience. I mean, as you work, you've got different stressors and stuff, and so, if you plan to come back for work, then there's no point clinging onto something that has passed, or living in the past.... I guess [pause] for students who are coming back, if they have decided to come back, then give Singapore a good bash rather than come back and still live mentally in New Zealand and physically in Singapore because it doesn't work as well, even though its hard [laugh] (Interview 1, RGSGF).

The experiences of returnees are well captured by Kauffmann (1989:29, emphasis in original) and is therefore expressed here in full:

One of the profoundly disturbing consequences of disenfranchised grief is that because of a lack of social sanctioning and social support, the bereaved may become disillusioned with

and alienated from their community. Community is the natural support network in which one's basic sense of *identity* and *belongingness* are realized. The space of family, friends, church, neighbors [sic], and colleagues in which we live is the arena in which we experience the human reality of our existence. When bereavement needs are disenfranchised by one's community, those parts of oneself where the unrealized, unrecognized, unsatisfied, disenfranchised pain exists are negated. This pain in an especially meaningful way defines who one really is, and so the value of one's bond to the community can be damaged. Our basic sense of belonging, the shelter of being in a community, our realization of ourselves as community-dwellers, the touchstone of our being as a social animal – this sense is disenfranchised. The loss of community that may occur as a consequence of disenfranchised grief fosters an abiding sense of loneliness and abandonment.

Allowing the grief process to work means recognising the loss and re-entering one's country of origin means recognising what can be left behind in New Zealand and what can be brought back, as is noted in the interview below.

Interviewer: Coming back, has it been more difficult or has it been easier than you thought it would be?

Returnee: Um, [pause] slightly more difficult. It's not like a jump; it's not like something I didn't expect. I guess it's like, I mean I came back regularly every summer, I spent an average of one to two months here so that helped buffer me when I came back for the adjustment shock in that sense. But at the same time I really question my ability to cope at the task [and] at the level, which I used to cope. I find now that I'm actually functioning lower and lower and I'm just wondering whether its all right because the function that my biggest hurdle is that the quality of life will be back to square one, which I'm not willing to go. But at the same I am still working my way through, when I was back in New Zealand I was deciding what to give up and what to keep now I'm back in Singapore I've got to do the same in deciding what to keep from New Zealand and what to give up

Interviewer: Are you still in that process of deciding?

Returnee: Yeah, I'm still in that process of deciding, just working through, and still asking myself what I'm willing to give up (Interview 12, RGSGF 090201).

Allowing the grief process to work means having a social context that recognises grief for what it is, while also recognising that much of the material on grief and grief processes comes from a Euro-American perspective and is often written with the same audience in mind (Currer, 2001). Research has demonstrated that there are substantial differences in the practices of grieving between cultures: “what one can say, quite unequivocally, is that the phases of mourning and the overt expression of grief across the duration of bereavement are not universal” (Stroebe and Stroebe, 1994:197). Furthermore, “[it] appears that symptoms and phases of grief are modified very considerably by cultural factors.... Thus, cultural variants do, then, appear to have a moderating influence on the symptoms and phases of grief” (Stroebe and Stroebe, 1994:204). This is expressed well in this returnee’s response, below, when she was asked whether she felt she was supported when she returned to her country of origin.

Returnee: Financially: yes, my parents continued to support me until I find my job, um but emotionally: no.... I didn’t have any close friends here in Hong Kong so, and I didn’t have a church to come back to, because I became a Christian when I was in Australia. [pause] So, yeah I guess I only had financial support when I first came back here from my family, because I, I was going back to the Chinese culture. You know, it’s very different from a Western family. You see all those, the Western family always seems so much more loving and they [pause] people express their feelings, affections for one another, but you don’t do that in a Chinese family, you hardly show any feelings and um, no hugs or kisses, no. It must be, I guess fifteen years, at least fifteen years since that I have never received a hug or a kiss from my parents and if you ask me to do that now, to hug them or kiss them, I’ll feel embarrassed.... You don’t show, you don’t show it, um, yeah and so I’m not close to my family, so [pause] yeah, so I didn’t get any family support when I first came back, they’re just, they’re physically there in the house but that was it, you know.... I definitely hope[d] my parents will be more understanding and try to understand me more

Interviewer: Well you’ve talked about a more ideal world you’d like your parents to be more understanding, you’d want your close friends here [pause] what would the support be for you, what will it entail? [pause] what would you see people doing something, is it, I don’t know, is it people doing things, is it people just spending time with you or listening to you?

Returnee: Listening yeah, generally listening and um, I think not judging me so quickly and it's a form of support and [pause] yeah, listening to me (Interview HK6, RGHKF 310301).

The re-entry of international students into their country of origin is also a transition in their life course. As Giddens (1991:79) argues:

All such transitions involve loss...and such losses...have to be mourned if self-actualisation is to proceed on course.... Negotiating a significant transition in life...all mean running consciously entertained risks in order to grasp the new opportunities which personal crises open up.... More important is that such transitions are drawn into, and surmounted by means of, the reflexivity mobilised trajectory of self-actualisation.

Part of these risks is that such self-actualisation in these times of transition may be significantly difficult to negotiate. Disenfranchised grief, by its very nature, means that the international student must often negotiate this significant 'life passage' (Giddens, 1991) alone. The notion of disenfranchised grief allows a recognition that the losses are inherent in re-entry: losses of friends, experiences and expectations. However, disenfranchised grief is not only a useful framework for analysis, it is also the absence of rituals of transitions and the notable absence of social – and indeed, cultural – forms of support. One of the significant risks in negotiating this transition is the disruption of the ontological security of the international student: his or her notion of belonging (in *all* contexts) is unclear and changing. An important variable in this disruption and change are worldviews, which themselves will have been at least questioned through the students' time in New Zealand.

CHANGING WORLD VIEWS

Inevitably, the worldviews of returnees were changed from when they first left their countries of origin. However, this is not to say that had the student not studied abroad then their worldview would not have changed: it is not quite that simple. However, the study abroad experience may have accelerated those changes and it *certainly* would have given students an insight into a different way of doing things, insights they may not have otherwise had. Returnees noticed changes in their own worldviews when it became apparent that they did not match the worldviews of those around them.

McGrath (1998) identified the expectations of returnees to fit into the lifestyle of a 'five C' world, namely owning or belonging to: cash, credit card, car, condominium, career, and country club. These expectations remain, as these responses demonstrate.

I don't think I could ever live the normal Singapore life.... I may be wrong, but the typical Singapore life is that you aim to get a flat and hopefully a greater condo in a couple of years and try to get a car and then [pause] maybe a country club sort of membership and two kids and send them to piano lessons, stuff like that. I don't think I could live with that.... I think New Zealand [pause] helps you mentally, mentally gives you pictures of how the alternatives can look like (RGSGF, Interview 1).

I did feel pressurised when I have, you know, my family and friends, you know, their brilliant career that kind of thing: did you find a boyfriend, you know, apartments and stuff. So the expectations that Singaporean abides by you know cash, credit card, cell phone, anything that starts with 'c' okay [laugh]. So I mean people would always come back to the Five C's so it would be like yeah same age as you, and 'she's already got a condominium' or 'she's same age as you and she's going to get married to this doctor' and stuff like that. So those expectations are actually all there and to a certain extent you feel pressurised by it (Interview 8, RGSGF 070201).

Returnees expressed dissatisfaction with these expectations, as the returnee above expressed it: they had seen the alternative and it looked better. These responses were demonstrative of more than a superficial change or a pining for what was past.

I felt even more dissatisfied with Singapore.... I guess [pause] when you're standing on the outside, you realise how much...more restricted life was, life is here.... Not having to live with my parents and stuff like that, you know a lot more independent. I could, you know, do anything I wanted (RGSGF Interview 2).

A change in the worldviews of these returnees challenges the ontological security of the returnees as well as the foundations of the institutions of which they are a part: their family, their work place, their faith, and their country of origin. This returnee expressed the challenge to the latter:

I think I'm far more able to look at it from an outsiders point of view.... I just don't buy into a lot of the Singaporean rat race stuff.... So, I suppose you could say that [pause] I feel more like a global citizen if there's such a thing. No, I don't think I feel like I'm a global

citizen, but I don't think I have to live in any one particular country. I think I can adapt and, you know, and get used to other places.... I mean I don't think I have this great, you know, patriotism or whatever.... I know I'm very Singaporean anyway. I'm obviously influenced by my culture [pause], but I feel slightly more detached.... But I suppose you realise how Singaporean you are when you are actually overseas and everybody's very different and you realise you gravitate toward other Singaporeans you know [laugh]. When you're here you feel so different here and when you there you feel quite different from the people there and you hang with. But [pause] I [pause] don't like a lot of Singaporean ideals and stuff (RGSGF interview 2)

Another returnee responded similarly:

Interviewer: You've been back now about three months, do you think your place within Singapore has changed, or your view of Singapore has changed?

Returnee: Definitely, um [pause] I do find the government more intrusive, um [pause] at a certain point. I guess I've always been critical about the government, but um I find that having come back I've actually become more critical.... I am actually expecting and taking certain demands and one of the things I'm getting annoyed that it is very intrusive, this government and um [pause] and the impression of the lifestyle that we choose to live here in Singapore, impressing [sic] the whole idea of economic distance and stuff. (Interview 12, RGSGF 090201)

In short, these returnees had found their worldviews had changed, with respect of the societal expectations of their countries of origin *viz.* material possessions and status; in response to seeing a different way of life and living in New Zealand; and with the result of disrupting the returnees' ontological security and stability in hitherto foundational institutions. These worldview changes, whether expressed through forms of dissatisfaction, a desire for alternatives, or a challenge to institutional dominant discourses, do not occur in isolation. They occur within the re-entered social context(s) and as part of (reverse) culture shock.

Culture shock

Ward et al (2001) identified three distinct components of culture shock: affect, behaviour, and cognition. That is how people feel, behave, think and perceive when exposed to second-culture influences. The affective component of culture shock may include confusion, disorientation, anxiety, suspicion, bewilderment, perplexity and an intense desire to be elsewhere. The behavioural aspect of culture shock is associated with the concept of culture learning. Thus, those who lack the culturally relevant social skills or have no understanding of the rules, conventions, and assumptions that govern interpersonal interactions, may have difficulty in initiating and sustaining culturally harmonious relationships: they will be less effective in their personal lives and are less likely to achieve their goals, whatever they may be (Ward et al, 2001).

The cognitive element of culture shock argues that the broad notion that culture consists of shared meanings. This element affects how people see each other, how they regard themselves, and whether either party will be influenced to change their views because of this contact. People respond in various ways to this cognitive effect. Some become mono-cultural and staunchly ethnocentric, others succumb totally to the new culture, while some synthesise elements of both cultures. The indicators of culture shock at a cognitive level are generally agreed to be anxiety, confusion, and a sense of helplessness (Ward et al, 2001). Other chapters explore in more depth the outworking of these responses in a New Zealand context, which range from forming groups of exclusion, to social isolation (Chapter Five), to a significant use of computer-mediated communities (Chapter Seven).

Similar responses occur upon re-entry. Some, although not all, students remained solely and exclusively within enclaves of other overseas graduate students; other students become global in their outlook, describing themselves as 'citizens of the world'; still others, although far fewer, become more nationalistic or patriotic toward their country of origin. These responses upon re-entry are not arbitrary. Those who became global in their outlook while in New Zealand retained that upon their re-entry; those who remained exclusively within enclaves of other international students, retained membership of similar enclaves upon re-entry; and those who socially isolated themselves in New Zealand, did likewise in their country of origin. Those who did not want to return were the most unsettled of all; for

these students, the disruption of this life transition was effectively being forced upon them. There were not many returnees in this research who had lived abroad prior to their study in New Zealand, but clearly this overseas exposure was influential in building their global outlook.

One returnee expressed her response to reverse culture shock, which seems to encompass affective, behavioural, and cognitive effects.

When you're going to another culture, you're mentally prepared for it. You sort of think, okay, this is, these are such that, I mean, you're not going to be a majority any more, and you should look out for this, and you should be more open to a different situation and how people do things differently. But, when you're coming back to your own culture, you don't actually think that way. Because you think, I know, I'm Asian, I'm Singaporean, I know how things work, I have not changed, I will fit back, ah, you know, and I've got friends here, I'll have no worries, and I already have a church. And then it hits you when you come back that actually you are different, in a certain way. And then you, you have to deal with it, on the spot... You're also wondering, what has changed? It must be them! You know? And then, well, you sit down, you evaluate the situation, you realise, hey, it might be me (Interview 4, RGS GF 080201).

This self-reflexivity in the return process is explored further in Chapter Eight. However, recent models of culture shock have likened cross-cultural adaptation to two broad processes: learning experiences and the management of stress-provoking life changes. As Ward et al (2001:45) argue,

Implied remedial action in the first case involves preparation, orientation, and culture learning, particularly behaviourally-based social skills training. In the second case individuals are expected to draw on personal and interpersonal resources and to engage a wide range of psychological coping mechanisms to adapt or adjust to their new milieu.

The re-entry process not only highlights the change in the returnee's worldview, but also the change in their place in their location(s): their view has changed because they are seeing the world (and their place in it) from a different perspective. The returnee above experienced an 'affective' response in her bewilderment and a cognitive response in recognising that not only had others seemingly changed, but so had she. This returnee had to remind herself, indeed even relearn, the conventions and norms that governed

interpersonal relations in her country of origin. She discovered that culture consists of shared meanings, meanings she found ambivalent about subscribing to.

I think in Asian, in an Asian culture, there are a lot of hidden meanings to, to certain things. A lot of rituals you do, like you visit your Aunty, which you haven't seen for five years, but you still visit her, because it's respect, for example. When I came back, I didn't want to visit her. Why should I visit her? I have no feelings towards her. It's a waste of my time, you know. Of course that really irritated my parents...because I have lost the ability to respect my elders (Interview 4, RGSGF 080201).

The change in a students' worldview upon their re-entry is expected. Any student, whether domestic or international, will have their conceptions and perceptions changed. However, an international student faces change at a more significant level: the change in their worldview will affect their ontological security, and their notion of longing and belonging. For a large part, this is because their newfound worldview, or re-negotiated worldview, will be substantially different from the worldviews of those in their countries of origin, particularly if their change in worldview is attributable to a change in religious belief. Many international students find that their affective, behavioural and cognitive changes upon re-entry were dissonant with the environments around them, environments in which they are a far less certain position, due, in large part, because of a changed perspective from which they live and view that position. This dissonance and ontological insecurity is compounded by the expectations that returnees hold upon their return to their countries of origin.

EXPECTATIONS ON RE-ENTRY

When a student returns to their country of origin, they had expectations of their own and the expectations of others placed upon them. Returnees' disappointments about unmet expectations were a significant factor in the difficulties many faced during their re-entry. Some expectations were unrealistic, such as finding well-paying employment at a respectable middle-management position in a large multi-national company immediately upon their return. However, it was not entirely a question of graduates lowering their expectations. Few returnees had the balanced (if not slightly unflattering) expectations expressed by this graduate:

I expected to be pushed into the social structure, like the expectations of relatives and bosses and stuff. And also, I expected the weather, the food, the crowd, you know, we are

completely different, I expected all those. I expected a lot of um, how do you put it, many Singaporeans are not really, you know, friendly people so yeah, I expected to not be able to relate to Singaporeans that well (Interview 8, RGSGF, 070201).

More often, returnees approached others' expectations of them with trepidation.

When I first came back, I wasn't planning to stay, so I never thought about, um, life, the difficulties I would face when I come back.... I was afraid, I was more afraid actually at that time. I was afraid that once I came back I'd be tied down and not able to leave again.... It's just like the older you get you, you want a more secured life.... I was just thinking, if I continue to live overseas it's probably easier if I just pack my things and go to another country to live. It'll be easier than coming back here um, living for a while, and then try to pack my things and leave. It's because my family...is here and again because of their expectations of me.... They really expect me to [pause] live in Hong Kong now and to look after my parents and they expect me to look after them.... Just giving them money and supporting them financially...is not enough [pause] from their point of view [pause]. I still have these fears, even now, that I'll be stuck here forever (Interview HK6, RGHKF, 3010301).

Rarely, were the expectations of others explicitly expressed to the graduate, yet most graduates varied on the theme of the returnee's response provided above. Partly the fears expressed were fears of the unknown, perhaps there were even fears that their expectations would not – or could not – be met. Giddens (1991:44-45) argues that:

All individuals develop a framework of ontological security of some sort, based on routines of various forms. People handle dangers, and the fears associated with them, in terms of the emotional and behavioural 'formulae' which have come to be part of their everyday behaviour and thought. Anxiety also differs from fear in so far as it concerns (unconsciously) perceived threats to the integrity of the security system of the individual.... Rising anxiety tends to threaten awareness of self-identity, since awareness of the self in relation to constituting features of the object-world become obscured.

If the student anticipates that they will quickly meet their expectations (however realistic or unrealistic they might be), but fails to meet those expectations, then the thing on which they have (partly) based their ontological security is challenged, their expectation of what they thought their re-entry would be like is found wanting, and the 'constituting features' of their 'object-world' are obscured. This personal correspondence from a returnee is indicative:

I have to say this year is kind of my rolling stone year for me. In the beginning of the year (Three month after my last Email update), I was being terminate from my job just saying I'm not suitable for the company.... Just that! In that time I was kind of like the end of the earth esp[ecially because] the economy is in a downfall & [it is] hard to find a job in that time (Now is even harder). I was thinking about what's wrong with it & lot of Why Q[uestions] in it! ... I [had] been to this kind of church (Majority with lots of Youth Professional) for a few month when I just came back to H[ong] K[ong]. I just find it I cannot fit in to those group of people & I'm seem to be left out in the group & felt nobody cares on you. It just kind of felt they have their own world in it (personal correspondence with returnee, November 2002).

International students invariably return to their countries of origin with expectations of one sort or another; around these expectations, they build notions of longing and belonging, they attempt to place their identities, and they try and establish a sound ontological security. However, while these returnees may have control over their expectations, they have virtually no control over whether these expectations are met. Unless, that is, they employ self-reflexivity: base their expectations less on ideals and more on realities and find new ways to 'belong'.

Employment in their countries of origin

Previous studies have identified that pertinent concerns for re-entry include finding employment congruent with their training, transference of technology, fitting into the workplace and changes in their home country (Creed, 1987; Paige, 1990). Part of preparing students to re-enter is ensuring they have realistic expectations about what life will be like when they return to their countries of origin. Perhaps the greatest expectation of returnees was that they would immediately find employment, which was relevant to their qualifications and well paid. If that ever was the case in Southeast Asia, it is now no longer the case. Some returnees quickly became despondent when, after applying for numerous jobs, or waiting for several months, they were still without employment; as this returnee expressed it:

When I...graduated from New Zealand there was the recession time and...in Asia we are...back to economic downturn and it was very difficult to get a job for the first grad[uate].... If there was this community service people there to help to counsel all these

graduates what to expect from society that would be great.... It's very hard to come along and just fit in (Interview 5, RGMYP).

Some returnees did not have difficulty finding employment, because they were 'bonded' to a particular company or government who had financed (in part or whole) their study in New Zealand. These returnees faced several particular issues. Firstly, the nature of the bond almost invariably meant that the returnee had no option but to return to their countries of origin. The financial cost of 'breaking' their bond in order to stay in New Zealand was too prohibitive. Secondly, while the bond secured their employment, it may have been for a company they would have rather not worked for, perhaps because of the hours worked or the company ethics or other reasons, and for a period of time (up to seven years or more) that they would rather not have worked to. Bonds, therefore, significantly limited the options of their holders: they could neither stay in New Zealand nor leave their country of origin and live elsewhere at their leisure.

Those returnees who were not bonded and who also tended to be private full-fee paying students, and were eventually able to find employment, did not necessarily remain in their initial company for more than a couple of years. These returnees moved on when they had the chance; their initial job was often seen as a stepping-stone to longer-term employment prospects. These returnees may have had difficulty finding employment, but they had a flexibility (which, incidentally, many in this category seemed to use) of changing jobs at regular, but short, intervals. Those who worked for their families also faced particular issues, explored more fully shortly.

The shift from student-hood to working life is part of the shift from childhood/adolescence to adulthood. For many graduates it is a further step toward independence, individuation, and freedom from parents and the institution's of one's youth, such as the university. Old bonds are renegotiated and new bonds are established; there are losses and there are gains. Demonstrating again the ties that bind, this independence, individuation and freedom are circumscribed for many of these graduates.

Interviewer: What was the most difficult part about coming back?

Returnee: Well probably that I'm no longer a student and that I'm going into the real world. The real working world I think that's one of the hardest: in terms of dealing with my

own emotional stress; in terms of losing some of my friends that I've made throughout the five years that I've studied that I spent in New Zealand.... [And] the fact that I have to be a man, I go out to work yet when I'm back home I'm still treated as if I'm still an eighteen year old (Interview 25, RGMYYKKM, 180201).

For any graduate, there is the transition from student life to work life. For an international graduate, entering a work force of which they may not know all the norms and conventions, and for which they may not have been educated, compounds this transition. Degrees in economics and management from New Zealand, while undoubtedly beneficial for many domestic students, *may* have limited benefit to an international graduate entering the work force in any of the countries in this research. The modes, ethics, behaviours, and the expectations in the work environments of these students' countries of origin are significantly different to those of New Zealand's work environment. This transition into the work force can compound the difficulty of a returnee's re-entry.

It was awful in the first half of the year but, you know, I came back to Hong Kong and Malaysia, more awful than I go to New Zealand, when I went to New Zealand.... When I was in New Zealand I studied, my first priority was study, but when I came back to Hong Kong or Malaysia, first I have, I need to get a job, I have to get a job. And I'm quite alone here in Hong Kong you know, I have no friends in Hong Kong, because I grew up in Malaysia, no friends in Hong Kong. [I] had to get a job...this is real life you know: go to society, go to work, interact with people. It's no longer like in university [where] you can just like attend a lecture and it's my own responsibility of myself, I take responsibility of myself [when] I come back here. When you work, you have to take responsibility for the company you know, everything you do, it's not only you do it yourself but you do it for the company [pause] [it's] awful, but right now, after two years, I think it's okay (Interview HK8 RGHKM 010401).

Many returnees do not expect the demands placed upon them by their employer, not only in the tasks they are required to do, but also in the time required to do those tasks.

We have to work until seven, eight, every day, and sometimes like Saturday, Sundays, we have to go back to work. So, work would be occupying a lot of your time (Interview HK4 RGHKF 310301).

It's going back to, to the Chinese culture really, everyone is hard working um and that's what's expected of you, especially if you're an employer, an employee. They pay you, you know the employer pays you and they expect you to work long hours, like I start work at nine and quite often I finish at about nine o'clock at night and that's the norm because there are still lots of people working till twelve, even one o'clock in their office.... I guess it's just that, it depends on the industry you're in really, um some people you know doing, I don't know, commerce, admin and so forth, they have more regular working hours, like say nine till six.... I don't get paid for all the overtime I do.... You know some of my friends say, you know, you don't have to work so hard. It's just me I, you know that's the work you have in front of you and you've got all these deadlines, you just have to meet them.... I tried speaking you know, talking to my boss, whether or not he could get someone else in to work and he'll just say no, you know um, it's just the way it is, things are done. I don't do it to impress my boss or anyone, just want to do it well and get it done.... I finish that late, I go home and I just sleep, so I try to, try not to meet too many of my friends on week days and just in weekends. But, then, sometimes I get into trouble because my folks will just say, you know: "you're spending all this time away from home, when do we get to see you?" (Interview HK6 RGHKF 3 10301)

The dominant discourse in the form of societal expectations, and the dissonance that caused to personal expectations, is clearly evident in the above quote; but, more than that, there is evidence of the intersection of social structures, namely the employer, and, judging by the last sentence, the family. The returnee, in this context, is not liberated because of their Western education; if anything, this returnee – and given the indicative nature of these comments – most, if not all, returnees, find their freedom significantly curtailed upon their re-entry. There is more here than dashed hopes or fallen expectations; this is a profound experience of re-entry.

Coming to grips with a new work environment and all that that entails is only one aspect of re-entry. Part of preparing for re-entry is ensuring that students hold realistic expectations. While for any student there is the transition from work-life to student-life, for returnees, this transition is compounded. Returnees are transitioning from the host country to their countries of origin, from having a distinct identity as an international student to having to realise a new, or re-establish a former, identity in their countries of origin, and from being independent, to returning to a familial environment.

Familial relationships

It is in an environment of competing discourses that ontological security can be challenged. For international students, this environment of competing discourses may be in New Zealand, as shown in the previous chapter, or it may be upon their return to their countries of origin. Bourdieu (1977:167-168, emphasis in original) has argued that:

Because the subjective necessity and self-evidence of the commonsense world are validated by the objective consensus on the sense of the world, what is essential *goes without saying because it comes without saying*: the tradition is silent, not least about itself as a tradition...the play of the mythico-ritual homologues constitutes a perfectly closed world, each aspect of which is, as it were, a reflection of others, a world which has no place for *opinion* as liberal ideology understands...and nothing is further from the correlative notion of the *majority* than the *unanimity* of doxa, the aggregate of the "choices" whose subject is everyone and no one because the questions they answer cannot be explicitly asked.... The truth of doxa is only ever fully revealed when negatively constituted by the constitution of a *field of opinion*, the locus of the confrontation of competing discourses.

The competing discourse for international students whilst they were in New Zealand was one of difference; there are similar competing discourses when they return to their countries of origin. Some returnees found that they had to re-learn unspoken social and cultural conventions. Here, the difference in the competing discourses is not as obvious (it is not ethnically-based nor phenotypical) and tends to be a discourse in the private, rather than the public, arena. Whereas in New Zealand 'international students' were distinctive through their differences (*vis-à-vis* domestic students and the non-Asian population), that is no longer the case once those students return to their countries of origin: the public discourse is relegated to the private arena and the group discourse loses its strength. (Although it is not lost entirely, it may be transformed as they become identified as a group of 'overseas graduates', for example).

There are several areas where returnees will recognise their competing discourse (its recognition only comes when it is challenged), the most pertinent area is in their familial relationships. For many returnees, the most difficult aspect of returning to their countries of origin is returning to live with their parents. Moving out of home and 'flating' is neither an option nor a social norm in their countries of origin. However, it is more than just curtailed independence, it is part of an over-riding socio-cultural discourse of filial piety.

Filial piety

The two major influences on Chinese worldviews are Confucianism and Communism (Sodowsky et al, 1994). This world view of Confucianism sees: the natural goodness of a person, the family as the basic social unit, ancestor worship to preserve family line, hierarchal family relationships, people's relationships with nature characterized by fear, the concept of yin and yang reflecting a balance between opposing forces, the significance of history, an emphasis on the condition of 'being', and the almost opposite influences of communism in self-reliance and a long-term future orientation (Sodowsky et al, 1994). Research has shown that Chinese students in Hong Kong and Taiwan are influenced more by Western and Japanese ideas rather than Confucianism or Communism, evident through their dominant individualism and future orientation (Sodowsky et al, 1994). Recognising the importance and influence of world views they remark that "[w]orld views also influence cognitive processes, including styles of communication, information processing, decision making, and social interactions" (Sodowsky et al, 1994:322).

Rothbaum and Xu (1995) suggest that filial piety (*hsiao*) refers to the child's love, respect, devotion and deference to their parent, a giving back to the parents for the care they have given to the child. Filial piety is strongest in Chinese Confucian-based ethnic groups and nationalities although also influences other Asian ethnic groups (Rothbaum and Xu, 1995). The primary emphasis in Asian society is the family as its fundamental unit and major emotional support (Fernandez, 1998). It can be traced to the Confucian belief of the five-relationships in life between: parents and children, older and younger persons, husbands and wives, friends, and rulers and subjects (also teacher-student) (Blair and Qian, 1998; Hwang, 1999). It can also be traced to the tri-relationship assessment of benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*) and propriety (*li*). In essence, it is inferior respecting the superior, the inferior never questioning the superior, and the superior having the final decision (Hwang, 1999).

Filial piety is considered as the first of all virtues in Chinese relations and it has profound implications for the formation of character, cognitive conservatism and authoritarian moralism (Yue and Ng, 1999). It takes its premise from the Confucian cosmological belief that individuals' lives are a continuation of their parents' physical lives (Hwang, 1999). While it may be a continuation of their parents' physical lives, being part of their parents'

physical lives can be difficult for many. It is not that the returnees did not subscribe to notions of filial piety, or that they were not aware of the expectations entailed in that discourse, but many found they could not *wholly* subscribe to its tenets. One student resorted to moving to another country, while another threatened to move out of home.

Returnee: I had great difficulty coming back to Singapore, primarily because I had to live with [my parents] again.... It was quite, you know, a shock to the system, you know after having done your own thing and then having to live with your parents and living by their house rules and it's difficult.

Interviewer: There was a bit of tension then

Returnee: Yeah [pause] um I did kind of suggest moving out at one point, of course they were horrified at the idea; in Singapore basically you live with your parents until you get married you know I haven't, I'm kind of expected to stay on [Interview 2, RGSGF].

Most do not shift countries again, once they return to their countries of origin (at least, in the short-term), but many shift their perspectives. One returnee had difficulty subscribing to these Confucian values:

I'd like to be more independent from now on.... Of course, on the other hand, they will still assume that I'm still the teenage boy that they once knew.... Other things as well: they're still holding to certain values and I've shifted from those values, such as they might have a strong feeling that family members have to stick together whereas I would say, I um I don't prescribe one hundred percent to those kind of doctrine if you want to put it that way.... There are other priorities in my life [pause]. Just to go back to other values that I've come to um live and appreciate is how civilised New Zealander's can be, for example, you can disagree on a lot of things and yet at the same time you're able to come back as a friend you know what I mean. You can argue on a lot of things, but yet you don't get personal on it.... So those are certain values that I've come across which I value very much. And also when I talk about value I would say that its really unfair to say that all the values that I've learned and I've been exposed to in the past five years are all New Zealand values in that sense, because I study as, I entered New Zealand as an international student.... Therefore, I met a lot of international students as well and I've been exposed to their culture, to the values that they have got yeah so the culture of the value that I've been exposed to I would term it as a universal rather than just New Zealand, of course New Zealand is still the predominant value.... [However, in Confucian culture] when people they are treating you nicely you have to reciprocate on that one and um I agree as a matter of principle, but that

its just that I thought that sometimes they overdone it so in that sense I don't really agree to it (Interview 23, RGMYYKKLM).

While surveys in Hong Kong and Taiwan have shown a declining adherence to the principles of filial piety (Yue and Ng, 1999), a recent survey amongst New Zealand Chinese shows a high level of filial obligation and expectation (Yue and Ng, 1999). Yue and Ng (1999) found that respect was valued the most, but obedience the least in communicating filial piety. They found that young people still gave a strong endorsement of filial obligations whilst older people were realistic in their expectations and the only area where their expectations were unmet was in obedience. Chinese males were more expected to assist family elders financially than any other filial duty, whereas females were expected to retain contact with their family elders. They suggest that a new cultural protocol for filial piety is respecting the older, but not necessarily obeying them; this has endorsement from old and young alike (Yue and Ng, 1999). Hwang (1999), however, suggests that the most important moral principle is loyalty. Hwang (1999) notes an important point, which is also reiterated in this study, that education has a significant negative relationship with filial attitudes. The distinction between 'respect' and 'obedience' is unclear at best and parents in particular may not make such a clear distinction, as this returnee intimated.

Oh, I don't know whether [my parents] regretted [sending me abroad to study], yeah I guess perhaps, uh, my father always tells me that he, ah, he regrets sending me away because I am so um, I am so defiant, as a girl. I now don't come home by ten, and I do what I want, whereas Asian girls should be quiet and not seen (Interview 4, RGS GF 080201).

Returnees may return to find that their parents expect them to take over the family business, or to get a well-paying job and financially support either their parents or siblings, perhaps, in the case of the latter, for overseas study. When the expectations of the parents and the expectations of the graduate do not meet, there is inevitably tension. Sometimes this tension was resolved; other times it was left unresolved. For a few returnees, the relationships with their parents were strengthened while they were overseas: being absent from their parents helped the student to appreciate their parents all the more.

[My] relationship with my family, um, I think it has grown stronger when I was away. Because when I was away I used to appreciate my family a whole lot more, you know, when I was living in a hostel in Wellington. I grew to appreciate my family a lot more,

especially when I was sick and staying by myself and [doing] laundry and cooking and so I learned to appreciate my family a lot more.... Also I, when I was like here, I was wanting to study overseas experience the freedom you know and be free, be an individual.... I thought 'nah I'm not going to miss my parents', but then when I was overseas I was like yeah I really do miss them, really miss spending time with my brother, we were close but ever since we came back from overseas I think that we're a lot closer (Interview 8, RGSGF, 070201).

Filial piety can also be related to the significance of face-saving and the maintenance of harmonious relations (Singelis and Sharkey, 1995). Some returnees recognised that steps could be taken to ensure harmonious relationships, as this returnee did.

Interviewer: You kept in touch, presumably, with your parents, while you were in New Zealand. //yes// How often?

Returnee: Every day. //every day?// Two times a day. E-mail, yeah.

Interviewer: Really?

Returnee: It wasn't enough. I spoke-, we knew what was happening with each other, they knew, they knew I was going to, okay, morning I'm going here, evening I'm going here, but they didn't know how I view things, and that that's the more important part. And I also didn't know how they view things, how they, what's their personal opinion about what's happening in their country and their family, and that, that I felt was lacking, yeah. So, even though I knew exactly what was happening, um, that didn't help the transition period, yeah.

Interviewer: So you would've, in hindsight, you would've expressed...

Returnee:...more of my beliefs, yeah.

Interviewer: And you would've liked them to express more of theirs?

Returnee: Yeah (Interview 14 RGMKLF 130201).

Many students return and find their worldview is substantially different to their parents' worldview, they find that they hold a competing discourse to not only their parents but, as with filial piety, to their society at large. Prior to their study abroad, they may have not questioned the dominant discourse, or considered that there may be other discourses; post their return, their discourse of difference is not one of physical appearances and the assumptions therein, but it is one of ideas, behaviours, and ways of doing things: it is a different habitus. As Bourdieu (1977:196) argues:

[T]he mechanisms responsible for reproducing the appropriate habitus are here an integral part of an apparatus of production which could not function without them. Agents lastingly "bind" each other...only through the dispositions which the group inculcates in them and continuously reinforces, and which render *unthinkable* practices which would appear as legitimate and even be taken for granted.... The official truth produced by the collective work of euphemization...also has practical efficacy, for, even if it were contradicted by everyone's behaviour, like a rule to which every case proved an exception, it would still remain a true description of such behaviour as is intended to be acceptable.

Those who hold competing discourses to the dominant discourse are challenging not only their place in their social context, but also their own sense of self-identity; in short, they are challenging their place of longing and belonging. If, prior to living overseas, a student's self-identity was rooted in his or her family and societal norms, but upon their return to their country of origin the student finds these roots have shifted (or they have shifted from those roots and norms) then their self-identity is challenged and questioned. Giddens (1991:5) argues that: "[t]he reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems". For these students, the mediating filter for their 'reflexive project' only evidently became multi-choice upon their re-entry: whereas once they were secure in an environment of one dominant discourse, now that security is challenged by competing discourses.

Religious conversion and familial tensions

For many of these returnees, and the environments where they came from, worldview, life choices and the whole ambit of a 'reflexive project' are tied in with religious practices and beliefs. Unlike New Zealand where one's religious beliefs tend to be exclusive to the private domain, in the countries of origin of many of these students (with the possible exception of Singapore) religion is part of the dominant discourse; it is in the public arena, and it is a significant factor in identification, by others and by oneself. Changing religions is almost unthinkable and in the case of Malaysia is illegal if you are Malay (by law, all Malays must be Muslim). Therefore, graduates who returned to their countries of origin with a different religion to their parents (normally the student had converted to Christianity) faced intense opposition. Where the religion between parents and their children was different, this opposition was invariably the case: changing one's religion was one of the most explicit forms of holding a competing discourse.

In one case, a returnee identified that her parents prevented her from seeing her friends or spending a lot of time away from home and prevented her from attending her church. Interestingly, the returnee expected the worst, so she was in some position to deal with this. Having said that however, the returnee did put great effort into trying to stay in New Zealand, but was unable to find employment. This is a worst-case scenario and at the far end of the continuum of re-entry experiences with parents; in this case, tension with parents manifested itself in an explicit form of emotional (and apparently physical) abuse.

Familial tensions were the norm for the returnee. In the cases where the graduate returned as a Christian, it was quite common for parents to prevent their children from attending church-related activities. Returnees responded to this tension in different ways and, while many did attempt to 'buck the system', it was rarely to any avail.

I think in, in sort of looking, looking back, in hindsight, I wouldn't have been so insistent on my way. Ah, and I would be more, it's funny, you know, I would be more accepting about the Singaporean culture, which I am already so, perhaps, so, so familiar with, it's not fighting, fighting sort of the system, or fighting my parents at that stage. I would have been perhaps more graceful (Interview 4, RGSGF, 080201).

While the returnee above could see that fighting the system was not always the best way, others fought internally, struggling to subscribe to familial and social conventions. Relationships with others also needed reconfiguration. Those who returned as Christians expected that their church in their countries of origin would provide them with social networks and support. For returnees who had converted to Christianity while in New Zealand, or even returnees who had attended a church in their country of origin before arriving in New Zealand, re-establishing themselves in a church upon their return could be a difficult process. For these returnees, the church was not so much a venue for the expression of their faith (although it was that also), but rather a venue to establish, or re-establish, social networks.

Religious conversion and social support

Returnees may have found that the style of church was considerably different to that which they had experienced in New Zealand. Furthermore, to the returnees who depended on the church to provide their support and social networks, their unsettledness was more than the unsettledness they may have experienced in the transition in any institution, such as the work-force, because without the church, they were also without social and support networks. Arguably, the consequences of a 'churchless faith' (Jamieson, 2000) are profound for these returnees: they have lost more than a place of worship; they have lost crucial friends and support.

Interviewer: Do you think that your relationship changed as a result of your study or they would have changed anyway?

Returnee: Well they probably would have changed because quite a number of them went overseas to study as well, they went to the UK so you know it would have been different anyhow. But, I suppose the main change was that I thought that church people, I drifted further and further away from them, I guess those were the friends that I really lost yeah (Interview 2, RGSGF).

There may have also been language issues, as expressed by this returnee:

I think my church is a bit... it's a sort of adjusting to a church as well because I think one of the things is that it's a mandarin speaking church, which is a little different to Elizabeth

Street Chapel [in New Zealand] [laugh]. Also having to get used to expressing your ideas you know in a different language...and singing translated songs [laugh]. I think that was thing I never really got used to [laugh]...There seems to be a sense that, that, maybe it's a self-imposed thing, but um there is a sense that people don't really understand me very well [laugh]. I don't know, or maybe I wasn't really able to relate that well with them [laugh]. (Interview 25, RGSGF (UK) B).

Other relationships

The returnee's observation that 'people don't really understand me very well' was not restricted to churchgoers. In general, re-establishing friendships could be difficult for returnees. As noted above, familial changes upon re-entry are profound. Similarly profound are changes in relationships with friends.

Interviewer: How about your friends back here? Had you kept in touch with your friends while you were in New Zealand?

Returnee: Yes. The friends who had also went overseas were easier to keep in touch with... We relate better to each other, 'cause there was also a gap where we left Malaysia, and we went overseas to study. It didn't matter that they didn't go to New Zealand, some of them went to US, UK, or Australia – it didn't matter. Those who were behind, ah, yeah, it was-, it's a bit more difficult, because, for one thing, they would still be studying, whereas we had graduated, because it takes longer in the local system. And because they have not, in that sense, transitioned to adult, they are still living with their parents, whereas for us, we come back, supposedly with a stamp that says, you know, adult, so, there, there was a bit of difference, but...those closer friends...friendships I maintained.

Interviewer: Have they changed?

Returnee: They changed in part, Sometimes it's the fact that they didn't change that makes the friendship a bit more difficult to continue. But most of them did change...

Interviewer: Yeah. Change for the better, in most cases?

Returnee: I could not say better or, it's just a different outlook (Interview 14 RGMYKLG 130201).

However, generally friendships with those who had also studied abroad did not change as significantly as friendships with those who did not study abroad. Inevitably, friendships that exist oceans apart may be difficult to sustain, although, as noted in Chapter Seven, increasingly the Internet is resolving the difficulties, in part.

I mean the problem about being away is that you lose all your friends in certain ways. The very good friends you write to and when you're there you see them and that sort of thing, but otherwise, the others just fall away [laugh], but you can't really live without them in a sense, so I think in a sense, that made the ten months quite difficult [laugh] (Interview 25 RGSG (UKB) F 090301).

Giddens (1991:186) has argued that “[a] self-identity has to be created and more or less continually reordered against the backdrop of shifting experiences of day-to-day life and the fragmenting tendencies of modern institutions.” Many returnees will acutely experience this shifting backdrop: their worldviews have changed; their familial relationships have to be renegotiated; their expectations have been challenged; and, above all, their ontological security has been shaken. Their re-entry is a grief experience: an encounter with loss. However, it is a grief experience disenfranchised from social and cultural support structures. This disenfranchisement, in turn, has a profound affect on international students, their self-reflexivity, their notions of longing and belonging, and their sense of ontological security. As Giddens (1991:185) has argued, at length:

On the one hand, in ordinary circumstances, the individual is relatively protected from issues which might otherwise pose themselves as disturbing questions. On the other hand, whenever fateful moments intervene or other kinds of personal crises occur, the sense of ontological security is likely to come under immediate strain. On a psychological level, there are close connections between the sequestration of experience, trust and the search for intimacy. Abstract systems help foster day-to-day security, but trust vested in such systems...carries little psychological reward for the individual; trust brackets out ignorance, but does not provide the moral satisfaction that trust in persons can offer.... We can see here a powerful basis for emotional disquiet, particularly when considered in combination with the backdrop of high-consequence risks. The loss of anchoring reference points deriving from the development of internally referential systems creates moral disquiet that individuals can never fully overcome.

Returnees' 'anchoring reference points', whether it is in their identity as a member of a family, a faith, or a friendship, are challenged. The issues they face upon re-entry are essentially issues centered on the matrix of disenfranchised grief, ontological insecurity, and self-reflexivity. In turn, these issues affect their notions of longing and belonging.

CONCLUSION

As the returnee above expressed it, 'you lose all your friends in certain ways'; for many returnees, the processes of re-entry engenders losses of other kinds as well. The literature has shown that while international students are a well-studied group, their re-entry experiences are not so well studied. Much of the research on international students and re-entry (generally, not specifically to students) comes from psychology and offers a useful entry point into the frame of analysis of disenfranchised grief.

Re-entry is a process: it may begin while the student is still in New Zealand and continue well into their return to their country of origin. It is also a process of loss. One aspect of this loss derives from a changing worldview. Many returnees find that, upon their return to their countries of origin, their worldview – in terms of adherence to social expectations and dominant discourses – has changed. They no longer adhere wholly to these expectations and discourses and find their own perceptions and experiences in conflict with the expectations of those around them. This changing worldview may be a form of loss for returnees. The transition of re-entry can also engender other losses in all aspects of their life, including their familial relationships, their friendships, their work place, their faith, and their perceived place of belonging in their country of origin.

However, these losses are not isolated incidences or occurrences. They are part of the re-entry process, and aspects of disenfranchised grief. Disenfranchised grief, while acknowledging the profound and often significant losses encountered during transitions such as re-entry, also recognises both the social and cultural contexts in which that grief is experienced (and disenfranchised) and the varying responses by the grievers. While it acknowledges a grief experience estranged from the community, it does not offer to the same degree the learning and dynamic approaches offered by psychology.

However, it is an important frame of analysis for this research because of the effect that disenfranchised grief has on the ontological security, self-identity, and settledness of the returnee. It also combines the individual's experiences with communal expectations and experiences. To this research, it recognises that the re-entry of an international student affects more than the student him- or her-self. Disenfranchised grief is a highly useful frame of analysis of students' re-entry transitions, but it is less useful in exploring how those transitions and experiences can in turn lead to renegotiated identities and 'homes'. Issues of this nature are explored in the next chapters.

Having subscribed to different discourses, challenged dominant discourses, or questioned social expectations, many of these returnees found themselves ontologically insecure and effectively 'homeless'. They encountered a grief that was not socially sanctioned, but rather it was disenfranchised. Returnees' processes of re-entry were both complex and challenging. Their re-entry had also set them on a course: of renegotiating their sense of place, of re-ascribing and redefining notions of home, and of finding a place of belonging. They found that, to paraphrase the famous quote: home is a foreign country; they do things differently there.

LONGING FOR BELONGING:

SEARCHING FOR A PLACE TO CALL 'HOME'

A man's destination is not his destiny,

Every country is home to one man.

And exile to another.

(Eliot, 1963:231)

INTRODUCTION

The 'foreignness' of 'home' in turn leads to a longing for belonging; part of this longing for belonging is a seeking for identity. However, not only is *seeking* for identity complex and problematic, so is identity itself. It can be relational, oppositional, vocational, or virtual. It can be a strategic project, self-defined, or defined by others. It can also arise within the conflict between the local and the global, and it can disrupt the reflexive narrative. According to Giddens (1991), a person's identity is found in their ability and capacity to retain an ongoing narrative. However, this narrative may be disrupted by significant times of transition, including re-entry into a person's country of origin. This disrupted narrative may cause ontological insecurity, challenge the reflexive life project, and perpetuate notions of disenfranchised grief.

For many returnees, their New Zealand study experience had added to or challenged their notions of self-identity and had also challenged their notions of place and space. Bourdieu's notion of social space is useful here in bridging the extremes of objectivism and subjectivism: it recognises both the determinant structures and the human agent. An equally useful frame of analysis in this manner is transnationalism.

While it is still a relatively under-theorised concept (Vertovec and Cohen, 1999), transnationalism allows the intersection of properties of both structure and agency. Thus, while it allows room for the new power relationships between state and capital and local and global, as posited by Ong (1999), it also allows room for the intersection of the

'everyday meanings' with regulatory processes and structures. It therefore complements the notion of disenfranchised grief – as a grief that cannot be expressed within social conventions – and the notion of ontological security, which is a subjective experience mediated through social realities.

While aspects of transnationalism deal with social and cultural capital, it is the social and cultural capital of the individual agent, rather than any supra political or economic force or power. However, transnationalism also retains the notion of the nation-state, particularly as the regulator of migration and citizenship, while recognising the international movement of people, some of whom may hold several passports and therefore make claims to several nation states at once. Transnationalism is concerned less with the notion of diversity within plurality than with the very fact of inter- and intra-continental movement of people. As Faist (2000:199) argues: "transnational communities must be embedded in larger political and economic international structures".

Transnationalism then is an appropriate and relevant framework of analysis in this context: it acknowledges the structural factors, but not at the expense of the choices of the individual agent. In the case of returnees, therefore, we can acknowledge that at the macro level students face structural, social, cultural and behavioural expectations, as demonstrated in previous chapters; they also face a crisis of identity. These structural expectations affect the returnees' ontological security and reflexivity projects (cf. Giddens, 1991).

Furthermore, new forms of international migration bring about *transnational* social spaces: social spaces that have a multi-polar geographic link. Here, social interaction is plural-local; it is now possible for people to communicate and move faster and further than ever before (Pries, 1999b). Social space is emerging within multiple geographical spaces. The interaction between the individual agent and those conditions will affect whether that social space is transnational or not. As Faist (2000:199-200) argues:

Cultural, political, and economic processes in transnational social spaces *involve the accumulation, use, and effects of various sorts of capital, their volume and convertibility: economic capital, human capital, such as educational credentials, skills and know-how, and social capital, mainly resources inherent in or transmitted through social and symbolic ties* (Faist, 2000:199-200, my emphasis).

These transnational social spaces are defined, *inter alia*, by their scope and intensity. They are also defined, in this context, by symbolic ties and in particular the use, accumulation and convertibility of these ties beyond the kin group and in the absence of geographical propinquity. This social space is a mediated social space: the contexts in which these symbolic ties are attained and transferred are delimited by relationships between regulatory nation-state structures. While the social contexts of these returnees do not determine their life-choices, reflexive projects, or re-entry experiences, they nevertheless influence these choices and experiences.

Many international students occupy a transnational social space: many engage in regular long-distance communication and travel, but also *actively* engage within and between nation-states. However, other international students are not transnational: their activities do not involve the transnational accumulation, use and effects of various sorts of capital, social exchange, reciprocity, or solidarity inherent in symbolic ties (cf. Faist, 2000). Those returnees who are not transnational have little concern re-establishing a notion of place or space, for they have never engaged in a transition to warrant this concern. However, transnational returnees do find their notions of place and space are questioned: here a transnational analysis offers a meaning-making component and one that involves both structures and agency.

Inhabiting this transnational social space and in questioning their notions of place and space, many returnees find themselves without either, that is, they are effectively homeless. This notion of 'homelessness' is most pertinent to the returnees' re-entry experiences. 'Home' itself needs to be redefined. It is ambiguous, and its association with physical territory is less certain. There is a diversity of attachments and belongings as there is a diversity of 'homes', which become increasingly people-places not physical-places: the boundaries of a nation-state or the borders of a geographical territory no longer frame notions of belonging, and no longer get thought of as 'home'.

IN SEARCH OF IDENTITIES

The longing for belonging is a search for places, although equally it could be a reorientation of expectations that *spaces* are 'all' that there are: spaces to call 'home', spaces to call 'friends', and spaces of self-identity/(ies). Moreover, sometimes, and more recently, identity is an e-mail address or Internet alias, shred of the three-dimensions of the physical world, yet alive in the virtual world. Although, more strictly speaking, something like an email address is also a symbolic marker of identity, a tangible artefact of the desire for identity. Identity is all of these and more besides. As Calhoun (cited in Castells, 1997:6) writes:

We know if no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made... Self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others.

Longing for belonging can be a search to find identity, create identity, or perhaps just to express an identity. For an international student, the "dialectical interplay between the local and the global" is a reality, but increasingly a reality that is both mediated and undergoing change. The mediation is via the "how, from what, by whom, and for what" of constructing identities (Castells, 1997:7).

Returnees have their own *reflexive* identities, tied up with their notions and explorations and (re)discoveries of their ontological security through their subjective experiences. However, as previous chapters have argued, they also have a collective identity: in one context, they are 'international students' while in another context they are 'overseas graduates' or 'returnees'. Faist (2000:225) argues that collective identity denotes two dimensions:

[F]irst, a common core of shared beliefs, ideas, the memory of a common history, aspirations, the identification with certain projects – in short, a core of collective representations – and second, ascription by others concerning the collective character, certain dispositions and memories.

Although he largely employs the concept of networks as a way of describing the dominant organisational form of the informational economy, and not necessarily of interpersonal relationships, Manuel Castell's (1997) analysis is nevertheless helpful here (cf. Vertovec,

2001). Castells (1997) proposes three forms and origins of identity-building: legitimising identity, resistance identity, and project identity. The dominant institutions of society who rationalise their domination *vis-à-vis* social actors introduce legitimising identity. Those actors that are in devalued positions or stigmatised by the logic of domination generate resistance identity. They resist and survive based on principles that are different from, or even opposed to, the permeating principles of society. Project identity is created when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials that are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society. In so doing this, they are seeking the overall transformation of social structure.

These three forms of identity are evident in the social and discursive encounters of the international student. Legitimising identity is evident in the dominant discourse in their countries of origin, in its social expectations, and unwritten codes of behaviour. This is the discourse that disenfranchises the grieving returnee. Some international students adopt resistance identity, although more often at an individual rather than corporate or social level. This resistance identity is part of the returnee's self-reflexivity and struggle to regain ontological security. Finally, project identity, or the redefinition of identity as an individual in a given society, is the task which faces many returnees, or at least those who choose to move on from resisting the dominant discourses of society and (re)placing their identity in a new space. Here, their notion of belonging moves away from being physically bound (as, for example, a citizen of their country of origin). This notion of belonging finds its place in the disjuncture between the local and the global, a disjuncture that can also disrupt the narrative of the returnees' identity.

Disrupting the narrative

Recent dialogue between the 'global' and the 'local' has provoked extensive discourse about changing natures of identity, particularly identity shaped within the context of globalisation generally (e.g. Featherstone, 1990b, 1993; Massey, 1993; Nonini and Ong, 1997; Yeoh and Willis, 2001). As Cohen (1997:175) argues:

The scope for multiple affiliations and associations that has been opened up outside and beyond the nation-state has also allowed a diasporic allegiance to become both more open and more acceptable. There is no longer any stability in the points of origin, no finality in

the points of destination and no necessary coincidence between social and national identities.

With identity based in places increasingly unstable, 'identity', as a reflexive project (cf. Giddens, 1991) has to be reconfigured. Yeoh and Willis (2001) assert that the context of global dynamics and transnational forces have not eliminated, but have rather transformed the power and politics of identity; and that because identity is socially constructed, rather than being essentialist, and because it draws on notions of 'imagined communities', new forms of identification are formed in strategic ways to better position themselves in a globalising world. According to this argument, the reflexive project of forming, shaping or (re)creating an identity is a strategic project, one that is as much self-serving as it is self-defined. However, identity is not always self-defined; the reflexive project of identity-building is not isolated from the contexts in which that identity-building takes place.

Giddens (1991:54, my emphasis) asserts that a person's identity is not found in behaviour, nor in relation to others, but "in the capacity to *keep a particular narrative going*". This capacity includes behavioural, social, and emotional levels. It also affects an individual's notion of belonging: their ontological security. As Giddens (1991:54-55) continues:

The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self. As Charles Taylor puts it, 'In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become, and of where we are going'.... A stable sense of self-identity presupposes the other elements of ontological security – an acceptance of the reality of things and of others – but it is not directly derivable from them.

When those senses of present, past, and future are questioned or challenged, then an individual's identity is disrupted. The returnees may find that not only does their time in New Zealand – and the plethora of options that study abroad experience suggest for their life courses – challenge their notion of 'where we are going', but they also encounter this disruption upon their re-entry into their countries of origin. The returnees' re-entry not only disrupts their narrative, but also leads to instability in their self-identity. However, while this ontological instability may be a negative characteristic, its outcomes, as explored in Chapter Eight, may be positive.

Recognising the changing and fluid subjectivity-positions, the risks of legitimising stereotypes, and the nature of habitus, the returnees were asked, having returned to their countries of origin, to describe themselves in terms of identity. Invariably, they found this question difficult to answer. Their answers echoed constructed identities; for example, their job or qualification were proffered as responses. Others responded according to their beliefs: “a child of God”, “a Muslim”, or “a Christian”. Others responded according to their nationality: “a Singaporean” or “a Malaysian”.

These responses are significant for two reasons: they are identities circumscribed by and within structures (such as a system of beliefs or an ethnic categorisation) and they are responses more relevant within the countries of origin than within New Zealand. That is not to say that identifying him- or her-self as a Christian within New Zealand was not important for the student, but it was not necessarily the primary means of identification. In New Zealand, as noted in the previous chapter, a significant identifier was that of ‘international student’: a minority in both a categorisation sense (*vis-à-vis* domestic students) and a discursive sense (*vis-à-vis* the dominant discourse). In their countries of origin, many of these self-identifiers (Christian, Malaysian-Chinese *et cetera*) were similarly a minority and a dominated discourse. For some of these students, the cultural capital of a Western educational degree was unable to alleviate them from being in a discriminated class. For some of these students, they were either ethnically or religiously restricted; their identities were formed out of both repression and resistance.

Where they could not find external reference points on which to base their identity, such as a nationality or ethnicity, then they used internal reference points, like a belief or ideals of behaviour. To Giddens (1991:37) these internal reference points, “provide modes of orientation which, on the level of practice, ‘answer’ the questions which could be raised about the frameworks of existence” and these answers are emotional rather than simply cognitive. However, at another level, the ‘meanings’ of these ‘frameworks of existence’ *are* associated with social organisation, beyond the individual’s cognitive and emotional identity-points. Here, then, is the intersection between the individual and the society(ies) to which that individual belongs. As Giddens (1991:42-3) argues:

Meaning is not built up through descriptions of external reality, nor does it consist of semiotic codes ordered independently of our encounters with that reality. Rather, ‘what cannot be put into words’, interchanges with persons and objects on the level of daily

practice – forms the necessary condition of what can be said and of the meanings involved in practical consciousness.... Learning about external reality hence is largely a matter of mediated experience.

If, following Giddens (1991) argument, identity is perceived to be an ongoing narrative, then a student's study experience in New Zealand may be a break in that narrative: those returnees who had most difficulty describing their identity (outside referentials like faith) generally were also those who were less certain and less settled about 'home'. One response demonstrates this:

I think I'm trying to find some purpose here, in Hong Kong.... At first, it was really hard to settle, and I think oh, I really don't like this place.... I was trying to find some purpose to live here.... like doing the job... I want to find some meanings, to find some meanings, to...live here.... I think it's like a searching now, at this moment, because I just started my career, it's just a new side, so its like I'm searching, and if this, like if to any kind really doesn't work out here, then ah, we tears, and... [HK4 RGHKF 310301].

New Zealand changed those who studied there. At least, New Zealand was a factor in those changes. When students, both recent and those who studied under the Colombo Plan, were asked whether their time in New Zealand changed them, their answer was inevitably 'yes'. The changes were both subtle, in terms of slight personality or behavioural changes (such as becoming more outgoing) and explicit (such as changing religion or adopting a greatly altered world-view). One Colombo Plan scholar was effusive in his response:

Yes, yes I can't imagine what I would be like if I'd never been overseas or been in Malaysia all these years, fifty years in one country.... I suppose I would not be so confident or even my own career.... As I say just now, if I was given the chance I would go [to New Zealand] again...if I was younger. [Interview 13 CPMYKL, 120201].

However, while these changes in self-confidence and behaviour were significant, the changes in conceptions of one's place and space, while subtler, were equally significant.

FINDING A PLACE AND SPACE

The bonds of ‘common experience’ of these students, in one context, or overseas returnees, in another context, are mediated through both opportunities and constraints. An overseas degree may be both an opportunity and a constraint. To Bourdieu (1998:9), the social space is the first and last reality: it commands the representations that social agents can have of it “to exist within a social space, to occupy a point or to be an individual within a social space, is to differ, to be different”. The invisible reality that organises these differentiations and representations is a principle of classification that is *explanatory*. This principle does not just describe classified realities, rather it fixes on determinant properties that allow the prediction of other properties, and distinguishes and brings together agents who are as similar to each other as possible and as different as possible to members of other classes. Those with proximity in a social space are predisposed to closer relations: closer in their properties, dispositions, and tastes. The position occupied in this social space - that is, according to Bourdieu (1998), in the structure of the distribution of different kinds of capital - commands the representations and position-takings of this space in the struggles to either conserve or transform it.

Returnees, as with all transnational citizens, are not removed from the contexts which they have left nor to which they are returning; they are not, as we have seen in previous chapters, immune from social expectations, nor are they ‘above the law’, free to move, act and behave in a fashion opposite to the dominant discourses. Faist (2000:191, my emphasis) argues:

Transnational social spaces are combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that reach across the borders of multiple states. These spaces denote dynamic social processes, not static notions of ties and positions....*Transnational social spaces are constituted by the various forms of resources or capital of spatially mobile and immobile persons, on the one hand, and the regulations imposed by nation-states and various other opportunities and constraints, on the other*; for example, state-controlled immigration and refugee policies, and institutions in ethnic communities. Transnational social spaces are delimited by pentatonic relationships between the government of the immigration state, the rulers of the country of emigration...civil society groups in the emigration state, and the transnational group (Faist, 2000:191, my emphasis).

However, this "dynamic process" of the transnational social space (Faist, 2000:199) includes international student returnees amongst its inhabitants. According to Faist (2000:197; cf. Castles, 2000b; Faist, 1999; Glick Schiller et al, 1992; Ong, 1999; Portes et al, 1999), transnational social spaces: "consist of combinations of ties and their contents, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places."

However, not all international students are transnational: not all international students engage in the scope or intensity of activities between nation-states. The international student who spends hours talking either physically or virtually to their co-nationals, but does not engage with New Zealanders in a meaningful interchange is not transnational. That is, their *cross*-border ties are static and not dynamic; they do not involve the transnational accumulation, use and effects of various sorts of capital at a cross-border level (Faist, 1999). Nor does negotiating with the regulatory structures of a nation-state (or states) make an individual transnational. Transnationality involves social exchange, reciprocity and solidarity, which are reached via symbolic ties. Here, "[c]ollective representations can be expressed in some sort of collective identity – we-feeling or we-consciousness – and refers to a social unit of action" (Faist, 1999:7).

Strong ties, in a transnational social space, involve intensive transactions, which are enduring and involve obligation and emotion; they are most commonly found in kinship groups and households (Faist, 2000). Alternatively, symbolic ties – face-to-face or indirect – involve bonds to which participants attach shared meanings, memories, representations, and future expectations, extend beyond a kin-group, and may involve members of the same religious belief, ethnic or national group, or language. They may function as bridges for social capital, or precursors to migratory careers.

It is only those students that are transnational that also search for a place and space of belonging, because their transnationality itself has challenged their ontological security: their perceptions of their place, and sometimes even the reality of their place, has been questioned, challenged and made insecure. It is for this reason that something like a *structurationist* reading of transnationalism is required: it introduces a *meaning-making* component into the definition and involves both structure *and* agency. Bourdieu (1990) offers a notion of social space that allows us to go beyond the alternatives of realism and

nominalism. This notion of social space is a response to subjectivism (which reduces strategies to visible interactions) and objectivism (which deduces actions and interactions from structures). A social space is constructed by the distribution of agents and groups according to two principles of differentiation: economic capital and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1998). As Levitt (2001:197; my emphasis) argues:

Individual actors cannot be viewed in isolation from the transnational social fields in which they are embedded.... Those who live within transnational social fields are exposed to a set of social expectations, cultural values, and patterns of human interaction that are shaped by more than one social, economic, and political system.

Yet even in inhabiting this transnational social space, some returnees are simultaneously searching for place and/or space(s) to call their own. Their place is no longer “a locale whose form, function and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity” (Castells, 2000a:453). As Faist (2000:293) argues:

[t]emporary or permanent territorial exit abroad is part of a variety of people’s strategies to deal with stress and strain, to search for security and collective identity, to express political dissent, to enlarge options in various markets – in short, to engage in dilemmas and options posed over one’s life course.

There needs to be a common repertoire of symbolic and collective representations. To this end, Faist (2000:108-9) argues that,

[a] third dimension of social capital is solidarity with others in a group who share similar social and symbolic ties.... At the root of solidarity we find a willingness to transcend immediate self-interest, grounded in emotional identification with others. This is a fellow-feeling. It is the ability to empathize, the willingness to see things through someone else’s eyes, to commiserate, the capacity to rejoice in other person’s joys and feel sad because of their sorrows.... Collective representations provide the common ground for identities – a group, organizational, or symbolic community consciousness that refers to a unity of wanting and action.... [I]n a relational perspective, identity is an actor’s experience of categories such as gender, ethnicity, or class, of social and symbolic ties, groups or organizations or symbolic communities, coupled with a public representation of that experience. The public representation often takes the form of a shared story, a narrative.

It is this shared story and narrative that distinguishes transnational international students from others. Therefore, while transnational communities exist on the level of village communities in emigration and immigration countries, they can also exist with larger aggregates (Faist, 1999), such as international students, in the immigration country, or overseas graduate returnees, in the emigration country. This aggregate group of transnationals are not primarily economically tied (in the sense that business-people are); rather they are symbolically tied, held together, in this case, by a common bond of experience. The symbolic ties inherent in a transnational community – or amongst those who belong to this transnational community – have structures of meaning that “are engendered by and expressed in private and public behaviours, images, institutions [and] languages” (Faist, 1999:31).

These ties are not fixed, they are fluid and under the propitious conditions of modern technologies, liberal state policies, changing emigration state policies, and immigrant capacities to mobilize resources, these ties can lead to a fertile breeding ground for the transnational syncretism of culture (Faist, 1999). Faist (1999:33) goes on to argue:

Syncretist content becomes very important for forging and upholding transnationally-oriented networks and organizations. This not only means contained views of culture have to be modified. It also implies that the unrealistic image of a deterritorialized and global culture has to be cast aside.

Therefore, an international student who adopts this syncretic-culture and who entertains strategic symbolic and social transnational links *is* a transnational citizen (Faist, 2000). However, international students are not territorial-less: as students, they are bound, by immigration laws if not by anything else, within the boundaries of the host country, and most remain citizens of their countries of origin. Their location is not fluid – most are not highly mobile migrant entrepreneurs - but, despite this, their symbolic ties are not restricted exclusively within the borders of a nation-state. For some returnees, their (primarily non-territorial) space is transnational. Paralleling this is a sense of 'homelessness' by returnees: in particular, homelessness related to the absence of belonging in a physically bound place.

HOMELESSNESS

Berger et al (1974:77) have argued that “[m]odern man [sic] has suffered from a deepening condition of ‘homelessness’: the correlate of the migratory character of his [sic] experience of society and of self has been what might be called a metaphysical loss of “home.” Of this longing for belonging, this ‘loss of home’, one author comments: “[t]he exilic experience is essentially an experience of homelessness, a homelessness which links with the disturbing absence of meaning and the sense of being isolated which is prevalent in the modern age” (Jamieson, 2000:181). The novelist Sylvia Ashton-Warner has said, “Accident of dwelling place does not necessarily mean parochialism of the soul” (cited in Edgecombe 2001:81) and Giddens (1991:5) argues that:

In the post-traditional order of modernity, and against the backdrop of new forms of mediated experience, self-identity becomes a reflexively organized endeavour. The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems. In modern social life, the notion of lifestyle takes on a particular significance. The more tradition loses its hold, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options.

What these three authors have identified, in the form of homelessness, is a defining feature of our present age, but more than that, it is also a defining feature of international students of late modernity. Namely, it is that of revising one’s biography in changing environments and of finding new ways, spaces and places, in which one can place his her or ontological security. It is here that international students differ from other migrants: they return (or at least intend to return) to their countries of origin. In so doing, they face a dilemma, expressed in various ways by the above authors, but essentially, a dilemma of ‘home’. For many of these returnees, home is “everywhere and nowhere” at once (Pollock and Van Reken, 1999:125). ‘Home’ is more ambiguous, its territoriality is less certain; the longing for a place to call home is met by a perception that there is nowhere to belong. Arguably, this is the most defining feature of the re-entry experience. Moreover, following Giddens (1991), the conundrum of a ‘home that is both everywhere and nowhere’ produces a need for a highly reflexive form of subjectivity: ontological *in*securities return.

Returnees' existence is shaped in important ways by being part of a transnational community, and while some may prefer the term 'transmigrant', in the case of international students, the community element of their transnationalism is significant, as is their social and spatial identity (Castles, 2000a, 2000b). However, while territory is present, allegiance and identity-attachment to that territory may not be (Castles, 2000a). There is a diversity of attachments and belongings, many of which will refer to people, places, and traditions that are outside the limits of a particular nation-state (Vertovec, 2000). This diversity of attachments and belongings equally diversify notions of 'home': the basis on which home is defined is *redefined*. If 'home' was a physical place once, now it is a *people-place*; if 'home' was defined by nation-state traditions once, it is now defined by global experiences, where territory and tradition have given way to longing and belonging, to longing *for* belonging

Bauböck (1995:3) has argued that

Some people think of themselves as citizens of the world. They do not feel any deep attachments to a nation or a state and they move with ease from one country to another. However, in order to do that they need passports which acknowledge them as citizens of a particular state. Being a cosmopolitan, not only in one's political opinions but also in one's life-style, is something which few can afford. Most ordinary people are citizens of separate states much more than they are citizens of the world.

Like travellers between destinations, or nomads between shelters, returnees are without a 'home', in the sense of a physical place; many would describe themselves by the amorphous term of 'global citizens' or 'citizens of the world'. Others have multiple 'homes'. For some returnees, New Zealand is their 'home away from home' (cf. Vertovec, 1999:450); it is more a 'home' to them than their country of origin, in the sense of that is where they feel that they belong, although only relatively speaking. This identification of New Zealand as more of a 'home' (albeit an ambivalent identification) amongst returnees in this research is arguably more of an instinctive response to return to familiarity, rather than contempt for their new (but, re-entered) surroundings.

In the unsettledness they encounter upon re-entry to their country of origin, some seek to return to the 'settled' experiences of New Zealand: however, this New Zealand 'home' to which they seek to belong is only of memories, its reality was only lived in experience. Many have a strong emotional attachment to New Zealand, to the extent that some return to New Zealand on a regular basis. For these students, New Zealand may be their 'home',

or at least their 'second home'. Other students identify their country of origin as their 'home', some through unequivocal enthusiasm, yet others by timid default.

What differentiates one group from another (that is, those who see their country of origin as their 'home' and those who do not) is general. The interaction and immersion in New Zealand life clearly was a factor, but not in all cases. Not surprisingly perhaps, those who were more engaging with New Zealand people and culture had a greater attachment to New Zealand and therefore a greater propensity to see it as 'second home', than those who did not engage with New Zealand to the same extent (or at all).

'Third Culture Kids'

Another way of approaching this sense of 'homelessness' is to consider a term often used for and by children of missionaries or diplomats, or others have lived in one or more country and culture: 'Third Culture Kid' or TCK. They share much in common with returnees, most notably this vexing issue of home, this longing for belonging. As Pollock and Van Reken (1999:124) express of TCKs, so the same can be said of returnees:

For some TCKs however, "Where is home?" is the hardest question of all. *Home* connotes an emotional place – somewhere you truly belong. There simply is no real answer to that question for many TCKs.... No matter how home is defined, the day comes for many TCKs when they realize it is irretrievably gone.

In many respects, returnees have a chameleon identity: some can easily switch language, style of relating, appearance, and cultural practices to take on the characteristics needed to blend better into the current scene (Pollock and Van Reken, 1999), whether that scene is real or virtual; others, however, find this 'instrumental adoption' to a second culture difficult (Portes et al, 1999). Yet, this chameleon nature brings pain as well as nominal acceptance. As with Third Culture Kids, returnees are more likely to find their roots in relationships rather than in geography. When students were asked where home was, the response was where people, rather than places, were: the hierarchy was people first, places second. As one returnee expressed it:

I see myself more as a citizen of the world...in the sense that I could go anywhere and... adapt.... So affinity wise I think it's less with the places and stuff, it's more with the people I think, that's more important [Interview 12, RGSGF, 090201].

Another expressed similarly:

I think of myself as a global citizen, I think that [pause] I realized that one of the things the global citizen description is not specific to nation and of essentialism of cutting down the differences, the variants and from day to day, I think I'm a different person all together, when I'm in different situations, different periods, different persons, there isn't an essential core of me-ness, that's not true I am multiple different roles and identities which I'm quite, more accurate and more [Interview 10, RGSGM 080201]

Here, the problematic nature of 'home' as a physical place, bound by geographical territory and territorial loyalty, is evident. If a physical place is the basis on which an identity has been developed, then, when the allegiance to that physical place is in some way challenged, the identity itself is challenged. 'Home' is redefined and hard to find; those who seek after it are 'third culture kids' or 'global citizens'; their place of belonging is no longer clearly tangible, their identity is not longer secure and they inhabit the 'legal shadow lands'. Their identity needs to find its basis elsewhere, beyond the constraints of the nation-state, perhaps in ethnicity; or perhaps not.

Ethnic identities: Takeaway Chinese

Nonini and Ong (1997) consider modern Chinese transnationalism as one of the "third cultures" of globalisation, providing alternative visions to the late capitalism of Western modernity, and generating new discourses, practices, and subjectivities. These "third cultures",

are the product of globalization associated with late capitalism, and they arise out of the new transnational economic processes that transcend the porous boundaries of nation-states even as they now penetrate them....[T]hird cultures arise when groups face problems of intercultural communication at first hand and confront the necessity of continually moving to and fro between different cultures, each to some extent spatially defined (Nonini and Ong, 1997:11).

The flexibility, consumption, multiculturalism, mass media, and flexibility of capitalism in the Asia Pacific are reworking Chinese subjectivities and identities. According to Nonini and Ong (1997), these new identities rebel against being localised, preferring to remain within a global discourse. The nature of the Chinese diaspora, spread as they are throughout the world, and migrating, re-locating and re-identifying themselves, means they cannot be easily placed in a particular geography or a given identity (Nonini and Ong, 1997). Given the predominance of ethnic Chinese in this research, and given that returnees are reluctant to define themselves according to a specific territory or nation-state, this section is devoted to inquiring as to what role their ethnicity plays in (re)constituting their identities.

With the exception of the interviews in Thailand (which were of Colombo Plan students only), and two interviews in Malaysia, all the returnees were “Chinese”, that is, they were Hong Kong-Chinese, Malaysian-Chinese, or Singaporean-Chinese. Some literature suggested that their “Chinese-ness” would form a large part of their identity (e.g. Ong, 1999). The opposite proved to be true.

While there were elements of Chinese culture that returnees admired, their enthusiasm never went beyond admiration. Aguilar (1999) notes that many Southeast Asians of Chinese descent do not speak Chinese; indeed, many have English as their first language, and to such people China is a distant land, merely part of their personal autobiography and familial history. They cannot claim this land as their own; some are seeking to validate their claims to belonging by constructing inclusive narratives of the nation (Aguilar, 1999).

Strategic identities? Singaporean-Chinese returnees

In their study of the configuring of social identity in Singapore, Yeoh and Willis (2001) show that construction of a singular national identity in Singapore has been an important and complex state-led project for over thirty years (cf. Hill and Lian Kwen Fee, 1995). The discourse of creating a nation of ‘one people’ belonging to ‘one place’ has had associated manoeuvres in securing political legitimacy, building ideological consensus, disciplining its industrial workforce, and moulding the consciousness of its new citizens in all aspects of social and political life (Yeoh and Willis, 2001): The relationship between the ethnic and national identities of Singaporean-Chinese is also encouraged to be put to good

advantage at an entrepreneurial level, while still preserving the difference between them, as this quote from Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew demonstrates:

We are ethnic Chinese...but at the end of the day, our fundamental loyalties are to our home, not to our ancestral countries. To think otherwise...is unrealistic. It will lead to grief when our interests fail to coincide (quoted in Yeoh and Willis, 2001:10).

To demonstrate this notion, this response was indicative, particularly of Singaporean-Chinese returnees:

Returnee: I guess in many ways I'm not very Chinese, I'm very Singaporean, but not Chinese

Interviewer: What's being Singaporean to you?

Returnee: Singaporean is the fact that you eat out most of the time; that you in some ways are more pragmatic, and there's a very pragmatic slant in your upbringing...that you have to beat in down in order to gain some idealism in life and...materialistic.... The whole desire for, or at least the aim in, Singapore is to have a multi-racial country and you buy into that, you believe in that, and I think that's what makes it Singaporean.... You don't feel so, say if I put Chinese first then I would think that oh Chinese culture is really great and we should learn from Chinese culture, but I don't feel that way. I feel more Singaporean. I feel that [the] four races that co-exist in Singapore are equally great and I want to learn about all four races rather than feeling that the Chinese culture is particularly wonderful.... I guess there's a pride in me as a Singaporean that it is a nation that is small and has survived opposition where other countries haven't. [Interview 1, RGSGF, 030201]

This response is interesting when placed alongside Ong's (1999:69) argument that:

Singapore's national identity since the 1980s has been geared toward promoting the development of a well-disciplined "Confucian" capitalist society.... Singaporeans were persuaded that being Chinese was inseparable from being "Confucian". Such state-propagated ideas and narratives about Confucian culture are disciplinary schemes to shape and control a workforce geared to state-managed economic development and "state fathering" of the social body. State patriarchy is central to the form of state-sponsored export-oriented capitalism in Singapore.

Singaporeans need not distinguish themselves by adding a hyphenated 'Chinese' to their ethnic-identity as their neighbours in Malaysia do. As Yeoh and Willis (2001:18) argue: "[s]horm of its cultural and moral content, China has been adjectivised. Few see this degeneracy as endemic or innate (impossible, since the Singaporean Chinese also came from the same 'stock', but grafted on a different tree)." Here *habitus* – that is, a production of practices and a system of perception - is in its *habitat*. Singaporeans have a sense of their own place. Returnees to Singapore may not call it 'home', but it still defines their practices and perceptions, of others and themselves.

Nevertheless, a sense of strategic 'place' (*viz.* using one's nationality and ethnicity as alternately entrepreneurial and hegemonic discursive tools) denies the complexities of maintaining a diasporic condition, as Yeoh and Willis (2001:19) argue:

While not denying the fluidity, malleability and strategic use of identity in day to day survival, it appears that most Singaporeans would still prefer to retreat into the safety net of a fixed identity rather than a deterritorialised diasporic allegiance.

Here, apparently, a strategic identity is not a well-fitting identity. Returnees, in particular, may be Singaporean in name, but not in *game*; Singapore may be their territorial home, but, for many, it is not their emotional one, their citizenship is neither comfortably strategic nor nationalistic. However, nor is it second-class.

Second-class citizens: Malaysian-Chinese

Whereas the social positions of Singaporeans are mediated by social, cultural and economic capital, these factors and more besides mediate the social positions of many Malaysian students. In Malaysia, an identification as a Chinese leads to being treated by the state as a second-class citizen. Discrimination is the mediator and ethnic self-identification is the necessity. Malaysian-Chinese identified themselves this way as a means of distinction from Malays and Malaysian-Indians, the other two predominant ethnic groups in Malaysia. Malaysia, in relation to the other countries in this study, is a special case. Watson Andaya and Andaya (2001:312) understate the issue when they argue that "[t]he [Malaysian] government's affirmative action policy on education in favour of the Malays has been an extremely contentious issue among the Chinese."

While one returnee identified himself according to where he lived in East Malaysia, because he believed it was tangibly different from the rest of Malaysia, most others did not make such a localised distinction. A more indicative response, in this case from a returnee in Kuala Lumpur, was:

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself...as a Malaysian Chinese or just as a Malaysian?

Returnee: I'm Malaysian but I am also Chinese, but in a way I am a Chinese born in Malaysia.... But not born in China, I'm Chinese by race, yes *but I'm Malaysian and purely Malaysian*, it's just that our skin colour is different but all of us are Malaysians here

Interviewer: What are the hallmarks [of]...Malaysian culture to you?

Returnee: They start pronouncing "lah" [laugh] at the end of every sentence, and you say "mah" [laugh] [Interview 22, RGMYKLF 160201, my emphasis].

Arguably, these 'lahs' and 'mahs' are the classificatory schemes of *habitus*: they distinguish Malaysian-Chinese from other ethnic groups, in their own country and outside it. This is their "language of distinctive signs (Bourdieu, 1998:8)". Malaysian-Chinese returnees are discriminated against as international students in New Zealand, and as Malaysian-Chinese in Malaysia; out of necessity they must define themselves in opposition to others in both contexts. For Hong Kong returnees however, there are territorial distinctions.

A special kind of refugee? Hong Kong-Chinese returnees

Is an ongoing narrative of identity territorially fixed? Aihwa Ong (1999:124) argues that

Hong Kong Chinese, for whom the meanings of motherland, country, and family have long been discontinuous and even contradictory, sought legal citizenship not necessarily in the sites where they conducted their business but in places where their families could pursue their dreams. Among the elite and the not-so-elite, this meant a politically stable and secure environment where a world-class education could be found for the children and real estate was available for homesick wives to speculate in.

Hong Kong-Chinese, whom Ong (1999) also describes as a special kind of refugee, always in transit, and who were also more likely to be permanent residents or citizens of New Zealand than any other nationality of student, were adamant they were different from mainland Chinese. As in this case, many students found that their altered world-view, which they attributed to their time in New Zealand, did not match those of their compatriots:

Returnee: I think...[that] the values of the Hong Kong people are quite different from mine already.

Interviewer: What...are your values and what are the values of Hong Kong people?

Returnee: I think... they really like money and... they have to live under a framework in a way that everyone has to be successful in their career and if you are a certain age to have to get married to someone which is wealthy...you have to work in a big company, something like that to, to show your status. So, I don't really agree with that; so, if I think I can earn enough already for myself then its okay, [pause]. So, I think my values are changing in the way, so sometimes I have some conflict with the people around me, I mean thinking, I didn't I didn't show it off but ah in my heart I didn't agree with what they are thinking. [Interview HK5; RGHKF; 310301]

The notion of a 'special kind of returnee' is appealing, particularly when considering international students whose ethnic identity is apparently as problematic as the other aspects of identity noted already. It seems, then, that a returnee's conception of their Chinese identity differed according to their country of origin and while there may have been assumptions held about them by others, as we have seen in previous chapters, these were not necessarily assumptions they held about themselves, nor others. As Raslan (1996:16, my emphasis) argues:

Cultural identity is not fixed. Contrary to what many people may think, a Ming imperial ware vase is not a good metaphor for Chinese culture. Chinese culture is continuously on the move – evolving slowly. *It is shaped like the clay used in the Ming vase – both by circumstance and environment from generation to generation.*

Circumstance and environment were two significant factors in returnees' re-entry experiences and neither of which, it appears, are facilitators to (re)creating identities. Despite some arguments, the ethnic identity of 'Chinese-ness' while a signifier of identification is not, for returnees, identification in its entirety. For some returnees, they inhabit shadow-lands of many sorts: legal, ethnic, cultural, familial and national. The complexities of the situations they face in the realities of their re-entry mean that finding a place and space for their identity is problematic at best for many returnees. However, identities are also sought elsewhere, in the virtual world.

COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNITIES

A key aspect of transnationalism is that it has as its backdrop a *dynamic*, or organic, society and one of its tools is the Internet. The use of the Internet, in particular computer-mediated communities, is not only a tool for communication, it also demonstrates that both the circumstance and environment of the returnees' world is changing, particularly in their longing for belonging, as their notions of space and place are renegotiated.

According to Castells (2000a:386), a virtual community "is generally understood as a self-defined electronic network of interactive communication organized around a shared interest or purpose, although sometimes communication becomes the goal in itself." CMCs are significant to this research on two levels. Firstly, while an international student is in New Zealand, CMCs provide one means of communication with friends and family in their country of origin. Secondly, once an international student has returned to their country of origin, CMCs provide ongoing contact with other returnees in other countries and, sometimes, with friends remaining in the host country.

Two realities: The use of CMC's in the host country

The first instance, of retaining contact with friends and family in the country of origin over the Internet, is one of the most significant differences between international students of the last ten years and international students before then, particularly Colombo Plan students, who had the added burden of expensive air travel and telephone communication. The Internet has provided a different reality of communication, a virtual reality:

a system in which reality itself (that is, people's material/symbolic existence) is entirely captured, fully immersed in a virtual image setting, in the world of make believe, in which appearances are not just on the screen through which experience is communicated, but they become the experience (Castells, 2000a:404, emphasis in original; Demetriou, 1999).

Returnees in this research, as students in New Zealand, would use the Internet once a day, or more, to communicate with friends and family in their countries of origin. It did not supplant other forms of communication – international telephone calls are not as expensive as they once were – but it supplemented them (cf. Castells, 2000a). On the one hand, the Internet was arguably an extension of the umbilical cord; while, on the other hand, students were retaining a degree of independence from parental support. It also gave them the means to retain contact with their friends in their country of origin.

This is the re-configuration of personal intimate relationships due to the increasing ease of global communications. These global communications allow relationships with intimate Others to exist *despite* proximity rather than because of it. For students, this means they can continue emotional relationships via these global communications (ICQ, e-mail, cheap international telephone calls, facsimile, and personal computers) with friends and family from their home countries. For some international students, cyberspace becomes their 'space': "the "place" where the users electronically reconstitute the relationships that existed before migration" (Karim, 1998:15).

As noted in the previous chapter, renegotiating family and friendship relationships is one of the most difficult aspects of re-entry; the Internet allows students to play a more active role in the day-to-day lives of their friends and family than they might otherwise do. The Internet and CMCs have a useful role to play in the renegotiations of re-entry. Taken too far, however, it can lead students further away from engaging with the host culture and

encourage the ghetto-mentality referred to earlier. There can be a cost though: “an unhappy sentence may be sanctioned by clicking away the connection – for ever” (Castells, 2000a:388-9). Its users determine the effectiveness of the Internet; like a game of tennis, an e-mail conversation needs (at least) two players: if one chooses not to reply, the game is over.

Is anybody out there? Returnees’ use of CMCs

The second instance, of establishing and/or participating in CMCs once students have returned, is perhaps the most significant aspect of their usage here. Each interview presented variations on a theme: ‘I’m finding re-entry really difficult, I’m sure nobody else is, I’d love someone to talk to who has gone through the same experiences as me.’ Clearly, these returnees were not talking to each other – physically at least. Occasionally, returnee groups are established, but rarely do they last. These returnees are returning to a country, and entering a work-force, where time is money, and often where their time is not their own.

As noted in the previous chapter, many returnees are expected to work long hours (by New Zealand standards) and have little discretionary time in a week. It is not that returnees do not want to talk with other returnees about their re-entry experiences; it is finding time to do that talking, which is the problem. A returnee group needs to meet regularly enough that it provides its own momentum, but not too often that it infringes upon its members’ time. Likewise, a returnee group, sharing, as they will, about relatively personal experiences (albeit understood or shared in a degree by others), needs a stable membership. The issue returns to one of time commitment. One returnee expressed a common complaint:

I think one of the things that would have made it easier if I had met a lot more people who were in similar situations; that would have been better...because I don’t think my friends really understand. ... For some reason I didn’t really get to know the people in that Graduate’s Christian Fellowship who would be in a similar situation. I think the problem is that because work takes up a lot of time and therefore you just can’t really meet up with people that often and...there’s family priorities, its just quite hard, it is a problem that way....I think the best support group is most probably from graduates themselves...because I guess it is quite hard. I mean G[raduates] C[hristian] F[ellowship] [met]...once a month.... That sort of thing is not really going to be giving enough support,

but then again you can't actually support more than that, so probably that's the best. If the group they are committed to or whatever, understand that there is a need then that is the best way to do it really and perhaps to make sure that the person has come from there is a good cell group that is supportive. [RGSGUKBF, 090301].

There is the ideal: returnees meeting together regularly to support each other in their re-entry experiences; and there is the reality. Support of returnees, by anybody, is largely absent. CMCs address this inadequacy and reality, to a degree. They provide a supportive community, albeit a virtual one. The crucial difference between these CMCs and the CMCs that the students participated in while they were in New Zealand is that they are more likely to be compensatory rather than supplementary: they participate in a virtual community because there is no physical community in which they can participate on the same level or to the same scope or intensity.

In 2000, one particular CMC was set up by a group of returnees in this research from a particular New Zealand university as a means of retaining contact. Members exchange stories, photographs, jokes, and sundry, some to do with their life back in their countries of origin, some of just general interest. The CMC has been operative for about a year and in 2002 its members organised a reunion, which was held in Singapore. Future reunions are planned for Hong Kong and later New Zealand. Most of its members know each other, being a cohort of international students who all returned to their countries of origin at the same time, although other, more recent, graduates have joined.

This CMC is not solely 'virtual': the members knew each other beforehand and have met up since. Like many CMCs, it is a community with specific rules and dynamics; it is not necessarily better or worse than a physical community, it is just different (Castells, 2000). Castells (2000) argues that there is substantial evidence for reciprocal supportiveness in CMCs; they tend to be stronger than its critics would suggest. Certainly in the CMC in question there appears to be reciprocal supportiveness.

However, caveats are necessary. Firstly, as mentioned, CMCs can be exclusive. CMCs are – and will be for some time yet - culturally, economically, and educationally restrictive (cf. Castells, 2000a). It is only available to those that have the means, which, for the most part includes international students. However, international students from poorer countries, or

on aid and development scholarships (so probably not from the wealthy middle-classes of their country of origin), miss out. Most international students come from the wealthier sections of their societies, but some do not, and a student returning to a country where computers, not to mention running water and electricity, are in short supply, will have to find their support elsewhere (Bown, 1992).

Secondly, CMCs may encourage social problems. As with international students in New Zealand using the Internet to the extent that they rarely engage with the host culture, so returnees risk avoiding dealing with issues of their re-entry if they become overly dependent on a CMC. Academic research has indicated that, under certain conditions, an extensive use of the Internet may increase the chances of feelings of alienation, loneliness, and depression (Castells, 2000a). While it has a valuable and useful role for returnees in giving them the means to express their re-entry experiences, it could become a crutch, which would hinder returnees' integration into their own society. Its compensatory, rather than supplementary, nature may increase the risk of it becoming a hindrance. CMCs provide a valuable support structure, but they should never come at the cost of other physical social links.

CMCs are not the best of the worst options; in any case, they are a reality. Returnees have – and should – utilise them for what they are worth. Their “plane of reality” is different from face-to-face communities and they may be more supportive; they are advantageous for international students because “[t]hey transcend distance, at low cost, they are usually of asynchronous nature, they combine the fast dissemination of mass media with the pervasiveness of personal communication, and they allow multiple memberships in partial communities” (Castells, 2000a:389). In CMCs, the sociability of its members is private rather than corporate; unlike a face-to-face conversation, they can choose to passively listen or not respond at all; they have control over their own social networks

At once, they have a shared and ongoing narrative – in their experiences of re-entry – which shapes their identity, and a personal identity: on-line they can reveal as much or as little as they like, absent of all non-verbal forms of communication. Self-reflexivity and life-agendas are mediated through more media, and with reference to more people and decisions, than ever before: media that have the potential to reconfigure personal relationships, particularly as they exist at only a ‘virtual reality’. Furthermore, CMCs

neatly intersect with (re)discovering the students' ontological security; it can be used as a tool for self-reflexivity, and can alleviate some of the difficulties in disenfranchised grief.

Returnees can live their 're-entry lives' through a forum that is largely absent of the prevailing dominant discourses, that provides a tool to re-live their experiences in New Zealand, and as a (temporary) alleviation to the transitions faced during their re-entry into their countries of origin. As Castells (2000a:406) convincingly argues:

[T]he new communication system radically transforms space and time, the fundamental dimensions of human life. Localities become disembodied from their cultural, historical, geographical meaning, and reintegrated into functional networks, or into image collages, inducing a space of flows that substitutes for the space of places. Time is erased in the new communication system when past, present, and future can be programmed to interact with each other in the same message. The *space of flows* and *timeless time* are the material foundations of a new culture that transcends and includes the diversity of historically transmitted systems of representation: the culture of real virtuality where make-believe is belief in the making.

In short, where returnees' identities and notions of belonging are problematised in their countries of origin, CMCs can offer another forum in which to explore new identities and participate in a community and network of social support of fellow returnees.

CONCLUSION

Re-entry is not only a grief process; it is also a process of searching for identity and a place of belonging. Upon their return to their countries of origin, returnees find that their notions of 'home', 'place', and 'space' have been challenged and disrupted. This is particularly the case for returnees who, as international students, lived a transnational existence through the transnational accumulation, use, and convertibility of symbolic ties. However, not all returnees are transnational, nor were many of them transnational as international students: they did not actively engage in any meaningful or enduring way across nations or nationalities.

Nevertheless, returnees' search for identity and belonging are intricately tied up with their ontological security and the experience of disenfranchised grief, but it also goes further. Their disrupted narrative challenges their own sense of belonging, particularly if that

belonging is to a physical place. As is argued more fully in the next chapter, some seek belonging beyond geographical propinquity. Returnees' struggled to base their identity on external reference points, such as their ethnicity: for many, their Chinese ethnicity was there, but not theirs. Many were also ambivalent about wholly adopting or accepting particular nationalistic sentiments of their countries of origin. Some sought different points of reference, such as a religious faith, while others could not reference their identity on anything at all.

In line with this lack of a foundation for identity, a significant part of the re-entry process is a sense of 'homelessness': a sense of not belonging anywhere at all. Transnational returnees, however, and those returnees who adopted self-reflexivity in their re-entry experiences (as explored more fully in the next chapter), were able to engage with a diversity of attachments and belongings, many of which were outside the boundaries of a nation-state. As part of this engagement with a diversity of attachments, many returnees are 'Third Culture Kids', where their identity is found more in relationships than in geography.

Many returnees also use computer-mediated communities as another form of attachment beyond geographical constraints and boundaries; CMCs are used in both the host country and upon return to their countries of origin. In this use, they provide a valuable way of finding new identities, places and spaces, and, above all, allow the returnee to participate in a community of fellow returnees. In so doing, returnees begin a process of renegotiating notions of belonging and 'home'; in this community of co-returnees, they begin to fulfil their longing for belonging.

DEPARTING FOR THE FOREIGN CONTINENT OF LIFE:

PREPARING TO RE-ENTER

Social reflexion – the processing of contradictory information, dialogue, negotiation, compromise – is almost synonymous with living your own life.... This compulsion to self-realisation, this departure for the foreign continent of your own life, goes hand in hand with integration into worldwide contexts. Something like individual distinctiveness really appears for the first time through the combination of social crises in which individuals are forced to think, act, and live (Beck, 2001:170).

INTRODUCTION

Both longing to belong and finding a place to belong are aspects that can be prepared prior to re-entry. This chapter draws together the expressions of loss, homelessness, longing, and difference noted in the previous chapters. Moreover, in so drawing them together, it argues that lessons can be learned through these expressions and that departure does not necessarily lead to a foreign continent of life rather, through preparation, returnees can respond in a new way to home and belonging.

It is not the definition of 'home' that is prescient in late modernity, rather it is self-identity in the absence of 'home'; as Rapport and Dawson (1998:6) argue: "movement has become fundamental to modern identity, and an experience of non-place (beyond 'territory' and 'society') an essential component of everyday existence". They argue further that traditional conceptions of 'home' were as the stable centre of one's universe, a safe place to leave and return to, and a principal focus of one's control and concern. 'Home' became synonymous with 'house', where time and space were structured economically, functionally, aesthetically, morally, and in every other way. In this, then, 'home' gave

context to time; it embodied anticipation and memory; above all, it organised space *over* time (Rapport and Dawson, 1998).

However, this is a Durkheimian perspective of 'home', one of shared solidarities and coercive institutions in microcosm. A broader approach to 'home', according to Berger (1984, cited in Rapport and Dawson, 1998) encompasses a routine set of practices and a repetition of habitual interactions. However, even then, the full breadth of 'home' is not conceived, perhaps because it never can be. As Rapport and Dawson (1998:9) argue

The journey of our lives is not between fixed positions, and there is no itinerary affording routes back again.... Perhaps it is part-and-parcel of an appreciation of the way that individuals live in movement, transition and transgression, that its conceptualisation, as 'home', is to be similarly paradoxical and transgressive. 'Home' we suggest as a working definition, 'is where one best knows oneself' – where 'best' means 'most', even if not always 'happiest'. Here, in sum, is an ambiguous and fluid but yet ubiquitous notion, apposite for a charting of the ambiguities and fluidities, the migrancies and paradoxes, of identity in the world today.

Re-entry into one's country of origin brings to the fore the 'ambiguities and fluidities' of 'home' and one's conception of it. The conceptual notions explored in the preceding chapters, of disenfranchised grief, ontological (in)security, and self-reflexivity, all return to notions and conceptions of 'home'. Also, returning to notions of 'home', are narratives told. In this thesis, those narratives are told about returnees and by returnees; they may be disrupted (Giddens, 1991), but it is the narrative, disrupted or otherwise, of longing for belonging, that is important. As Rapport and Dawson (1998b:33) put it:

It is in and through the continuity of movement that human beings continue to make themselves at home; seeing themselves continually in stories, and continually telling the stories of their lives, people recount their lives to themselves and others as movement.

For returnees, their narrative of movement is one where 'home' is challenged, disrupted, disenfranchised, insecure, reflexive, and perhaps redefined and integrated. This penultimate chapter looks at these disrupted (broken) narratives and the process of rebuilding those narratives (biographies), and within that the place of reluctant returnees and self-reflexive preparation. Re-integrating or re-consolidating identity does not take place in a social vacuum; the importance of social networks is therefore discussed. Ultimately, there are means through which identities can be re-integrated, through new

conceptions of 'home', new forms of intimacy, and new forms in which to place "active trust" (Giddens, 1991). However, before any reintegration of self-identity, returnees depart for the foreign continent of life, where narratives are broken.

NARRATIVES BROKEN...

In late modernity, Giddens (1991:184) argues, crises are normalised; these 'crises' exist "whenever activities concerned with important goals in life of an individual or a collectivity suddenly appear inadequate." Many of these crises have implications for an individual's life circumstances. The disruption of a self-narrative in re-entry is one of these crises. It is a vicious circle: the disruption of self-narrative causes a crisis of uncertainty and anxiety and highlights other crises, which, in turn, threaten notions of self-identity.

Individuals respond to these crises, according to Giddens (1991), by sequestering experience. The sequestration of experience, he argues, contains crises that otherwise might threaten an individual's ontological security, but this containment comes at a cost. This cost, he suggests, is psychological tension and emotional disquiet. This tension and disquiet may be seen in returnee's longing for belonging: longing for somewhere in which to anchor reference points for their identity(ies). With changing circumstances, and "the backdrop of shifting experiences", sustaining, let alone creating this identity is problematic and difficult (Giddens, 1991:186). He argues further (1994b:81-2) that:

Globalizing influences tend to evacuate out local contexts of action, which have to be reflexively reordered by those affected – although those reorderings also, conversely, affect globalization as well. Major changes therefore occur in the very warp and weave of everyday life, affecting even the constitution of personal identities. The self becomes a reflexive project.... Individuals cannot rest content with an identity that is simply handed down, inherited, or built on a traditional status. A person's identity has in large part to be discovered, constructed, actively sustained.... We have more and more to decide not just who to be, and how to act, but how to look to the outside world.

While Giddens' notion of self-reflexivity gives the impression that subjects are fairly well in control, being able to inaugurate reflexivity and initiate reflexive action; Beck, by contrast, tends toward the view that we are never entirely in control of the process through which reflexivity comes into being and is exercised. Therefore, for his part, Beck

(2001:165) argues that it is the compulsion to lead one's life in a society that is highly differentiated:

Constantly changing between different, partly incompatible logics of action, [people] are forced to take into their hands that which is in danger of breaking into pieces: their own lives. Modern society does not integrate them as whole persons into its functional systems; rather, it relies on the fact that individuals are not integrated but only partly and temporarily involved as they wander between functional worlds.

Here, the similarities between the 'multiple lives' of international students (as students, in one context; and as returnees, in another context, to name only two of these 'lives' and 'functional worlds') can disintegrate their own lives and disrupt their self-narratives (Giddens, 1991). It is in the recognition that they cannot control their lives, in particular and in this context of their transitions of re-entry, that compel them to seek ways to belong, to *long* to belong, to seek their ontological security in somewhere, or perhaps someone. In wandering between functional worlds, they are arguably dysfunctional of sorts, particularly if these functional worlds disenfranchise them, either through perceived racist practices, or through a lack of social sanction for expressing grief and difference.

For international students, returning to their countries of origin means renegotiating, re-establishing, or 're-finding' their narrative (cf. Giddens, 1991). In this same vein, Giddens (1991:9) argues that

The reflexive project of the self generates programmes of actualisation and mastery. But as long as these possibilities are understood largely as a matter of the extension of the control systems of modernity to the self, they lack moral meaning.... Yet the repression of existential questions is by no means complete and in high modernity, where systems of instrumental control have become more nakedly exposed than ever before and their negative consequences more apparent, many forms of counter-reaction appear. It becomes more and more apparent that lifestyle choices, within the settings of local-global interrelations, raise moral issues which cannot simply be pushed to one side.... 'Life politics' – concerned with human self-actualisation, both on the level of the individual and collectively – emerges from the shadow which 'emancipatory politics' has cast.

Returnees face this shadow and encounter these 'life politics', both at an individual and at a broader level. Giddens' (1991) notion of 'life politics' can be broadened beyond his definition where

[I]t concerns political issues which flow from processes of self-actualisation in post-traditional contexts, where globalising influences intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and conversely where processes of self-realisation influence global strategies (Giddens, 1991:214).

However, if the notion of 'life politics' is broadened to consider choices at a micro level, albeit ones mediated through experience and social context, then it is possible to argue that particular life choices can restore ontological security through an integrated self-narrative. In so arguing, it is recognised that the individual agent faces a plurality of life-choices, most of which are not so deeply intruded upon by global forces that the locally-lived experience becomes irrelevant and the choice becomes so circumscribed to no longer be a choice.

Individually, returnees' longing for belonging is at once self-actualisation and a desire for ontological security, sought through the renegotiations of friendships and familial relationships, and challenged (more often than not) through entering new worlds of work and societal expectations. These expectations, part of a dominant discourse, are the second level at which returnees encounter these 'life politics'. Their choices are their own, but are determined, in part, by the 'local-global inter-relation'. As argued in previous chapters, they remain a minority of sorts and, if anything, their return to their countries of origin accentuates their feelings of homelessness and ontological insecurity.

With the intersection of globalisation, detraditionalisation and individualisation, life is experimental; there are no historical models for the conduct of life (Beck, 2001). Certainly, for the returnee, their pre-study-abroad life is an inadequate model for their re-entry life: they have undergone significant changes in themselves, not to mention the changes that may have occurred in their countries of origin in their absence. To a large extent, therefore, their re-entry life *is* experimental (cf. Beck, 2001): most have not encountered similar situations in their own lives, and, for those removed from social networks, nor in the lives of others. They have no life experience on which to draw to cope with the transitions of re-entry and when they do seek to draw on previous models and ways of doing things, instead of harmony, they encounter dissonance. This experimental life can be wholly unsettling.

Furthermore, those who seek to *return* to New Zealand are often chasing after these idealised memories: they want to relive the experiences they had in New Zealand. Memories cannot be relived and, as with people in the country of origin, people in the host country will move on too. Part of this will be the freedom and flexibility that comes with being a student, but for many it was more than this. One returnee recognised that holding onto idealistic memories and constantly making comparisons can only hinder or stunt the re-entry process. Of these returnees, she comments:

I think it's probably just their desire to make this comparison: when I was in New Zealand I was doing this and stuff like that and again focusing on the negatives of where they are now instead of the positives when they come back.... I would tell them yeah again to embrace the differences.... We used to have a student, used to have a friend in New Zealand, who, when she got to New Zealand complained that it was too cold and she came back to Singapore and complained that it was too hot [laugh].... It's meant to be different so just enjoy it.... I guess for people coming back to Singapore it would be that you're a different person now and you'll initially have to expect Singapore to be different.... Maybe the adventure is in seeing how different Singapore is um and not seeing how much it has changed. But, you know, it's not that Singapore has changed, but it is a different Singapore that you have returned to really and enjoy the differences. I guess another thing is that a lot of returning students try and hook up with friends and its just impossible because things have moved on so I tell them don't bother I say make new ones, make new connections um be prepared for friends who are different stages and be prepared to make new friends yeah (Interview 10, RGSGM 080201).

The re-entry process can be highly disruptive for returnees: it can fundamentally challenge their notions of self-identity and ontological security. Above all, it challenges their notions of 'home' and belonging. Nevertheless, these potentially negative perceptions and experiences may have positive outcomes. Disrupted narratives can be rebuilt.

...AND BUILDING BIOGRAPHIES

Beck (2001:166) argues that, "living your own life therefore means that standard biographies become elective biographies, 'do-it-yourself biographies', risk biographies, broken or broken-down biographies". Building biographies and restoring narratives in late modernity necessarily involves risk. For the returnees, it may be a risk that their new narrative may be dissonant with dominant narratives. In building a virtual identity, for

example, it may be that there is a risk that a disjunctured chasm is created between *real* worlds and *virtual* worlds, particularly if a returnee is trying to maintain *multiple* identities. In Beck's (2001) use of 'real' and 'virtual', the 'real' is always mediated by virtuality, which does not necessarily mean that the real does not exist, rather that it cannot be assimilated directly.

Castell's (2000a) notions of *virtual* identity, particularly through computer-mediated communities, are also relevant here. For returnees, they may hold one identity in their countries of origin and another in a computer mediated community. The relationship between these two (or more) 'identities' is important, rather than the distinction between them. In short, 'standard biographies' no longer exist for returnees: their identity has been disrupted and they can either choose to remain in this form of ontological insecurity, or seek to establish a new or re-integrated identity; either way, they have to (re)build their biographies.

High modernity, Giddens (1991) argues, is different to previous eras in that 'the world' has changed: there have been the transformations of place, the intrusion of distance into local activities, and the centrality of mediated experience. While everybody continues to live a local life, and are, at any given time, contextually situated in time and space, living 'in the world' has taken on a new meaning: it may be a local life, but it is a global world. This tension in the world, between the local experience, yet mediated by the global reality, was noted earlier in discussions about transnationalism and in the previous chapter, in returnees' ventures of longing for belonging. However, the impact on life politics and ontological security goes further. In most cases, the student's narrative is disrupted; in order to resolve the tensions inherent in this 'world' of late modernity, a coherent narrative of self-identity needs to be sought.

Reluctant returnees

However, a coherent narrative of self-identity is easier found when it is sought willingly. Beck (2001:167) argues that institutional guidelines and incalculable insecurity condemn the individual life to constant "activity". This corresponds with notions of taking responsibility for one's own life for unanticipated events and "with an image of society in

which individuals are not passive reflections of circumstances but active shapers of their own lives, within varying degrees of limitation” (Beck, 2001:167). For these returnees, their choices along with their circumstances, shape their lives: to return to their countries of origin, or to remain in New Zealand; to change religion; or, indeed, to study abroad in the first instance. In terms of (re)integrating or (re)establishing their identities, returnees are faced with further circumscribed choices: where to root their ontological security; whether to employ self-reflexivity upon their re-entry (although Beck is arguing that it is almost impossible not to live reflexively now); whether to remain within enclaves of other international students or overseas graduates; and whether to recognise experiences of disenfranchised grief.

To this end, returning can be particularly difficult for students who do not want to return. Many students actively looked for work in New Zealand, but most of those had a realistic understanding that if they could not find work they would have to return to their country of origin upon the expiry of their visa. Those students who do not envisage returning are therefore unlikely to prepare for returning, but, as with this following case of a student who had two weeks to leave New Zealand after failing to find employment, it is necessary for returnees to recognise that returning is an option, as much as they might wish it were not.

I was telling a lot of people that the sun wouldn't shine anymore, there won't be morning [laugh]... it was basically desperation yeah, what do I do? Where do I start? [laugh] When I go back? There is basically nothing for support yeah, I don't know where to start, I mean where do I go and find a church and something? Where do I go and find a care group to go and settle in? and [pause] yeah and so, I guess I more psyching myself out just 'cause two weeks there is not too much you can do really [laugh] yeah (Interview 4, RGSGF 060201).

Biographies can be re-built and disrupted narratives re-configured in the re-entry environment of the returnees' countries of origin; however, this reconfiguration and *living the process of re-entry* can be hindered by returnees' reluctance to re-enter at all, or their unwillingness to prepare for their re-entry in a self-reflexive manner.

Self-reflexive preparation

In part, issues of identity and ontological insecurity can be dealt with pre-departure from the host country. Preparedness programs can help students recognise aspects of re-entry. In

processing the re-entry, Marks (1987; cf. Davidson et al, 2000; Jordan, 1992; McGrath, 1997, 1998; Pirolo, 2002;) suggests that it is appropriate to give students a positive framework, in which to increase their awareness of the psychological dynamics of the re-entry process. She suggests that students should reflect upon the changes that took place because of their cross-cultural experiences, while also establishing contact with those who can provide moral support in both the home and host countries. Such issues, she suggests, can be dealt with in seminars, workshops or as a requirement pre-graduation. Here, the self-reflexive project is encouraged.

As noted in earlier chapters, the returnee's recognition that they themselves had changed was liberating for them; it is a crucial transition to engage with during re-entry. A self-reflexive response means that the returnees can see their own position in their re-entry transitions, and seek ways to discover new bases for ontological security and new modes of self-identity. Some students prepared, but to varying degrees. Some read the newspapers in their countries of origin, while others kept up e-mail contact with friends and family. Preparation programmes can be valuable: they can identify issues that the returnee will face upon their return to their country of origin.

However, some returnees may ignore (deliberately or inadvertently) the fact that they too have changed while they have studied in New Zealand and that their re-entry experiences may have more to do with the changes in themselves rather than anything in particular in the culture or society that they left or to which they are returning. This student expressed the dilemma well: preparing for re-entry may be useful; but as he put it, "while you can lead a horse to water, you can't make it drink".

I would say that no matter how much you are prepared, because I went through a lot of talks and seminars on re-entry experience and those kind of stuff, but intellectually I know what it's like. But, when you're in that situation it's different because I think um the emotional impact when you come back is just very different it's much more personal to you, yeah. Because it really happens to you whereas whatever that you've gone through while your listening to others is pretty much 'O yep I understand that, yep, yep, yep, yep', and then it's a totally different story when it happens to you and then you're actually in that situation (Interview 23 RGMYYKKM 180201).

A self-reflexive preparation is a significant factor in easing the re-entry process for returnees; a process assisted all the more by supportive social networks in their countries of origin.

Social support

Beck (2001:167) argues that: “social crisis phenomena...can be shifted as a burden of risk onto the shoulders of individuals. Social problems can be directly turned into psychological dispositions: into guilt feelings, anxieties, conflicts, and neuroses”. This relates directly to returnees’ experiences during their re-entry transition: a belief that their disenfranchised grief and ontological insecurity are unique to them – or, more precisely, their ‘responsibility’. This also highlights the importance of social networks, in both the host and home countries, both real and virtual. Social networks not only provide an important social buffer for the (perceived or real) crises that impact upon the returnee during their re-entry, but also identify that the experiences of re-entry are neither pathological nor unique.

When returnees were asked whether they felt supported when they returned to their countries of origin, with few exceptions, the answer was ‘no’. Essentially, returnees found no social support of any significance. Students returned, perhaps equipped for that phase of the re-entry process, and yet faced this phase alone. One particularly articulate returnee expressed both her expectations and disappointments about preparation and post-return support. Her responses are indicative and cogent and are therefore expressed at length:

Interviewer: What about when you returned, did you feel that there were adequate support structures here?

Returnee: No. I think when we come back, the transition that we make to adjust back to life here is basically with our first prepare already when overseas and come back. Because our parents would not understand, our family would not understand... – again, it’s only those who have gone overseas and come back that would understand, what, what we mean when we say when we come back, everything is so familiar, yet it is so different that the feelings we should get.... People just assume that you’re coming home, that there’s no big difference, there’s no cultural shock, in fact it’s actually worse, really, worse culture. Yes, OCF had some courses, some talks, about people who are coming back, but it’s quite, quite

different. And obviously we didn't know what they're talking about when we were there. Firstly, we come back, oh emotions, and everything was different...

For this returnee, her preparation and experience of re-entry were at odds with each other; she continues:

Returnee: Again, it's basically the support, having people understand what you're going through, so, it, it could be, actually it's just, you have somebody to understand, it makes that much difference, because most of the time our family wouldn't understand. Our friends, who have not gone overseas, wouldn't understand. So you could either call, or e-mail or talk, however that communication is done, but to communicate, and to be told, yes I understand, I also went through this. And sometimes there are practical steps to help, and we are incomplete with our family, what things to be done. And sometimes because we have been overseas for so many years, we are not very-, we've forgotten how to relate to the older people in the Asian culture, in the Chinese culture, so then ah those who, who've gone on, who are more intact emotionally would be able to advise, yeah.

Interviewer: You've talked about practical steps. Would-, what would they be, would that be one of them?

Returnee: Very, very basic things, yeah. Sometimes where to find, ah, that particular brand of pasta, or cheese, or biscuits, which you are craving for which you can't find in most supermarkets here. Things like that. 'Cause people, most people when they come back, they know they're not going to go back overseas. Like, to adjust here, they, it's just things, small things which help.

In this returnee's perspective then, the struggle was not only at an ontological level, but also at a basic, yet profound, mundane level of day-to-day existence. She returns to discussing preparation for re-entry, making an interesting observation that preparation is more valuable when in tandem with support in the country of origin.

Interviewer: Do you think you were prepared to come home?

Returnee: No. I didn't, I knew there would be a reverse culture, at first for me it would be difficult, but no I wasn't prepared for the emotions I went through when I came back, yeah.

Interviewer: Do you think you could have prepared yourself to some extent?

Returnee: Perhaps a bit more, yeah. But, it's very difficult, because I would react if you need to supervision, as compared to my other friends, so again, I-, you can just talk about it, but you wouldn't know, and once you come back, then you know, and you then, and it's then you need someone to-, yeah, I also know what you're going through, yeah.... I think there is time needed to settle all these things with the family, not just the parents, but the brothers and sisters, time to settle, call up friends, get used to the climate, the way people talk. I had forgotten how to speak, pronounce Cantonese words, when I came back, things like that. I had forgotten how to communicate in Malay when I came back. Obviously, I pick it up quite fast, but there was a gap, and I understood, but I couldn't speak, oh like Cantonese I couldn't speak, because my pronunciation had all gone (Interview 14 RGMYKLF 130201).

This returnee identified the importance of graduate networks. Virtual networks, in the form of computer mediated communities, were discussed in the previous chapter, but sometimes it is necessary to have networks in the country of origin that can ease the re-entry process. As Faist (2000:2) argues:

We cannot study migration and its aftermath without taking into account the ties of migrants in their living contexts. And migrants need ties in their countries of destination to find work, housing, and a congenial cultural environment.... Likewise, it would be short-sighted to describe and explain immigrant adaptation without considering the ties migrants maintain to their countries of origin. Networks of migrants, stayers, brokers, and organizations do not simply vanish proportionally to the density and strength of new ties in the country of immigration. They are operative in return migration, in the formation of immigrant communities, and include established ethnic and religious minority groups.

It is the absence of these social networks that perpetuate notions of disenfranchised grief and an absence of *belonging*. However, as research has demonstrated, networks are significant conduits of migration, and, in this context, re-migration (Massey et al, 1998; Tilly, 1990; Vertovec, 2002). As Portes and Bach (1985:10) argue, migration itself "can be conceptualised as a process of network building, which depends on and, in turn, reinforces social relationships across space", to which Steve Vertovec (2002:3) adds "[m]igration is a process that both depends on, and creates, social networks". The importance of networks in migration and re-migration cannot be under-estimated; in a globalised and transnational world, these global networks are "a hallmark of the evolving world of the early twenty-first century" (Rogers et al, 2001:iii).

These networks are dynamic and flexible, and, above all, “[t]he structure of such global networks conditions the interactions, strategies and identities of their members” (Rogers et al, 2001:iii, my emphasis). For returnees, the networks established upon their re-entry may not only ease their re-entry process, but also be useful networks for later migration (Hugo, 2002; Khadria, 2001; Li et al, 1996; Salt, 1997). As Vertovec (2002:13) argues: “[T]he movement of students should be seen as an integral part of transnational migration systems, not least because the networks they forge often lay the tracks of future skilled labour circulation”.

While social networks exist in students’ countries of origin, particularly in the form of alumni associations, the question is: for what purpose do these returnees want these social networks? They want to discover those with common experiences. If they perceive that those around them have already found a ‘home’, they want to find others that are still looking for their ‘homes’. Here, we return to the (re)integration of self-identity. The role of alumni associations is valuable, particularly for trade, business, and political connections. However, while many senior graduates are in the higher echelons of their chosen professions, recent graduates are still at the bottom of the corporate ladder and do not share the influence, money or time of these senior graduates. The needs of these groups are different; for many recent graduates, they are still in the process of re-entering: they are searching for home.

Often, the returnees gave more insightful answers when they spoke in third-person. Here, their self-reflexivity was mediated through the experiences of an ‘imaginary Other’. Recognising that this may be the case, opportunity was provided for returnees to say what advice they might give a student returning to their country of origin. Their answers, probably inadvertently, tended to reflect their own perceptions and experiences – and perhaps even expectations of what they would have liked, but did not necessarily receive - as in this case here.

Interviewer: What about the student who is coming home within the next few weeks, from New Zealand? They ask for your advice about what it’s going to be like. What would you say to them?

Returnee: It’s trying. [laugh]. I think I would just tell them that, um, yeah, I think I would tell them that they will probably face reverse culture shock, and that, ah, it’s best not to, I

think it's best to observe what people do here, and learn to work around it, as opposed to fight against it. Ah, 'cause funny enough, when you coming back, you are minority again.

Interviewer: How so?

Returnee: Because...although you are, the same, perhaps, ah, race, and um nationality, but because of your experience abroad it makes you a minority again.... Whatever preparation you had in going to a country where you, you were a minority, you'll probably have to use it again.... Don't talk before, you know, learn to observe and to listen first, before you say, and learn to work around the culture, learn to work around the people, instead of just going, this is my way, and I want it this way. You, you stick out as a sore thumb (Interview 4, RGSGF 080201).

This returnee had employed a great deal of self-reflexivity, recognising that the best way to work the system was not to resist in vain. Nor did they seek out other returnees and form an enclave, an issue that two returnees raised in their interviews, and that was explored further in earlier chapters.

I reckon that you shouldn't have too much support structure, because I think that because there's already a tendency to stick to people who have had your same experience.... The tendency is not to go and mix with your own friends again and spend half your time reminiscing about how good your life was in New Zealand. I think it's really unhealthy. So, I think that you shouldn't have too much support structure so that became crutches, but there should be some sort of a motivation or impetus to go out and mix with everyone else even though it might be stressful, otherwise you'll just never get back into it yeah (Interview 1, RGSGF 030201).

There are communities here where you have a lot of overseas graduates congregate: people seek out people with the same experiences as they have.... Again, I feel that's quite destructive because if you're going to adjust you've got to adjust with the locals and the people who are different from you and learn their differences maybe there are overseas grads who have different ways but also that's just all wrong.... I don't think that there is a need for a support group. But, maybe there is a need for an orientation group for a very short period of time pointing in the wrong direction, points out that the currency has changed, where the food stores are, you know, where the new buildings are, and stuff like that.... A group you can just hang out for until you've gotten over the shock of coming back and then deal with issues. Certainly not a group thing that will keep you in the shallow waters all the time (Interview 10, RGSGM 080201).

While the physical presence of a social network is important, social networks can now exist *despite* geographical boundaries (Castells, 2000a; Faist, 2000; Giddens, 1991). The late modernity of Giddens (1991), or the Network Society of Castells (2000a) (the two not being mutually exclusive) have opened up new opportunities for social networking, identity-building, and a self-reflexive maintenance of narrative. More than that, they have opened up new ways of conceptualising 'home'. As Castells (2000a:500) argues: "Networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experience, power, and culture."

The participation in these networks is crucial, but not a given. These networks may exist at a virtual level *and* at a physical level. In concert with notions of self-reflexivity and ontological security, networks may also represent "a qualitative change in the human experience" (Castells, 2000a:508). In this context, it is a change not only of human experience, but also of conceptions of home, belonging, self-identity, and ontological security. Rather than finding these notions disrupted through crises, this "qualitative change" finds them rooted in different realities and experiences: transnationally, globally, and locally established. These different realities are attained through active trust and the transformation of intimacy: emotional intimacy and attachment across boundaries and despite distance. As Beck (2001:167) argues:

People struggle to live their lives in a world that increasingly and more evidently escapes their grasp, one that is irrevocably and globally networked.... In the global age, one's own life is no longer sedentary, or tied to a particular place. It is a travelling life, both literally and metaphorically, a nomadic life...a transnational life stretching across frontiers.... Whether voluntarily or compulsorily or both, people spread their lives across separate worlds. Globalisation of biography means polygamy: people are wedded to several places at once. Place-polygamous ways of living are translated biographies: they have to be constantly translated for both oneself and for others, so that they can continue as in-between lives.

The notion of identity for returnees is crucial, and is intricately tied up with their notion of 'home'. As Beck (2001:168-9) argues further: "Those who live in this post-national, global society are constantly engaged in discarding old classifications and formulating new ones.... In this way, identity emerges through intersection and combination, and thus through conflict with other identities." The challenge of returnees is to reintegrate a new

identity through intersection, combination, and conflict, with their experiences and identity-positions and projects in both New Zealand and their countries of origin. In establishing this new identity and in reforming and reintegrating notions of home, the local and the global take on different meanings and influences; no longer are they separate entities. In this search for identity, they are intimately linked.

TRANSFORMING INTIMACY, (RE)CREATING THE SELF

Part of (re)integrating a self-identity is to recognise that the *self* in this identity has changed. Often the biggest change for returnees is the change in them; it is this change that they most often fail to notice. Many assume that everything else has changed, but them; they assume that it is not their fault that they cannot properly re-enter: it is everybody else's fault. For some, realising they have changed can be a realisation that allows them to see their re-entry in a far different, and often better, light. One returnee expressed this well:

You know, you talk about, you know, "I can't believe my parents are like this", and da da da da da, and they can say, "Hey, you know, we've been through this, not! *It's not your parents: it's you*" [laugh], or something like that! (Interview 4, RGSFG 080201, my emphasis)

However, recognising that there has been a change in the *self* may not be enough to restore ontological security. As noted in previous chapters, returnees have a longing to belong, but more so, they want the acknowledgment that they *belong*. According to Beck (2001:166): "People used to be born into traditional societies, as they were into social classes or religions.... [Today] individuals become actors...stage-managers of their own biographies and identities, [and] also of their social networks and links." Increasingly, this is the case with these returnees in late modernity, particularly those experiencing their lives through new forms of communication (Castells, 2000, 2001), creating a transformation of intimacy (Giddens, 1991), changing religions or in other ways opposing the dominant discourse of their countries of origin, and (re)creating their biographies and identities through new networks, virtual and real, local and global, experienced in the past and expected in the future. It is within this matrix of expectations and experiences, local and global, inter-relationship and independence that returnees strive to find, re-establish, or discover (new) identities, places, and spaces of belonging.

In order to preserve, or attain, a coherent narrative of self-identity, Giddens (1991) identifies a series of dilemmas that need to be resolved. Giddens (1991) argues that modernity both fragments and unites. It unites by drawing in distant experiences (geographical distance, in this context) into the framework of an individual's personal experience. There is synergy here between this notion and transnationalism, as explored in the previous chapter. Geographical distance need not delimit intimate relationships with others. Modernity also fragments: in different social milieu and encounters, individuals draw on different forms of 'appropriate' behaviour; the presentation of the 'self' is different for each encounter. However, and this is particularly important and significant here, modernity can also integrate the self-identity. As Giddens (1991:190; my emphasis) argues:

A person may make use of diversity in order to create a distinctive self-identity which positively incorporates elements from different settings into an integrated narrative. *Thus a cosmopolitan person is one precisely who draws strength from being at home in a variety of contexts.*

The re-entry of an international student into their country of origin need not disrupt their narrative, threaten their ontological security, or cause them to have prolonged and intense unsettledness beyond the adjustment periods of culture shock (see Chapter Five). The identity of a returnee need not be a new identity from their identity in New Zealand; it can be an identity that integrates the different social settings, and draws strength from the positive elements in both these settings, in this disjuncture between a locally-lived life and a globally-lived experience. This is Giddens' (1990:142-3) 'transformation of intimacy'; as he argues:

It is simply not true that in conditions of modernity we live increasingly in a "world of strangers"....The "transformation of intimacy" of which I have spoken is contingent upon the very distancing which the disembedding mechanisms bring about, combined with the altered environments of trust which they presuppose....Yet the world "out there" – the world that shades off into indefinite time-space from familiarity of the home and the local neighbourhood – is not at all a purely impersonal one. On the contrary, intimate relationships can be sustained at a distance....We live in a *peopled* world, not merely one of anonymous, blank faces, and the interpolation of abstract systems into our activities is intrinsic to bringing this about.

Returnees' can find 'home' by reconceptualising it, can (re)gain their ontological security by (re)anchoring it, and can 'enfranchise' their grief by transforming and reforming their intimate relationships, beyond geographical propinquity, and in engaging the locally-lived world and globally-experienced world simultaneously.

This (re)integration of a self-narrative and, in turn, a stable sense of ontological security, can come through the sustenance of "active trust"; this "active trust", according to Giddens (1994a:186) is

at the origin of new forms of social solidarity today, in contexts ranging from intimate personal ties right through to global systems of interaction...New forms of social solidarity might often be less based upon fixed localities of place than before, but they can be very intense and perhaps durable.

Again, it is establishing this "active trust", as well as notions of self-identity, and positions and spaces to belong, *beyond* a geographical definition of 'home'. This is the new 'intimacy' of "post-traditional emotional relations": "it involves the generating of 'community' in a more active sense, and community often stretched across indefinite distances of time-space.... [G]roups create communities that are at once localized and truly global in their scope" (Giddens, 1994a:186-7). This (re)integration of self-identity therefore can take place in a community, but a *transnational* community rather than a geographically-bounded community.

They can also be grasped through the process of re-integration through preparation: recognising the changing *self* in self-identity. This reflexive project of the self allows the process – and the praxis – of re-entry to be a transition of (re)discovery, where active trust can be placed in new forms, ontological security can be based in new circumstances, choices, and environments, and self-identity can be formed in new ways, post-traditionally and transnationally. In order to find home, one must reconceptualise it, (re)place it and (re)space it. In short, therefore, the praxis of re-entry is the new positioning, placing, and perceiving, of a coherent and (re)integrated self-identity.

CONCLUSION

Re-entry is disruptive: it alters and challenges returnees' notions of home and belonging, place and space, identity and loyalty. But, while some returnees will never find a place to call home and they will be permanent nomads, others will redefine what they constitute as 'home', and (re)integrate a self-identity into that new notion of 'home' where they can also base their ontological security. Either way, home, in the conventional sense, in the sense in which the returnees experienced before their re-entry, and particularly in the sense of a physical place, has been irrevocably challenged.

The new challenge is to (re)discover a place like home; the risk is to languish unsettled when there is no place like home. Employing self-reflexivity in preparation, connecting into supportive social networks, and having a willingness to face the re-entry process are all means to a potentially positive end. Yet whether returnees have found their 'home', whatever and wherever they have conceived it to be, or whether they are still searching in their longing for belonging, the re-entry of international students into their countries of origin may have set them on a departure for the foreign continent of life, but re-entry needn't be the negative experience of an alien in a foreign land. Re-entry involves departure; but it can also involve arrival, to a new place called 'home'.

CONCLUSION:

A NEW PLACE LIKE HOME

INTRODUCTION

Departing for the foreign continent of life, longing for belonging, redefining home, recognising change, shaping perceptions, creating policy, acknowledging history – these are all markers in understanding returnees' search for a new place like home. Yet this search for home is more than a series of markers on a route; it is not the parts that lead to the destination, rather it is the sum of those parts. This chapter, therefore, draws together these various markers, but first highlights both the importance and the implications of this research.

THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

Going 'home' necessarily involves process: it is not an isolated event, removed from social, cultural, economic, or political contexts. International students returning to their countries of origin do so as part of a history; in this case, the history of international students in New Zealand, as both a sub-category of Asian migrants and as recipients of aid. The changes in those experiences of international students, and in the scale of international students in New Zealand, are also part of politics and political ideology. They are also part of a related economic context: the fiscal necessity of international students in New Zealand became as important as exporting education as trade.

These historical, political and economic contexts in turn shape perceptions, and create a social context. International students arrive into a social context of Asian migrants to New Zealand marked by discrimination and racism. International students face a multitude of 'social contexts'. These various social contexts include the context of expectations about New Zealand before their arrival; their experiences of the reality of New Zealand while studying; and their memories, impressions, and perceptions of New Zealand after their return to their countries of origin.

There is a further context returnees face: the context of re-entry. In this context, they encounter loss and homelessness and are faced with renegotiating relationships and reconfiguring expectations. This context of re-entry also engenders a crisis of identity and ontological security: a longing for belonging. It challenges their notions of what constitutes 'home' and forces them to reconsider their place and space in forums beyond the nation-state. However, while reconstituting and reconceptualising home may be difficult, it is possible.

These various contexts are noted in this thesis and the diversity of these contexts and their use within a sociological framework makes this thesis unique. Furthermore, this thesis comes not only from a sociological perspective, but employs relatively new theories and a useful combination of approaches to understand and analyse the re-entry process. Transnationalism is recognised as an important new way of understanding the movement of people in the twenty-first century (cf. Rogers et al, 2001). Alongside a structuralist approach, transnationalism brings to the analysis in this thesis an understanding of the political, economic, historical, and ideological factors that affect the re-entry process. However, the human agent is not absent: their experiences of disenfranchised grief and its affect on their ontological security, self-identity and notions of belonging draw from sociological notions of self-reflexivity, in particular notions provided by Giddens, and allow a breadth to explore the depth of the re-entry process.

Furthermore, this thesis is important not only because of its uniqueness, but because of its application. International students appear to be a fixture on New Zealand's social and educational scene, and while their experiences in New Zealand are important and influential, their transition into their countries of origin is equally, if not more, important. It is an area that is largely under-researched, but that is not a reflection of its unimportance. It may be a reflection of its complexity. Nevertheless, the significant increase of international students in New Zealand in the 1990s means an equally significant increase in the number of international students returning to their countries of origin.

This thesis has demonstrated the important connections between students' experiences in New Zealand and their re-entry into their countries of origin; it has also clearly demonstrated the broader socio-political contexts that aid or impede these experiences. While this research has provided valuable understanding of the re-entry processes, the

knowledge in this field would be augmented by ongoing research in this area. However, as this research has shown, any future research must integrate the various factors that are encountered by international students in New Zealand and upon their re-entry; for they all affect the others and to differentiate between them for the purposes of research would great a false distinction between these factors.

It needs to be recognised that the majority of international students who study in New Zealand will return home, as they have always done. New Zealand may be a recurring theme in their migratory careers; however, if returnees establish themselves in their countries of origin or elsewhere, it may just be one place amongst many. Yet, either way, the experiences of these international students in New Zealand will have profound influences on their lives, both positive and negative. The policies enacted, the perceptions created and the pastoral care delivered to these students will have longer-term effects than their duration of study in New Zealand. They may engender them favourably toward New Zealand as a place to do business, tour in, or send others to study in; or they may have the opposite and arguably more significant effects. Of similar importance, is the support returnees receive when they re-enter their countries of origin. To be ignored or asked for money and not listened to will not aid their re-entry transitions, nor may it give them favourable impressions of their countries of origin or fellow graduates. The potential for a diaspora of New Zealand graduates is great, with strong and favourable connections in a transnational community.

This research will assist in more fully understanding the re-entry process of these graduates, will be of use in forming pre-departure programmes and post-arrival support, and also useful for a plethora of agencies, graduate fellowships, education providers, alumni associations and other groups. Above all, however, it is intended that this research assists returnees themselves: that they might gain an understanding of the normalcy of the re-entry process; the complexities and challenges of longing for belonging; the grieving of loss, but also the welcome of gain; and that they might find 'home'.

When the first international students arrived in New Zealand in 1951, they were both novel and new. The Colombo Plan, signed the year prior, saw international students arrive in New Zealand with the expressed intention that they would return to their countries of origin, where their new qualifications would be of use to the student and their country alike.

New Zealand was also keen to build diplomatic bridges, recognising that good intentions, generous hospitality, and warm relationships to these new students would, in the future, be likely returned in kind. Furthermore, these first international students to New Zealand were the *crème de la crème* of their countries. Their influence upon their return to their countries of origin would be both wide-reaching and influential. In this, New Zealand recognised that they were not only being part of history, in being the first country in the world to receive Colombo Plan students, but they were also making history.

The dissipation of the threat of communism, the liberalisation of world markets, the growing economies and development of Asia, and the significant increases in international students to New Zealand were all factors in a subtle, albeit largely reactive, shift in New Zealand's policy to international students. International students were no longer as new or novel and the altruism of education-as-aid was no longer as persuasive.

The 1970s and 1980s saw incremental yet significant changes in New Zealand's foreign policy and toward international students: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs increasingly took a hands-off role in the governance of international students, and fees were introduced to students from Asia. These two changes are significant. They are the first signs of the removal of international students and export education from a definitive policy area, and they are a vanguard of sorts to the substantive reformative policies of the late 1980s and 1990s, where the political context of international students becomes increasingly important.

Equally important were the financial implications of trading (exporting) education, which can be seen in the policies from 1984 to 1999, which constitute the major discussion in Chapter Three. Whilst many of the policies discussed in this chapter were not directly related to international students, they nevertheless had a significant impact upon the enrolment of international students, who were now seeing largely as beneficial

commodities for universities, rather than potentially communist-leaning minds that needed to be re-educated.

In this period, New Zealand underwent significant changes in both public policy and education policy: there was liberalisation, privatisation, and deregulation. This period also marks the definitive shift toward the *trading* of export education, particularly to Asia. However, this shift came about more due to the prevailing and pervasive neo-liberal ideology rather than a deliberate policy toward international education. Moreover, this was indicative: international (export) education no longer fitted within aims of foreign policy; nor, however, did it sit comfortably with education policy, which domestically underwent significant reforms at both secondary and tertiary levels.

The influence of neo-liberalism on these reforms cannot be under-estimated, nor can the ongoing consequences of neo-liberalism and its reforms be under-counted. The two most significant influences for the purposes here are that international students were seen as commodities first, and students second; and that they were notably absent from policy development in either foreign affairs or education. The notions that had underpinned the Colombo Plan were secondary to the reliance and faith placed in market-forces.

While the liberalisation of the markets and the introduction of full-cost fees had a profound impact on the attitude toward international students, and on their economic attractiveness to education providers, there appeared to have been no consideration of the long-term consequences of these changes and reforms. If anything, the political context, particularly since 1984, demonstrates that political responses to export education, when not totally absent, were largely *ad hoc* and reactive. The policies of this period, driven by neo-liberalism, amongst other ideologies, were ones of significant social reform, illustrated in part by a significant withdrawal of the State.

In 1999, with a change to a centre-left Government in New Zealand, the State seemed to reintervene, not only in social policy, but more particularly in export education policy. For virtually the first time since the first Colombo Plan students, the Government was legislated specifically with international students in mind. This was particularly evident through the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students*. The creation of this Code ostensibly marked a concern with quality and reputation and at one level

responded to (potential) crises in the delivery of support to international students by the various institutions that enrolled them. However, there was a more significant level to the Code, particularly when considered alongside reforms suggested by the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission, documented in the Tertiary and Export Education strategy documents, and proposed in legislation in the form of the Tertiary Education Reform Bill (2002).

This other level maintained a separation between export and tertiary education; it remanagerialised risk; and it indicated that the State, while defining and broadly regulating quality, nevertheless would not be involved in its delivery or application. In so doing, it effectively absolved itself from receiving any blame should the delivery of this quality fail (even if that failure was a result of an inherent gap between principle and practice in the policy itself). However, in defining quality in its particular fashion, it also discursively highlighted it. Thus, quality was an official discourse, both within the industry as a form of a regulation and outside the industry as a form of marketing. However, in so marketing particular notions of quality, it was also provoking expectations by prospective international students that their experiences would equal that quality.

The Antipodean View: Perceptions and Experiences in New Zealand

Perceptions of quality are, however, only part of the experiences of international students. The perceptions of and about the international students themselves are also important. These perceptions constitute Chapter Five and consider the returnees' experiences in this research in light of the policy background of the previous chapters.

Historical, political, and economic contexts affect social contexts: policies affect perceptions. The social context into which international students arrive in New Zealand not only challenges their hitherto held perceptions about New Zealand, but also – in tandem with these other contexts – affects their notions of belonging and their processes of re-entry. Historically, Asian peoples have been unwelcome in New Zealand; they were only offered citizenship in 1951, ironically, the same year that the first Colombo Plan students arrived. This discrimination against Asian peoples may have changed legislatively (although even into the 1980s, New Zealand employed selective immigration), but socially, discrimination remained.

Asian students arrived in New Zealand with particular expectations of its social context. However, their experiences of the social context in New Zealand, particularly in relationship to other students and to the university as a whole (via its pastoral support of students) challenged these expectations and perceptions. Their experiences of racism did likewise, arguably the outworking of the reality of the social context in which the students found themselves.

Furthermore, a number of returnees in this research claimed that they received a large proportion of their social support from outside the university. While that partly reflects the tendency of international students to seek support from co-nationals and other international students, it also reflects the aforementioned perspectives by universities of international students as commodities in the first instance. In short, these contexts illustrate that international students do not belong, and are not made to belong, in New Zealand. With the experiences and perceptions of these contexts, they then re-enter their countries of origin.

The Retrospective View: Re-entry, Re-placing, and Re: Home

The re-entry processes of international students constitute the final part of this thesis. Having examined the policy background and the experiences of international students in New Zealand, the final chapters in this thesis deal with the particular transitions of re-entry, the profound sense of homelessness, and the preparation for re-entry.

Whereas the experiences of students in New Zealand involved a sense of not belonging in social contexts, their experiences of re-entry involved a sense of not belonging in terms of self-identity and conceptions of place, space, and 'home'. While the ambiguity of 'home' is most explicitly expressed in this context, it nevertheless draws its ambiguity from students' experiences in New Zealand. Upon their re-entry, returnees faced challenges and transitions, in particular disenfranchised grief and its sense of homelessness.

As explored in Chapter Six, while disenfranchised grief bears many similarities with culture shock theories, it broadens these theories to consider re-entry (or reverse culture shock) as a transition that involves loss and considers this experience of loss within the grieving process. The key issue of disenfranchised grief is that it is grief undertaken through a broad social context, which largely does not sanction the experiences or

expressions of this grief. Therefore, returnees have to negotiate this grief alone, which means recognising the grief for what it is, and which may also perpetuate the difficulties of the re-entry transition.

Losses faced by returnees include changes in their worldview, which, while part of culture shock, also challenge their sense of belonging in their countries of origin and their settledness in foundational institutions like their family, their work place, and their relationships with others. For a significant number of returnees, the familial tensions in particular can be difficult and tense, particularly if their newly consolidated world-views, which may include different religious beliefs to their parents, do not resonate with notions of filial piety and the expectations therein.

However, these losses are not only of foundational institutions or relationships, they are also deeply personal. Alongside their disenfranchised grief, re-entry challenges and fundamentally disrupts returnees' self-narratives, self-identity, and ontological security. As explored in Chapter Seven, the challenges of re-entry can be accentuated for those returnees who inhabited a transnational social space as students. In this space of meaningful interchange across multiple geographical spaces (which, as noted below, may continue upon their re-entry), their notions of 'home' as a physical place are disrupted and it becomes necessary for them to find an identity and a place to belong *beyond* geographical propinquity. These returnees struggle, and are ambivalent about, forming an identity based on referentials like faith, nationalist discourses, or ethnic categorisations such as "Chinese".

This struggle to find, or indeed even form, an identity leads to one of the most significant aspects of re-entry, namely a feeling of homelessness, particularly when 'home' is conceived to be a physical place, such as a nation-state. A helpful way in framing this sense of 'homelessness' is to see returnees as 'Third Culture Kids', where they are more likely to find their roots in relationship rather than in geography. Searching for a longing for belonging in this way allows for a reconfiguration of 'home' beyond borders.

One avenue for this search beyond borders is via computer mediated communities. Here, returnees can not only adopt new identities, but also be part of a supportive social network of co-returnees, thereby creating a forum where the grieving process of re-entry can be

expressed and is sanctioned, and where solidarity and 'belongingness' can be sought (and found).

Where 'home' as a physical place of belonging is disrupted, it can be sought through relationships via a virtual place. As argued in Chapter Eight, narratives may be disrupted during re-entry, but biographies can be rebuilt. Two ways of rebuilding these biographies are firstly to acknowledge and accept the transitions of re-entry, and secondly to self-reflexively prepare for those transitions. As important as these, is social support for returnees. This social support may not come through returnees' colleagues, friends or family. However, social support can come from dynamic and flexible transnational networks, whether they are via computer-mediated communities, through returnee support groups in countries of origin, or through other forums. In these social support networks, home can be reconfigured and a transnational identity, tied to relationships rather than geography, can be found.

CONCLUSION

While the transitions of re-entry, and the contexts that influence it, may be negative, the outcome can be positive. Returnees can reintegrate their self-narrative through being self-reflexive in their re-entry preparation, establishing a transnational identity, and participating in and belonging to a supportive social network. In these, both the local and the global inform their sense of who they are and their place in the world. They can find settledness in people first, and places second. In reconfiguring places as beyond geographical boundaries and in finding new ways to conceive and conceptualise 'home', returnees can find here that, for a settled identity and a place of belonging, there *is* no place like home.

APPENDIX A:

DETAIL OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

	GB	START	FINISH	UN	COURSE	COLLEGE IN NZ?	SO-SHIP	WORK IN NZ	POST-STUDY	FR	TWIN	PROX
1	M	1969	1983	VUW	BA/MA (Geog)	N	Y	N		N	N	
2	F	1965	1985	VUW	Accounting	N	Y	N		N	N	
3	F	1963	1967	Canterbury	BE/BS/MA (Chemical Engineering)	N	Y	N		N	N	
4	F	1964	1967	Canterbury	Economics & Agriculture	N	Y	N		N	N	
5	M	1961	1967	Canterbury & Otago	B.Sc & PG Dip Stats	N	Y	N		N	N	
6	F	1961	1969	Canterbury	B.E./1/2 M.E	N	Y	N		N	N	
7	M	1970	1973	VUW	BA (Hons Psych)	N	Y	N		N	N	
8	F	1974	1977	VUW	BA (History and Ed)/Hons (Ed)	N	Y	N		N	N	
9	F	1968	1991	VUW	BA (Eng & Pol)/Hons (Eng Lit.)	N	N	N		N	N	
10	F	1968	1991	VUW	BA (Eng. Lit)	N	Y	N		N	N	
11	M	1967	1992	VUW	Law	N	N	N		N	N	
12	M	1968	1992	VUW	BA (Econ Psych)/BA (Hons Psych)	N	N	N		N	N	
13	M	1992	1995	Lincoln	Bcomm (Finance)	N	N	N		N	N	
14	F	1993	1996	VUW	BSc (Biochem & Physiology)	N	Y	N		N	N	
15	F	1963	1965	Auckland	Bachelor of Town Planning	N	N	N		Y	N	
16	F	1992	1995	Waikato	B Management Studies	N	N	N		N	N	
17	F	1986	1987	Otago	Bcomm (Marketing)	N	N	N		N	Y	
18	F	1965	1997	Waikato	B Management Studies	N	N	N		N	Y	
19	F	1997	1998	VUW	Postgrad (Prof. Accounting)	N	Y	N		N	N	
20	M	1966	1998	Waikato	B Management (Accounting)	N	N	N		N	Y	
21	F	1965	1998	VUW	Commercial Law, Accountancy	N	N	N		N	N	
22	F	1966	1998	VUW	Bcomm	N	N	N		N	N	
23	F	1994	1998	VUW	Masters Education	N	N	Y		N	N	
24	F	1966	1998	Auckland	BA (Media, Film & TV)	N	N	N		N	N	
25	F	1993	1998	Auckland	BA (Jap) & Bcomm (Marketing)	Y	N	N		Y	N	
26	M	1994	1998	Auckland	Btech	Y	N	N		N	N	
27	F	1968	1998	Canterbury	B Comm	N	N	N		N	N	
28	F	1991	1999	VUW	BA/Hons (English Lit)	N	Y	Y		N	N	
29	M	1994	1999	VUW	BA (Geog and Anth) Hons (Geog.)	N	N	Y		N	N	
30	F	1994	1999	Auckland	BA (Property)	Y	N	N		N	N	
31	F	1993	1999	Auckland	B Arch	Y	N	N		Y	N	
32	F	1997	2000	VUW	BA/Hons (English Lit)	N	Y	N		N	N	
33	F	1998	2000	VUW	BCA (Accountancy)	N	N	N		N	Y	
34	M	1966	2000	VUW	Law	Y	N	N		N	N	
35	F	1994	2000	VUW & Auck	BA (Architecture)/MA	Y	N	N		N	N	
36	M	1966	2000	Massey (VH)	Dip Electronic Eng	Y	N	N		Y	N	

APPENDIX B:

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me a bit about yourself, where you were born, what you're doing now that you're back home, how long you spent in New Zealand, what you studied, that sort of thing.

Choosing to study abroad

- When did you first think about studying in New Zealand? What were the factors/reasons behind that?
- Describe to me the process of actually getting to New Zealand, you know the paperwork, visa that sort of thing. How did you find this process?
- What did you study while you were in New Zealand?
 - Why did you choose this subject?
- Did you have any particular expectations about studying overseas, in New Zealand?
 - What were those expectations?
 - Do you feel those expectations were met or not met or exceeded?
 - Were there any things that you expected to gain from holding an overseas university degree?
 - What were those things?
 - Do you feel you have gained them?
 - Did other people have expectations of you studying overseas, and what were those expectations?
- Do you ever think you'd study overseas again? Perhaps for postgraduate work?
 - Why? Why not?

Being an overseas scholar

- As an overseas scholar, do you feel that your perception of yourself changed?
 - If so, in what ways?
 - Do you feel that the way other people perceived you also changed? In what ways?
- Describe to me what it was like being a Malaysian/Singaporean in New Zealand.
- Did you ever feel you had an affinity with NZ culture?
 - How was this expressed?
- When you returned home for holidays, where did you prefer to be, In New Zealand or in Malaysia/Singapore?
 - Why was this do you think?

- How do you think NZ students perceived you as an international student?
 - Have you got any examples of this?
- Did you keep in contact with your friends back in Malaysia/Singapore?
 - How was your relationship with them while you were an overseas student?
 - How is your relationship with them now that you have returned?
 - How was your relationship with your family while you were overseas?
 - How is your relationship with them now that you have returned, particularly now that you have an overseas degree, and they may not?
 - How would you describe yourself in terms of identity? In relation to family, place, qualifications, relationships etc.?
 - a. Having now lived overseas, where is 'home' for you? Having lived overseas do you feel you can now 'settle' anywhere?
- Do you feel your place within Singaporean/Malaysian society has changed because you have an overseas university degree? In what way?

Ethnic identification

- As a Malaysian/Singaporean Chinese do you feel any particular affinity with China? Why? Why not?
- Do you feel you relate more to a Chinese-based culture or a Western-based culture? Or are you able to negotiate between the two? How?
- How do you think others identified you as a Chinese in New Zealand?
- What is Chinese culture do you? What are its hallmarks? What are the elements to which you do/do not identify? Why?
- What were your views of New Zealand [more generally, the "West"] before you studied abroad?
 - Did these views correspond to your experiences?
 - What was different?
- Now that you are home, have these conceptions changed for you?
- How did you arrive at these conceptions? [e.g. through mass media etc.?
- Why did you choose to study abroad? Why did you choose to study in New Zealand?

Experiences as a student in New Zealand

- Did you feel there were adequate support structures for you in NZ? (e.g. international office, friends, clubs, church etc.)

- Would you recommend New Zealand as an overseas study destination to your friends? Why? Why not?
- Do you feel the overseas study experience has been valuable to you? In what ways?

Experiences as a returnee

- Did you feel there was adequate support structures for you as a returnee?
- What was the most difficult element in returning (e.g. family, finding a job etc.)
- Were you prepared to come back home?
 - Were you aware how difficult it would be?
 - Was it more/less difficult than you expected?
- Do you retain contact with New Zealanders now that you have returned home?
 - Do you feel this has helped/hindered your re-entry process?
- Can you identify a time-frame where you felt you began to re-enter Singapore/Malaysia?
 - Did this process begin in NZ?
 - What were the indicators of this process?
 - Do you feel you're still going through this process now? In what ways
- Can you identify indicative changes since your return? (e.g. in circle of friends, topics of conversation, future-planning, etc.)
- What were your expectations when you returned?
 - Have these expectations been met? How? Why not?
- What were the expectations of others when you returned?
 - Have these expectations been met?
- Did you find attaining work/making new friends/re-establishing old friendships easy or difficult upon your return? In what ways?

- Is there any advice you would give to those students who were considering studying overseas? What would that advice be?
- Is there any advice you would give to those students returning from studying overseas? What would that advice be?

Is there anything else you would like to add or comment on?

APPENDIX C:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Participant information sheet for study on experiences of re-entry of Asian students.

I am a PhD student in Sociology at Massey University, New Zealand. The thesis I am undertaking is examining the re-entry experiences of Malaysian and Singaporean Chinese students who have returned to their communities or countries of origin within the last two years, having undertaken at least two years study at a New Zealand university. I am also interested in students who have decided to remain in New Zealand after they graduated in order to gauge some comparison between these two groups.

I am inviting graduates who identify themselves with these categories to participate in this study.

Participants will be interviewed around general themes about their re-entry experiences, or in the case of those who remained in New Zealand, their experiences and reasons involved in that. The participants can also choose to have family or friends present during the interview and can choose whether the interview is tape-recorded or just noted in a notebook by the interviewer.

No previous study in New Zealand, at this level, has examined the re-entry experiences of international students. Thus your participation would be greatly appreciated and helpful to the furtherance of knowledge about how to assist in preparing students for re-entry, and in gaining a greater understanding of the process of re-entry for international students. Should your consent be given and the information you provide be relevant to this study you will be subsequently contacted by the researcher to arrange an interview. As this information is necessary for this study should you choose not to supply it, this will be taken as an indication that you do not wish to participate in this study. A consent form is attached to this letter.

Should any participants feel the need to withdraw from the project, they may do so at any time, during the data collection and analysis and *before* the writing up of the final report, without question. Just let me know at the time.

Responses collected will form the basis of my research project and will be put into a written report. In the event that the researcher wishes to quote sections from interviews and identify participants in the written report then further consent from the participants will be sought and can be declined. The interviewees can have the opportunity to check the transcripts of their interview and any material

attributed to them in the report before publication. If participants wish, they can receive a summary of the report at the conclusion of the research.

The access to raw data will be limited to the researcher and the research supervisor, although access to computer files or storage files (locked securely in a storage cabinet) will through only the researcher. Tapes, discs, notebooks, and any other personal information not in the final written report will be destroyed by fire at the completion of the research. Alternatively, the tapes of the interview with the participant can be returned to the interviewee if they so request at the end of the research. The report will be submitted for marking to the Department of Sociology, Massey University, and deposited in the Library.

If you have any questions or require any further information about the project, please contact me at <mailto:andrew.butcher@clear.net.nz> or 025 626 5614 or +64 4 232 8125 or my supervisors, Professor Paul Spoonley, Academic Director, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University at Albany, Private Bag 102 904, NSMC, Auckland, New Zealand, Ph 64-9-443 9779 Fax 64-9-443 9650 E-mail: p.spoonley@massey.ac.nz or Dr Warwick Tie, School of Sociology and Women's Studies, Massey University (at Albany), Private Bag 102 904, North Shore Mail Centre, Auckland, New Zealand, Ph. 64 9 443 9700 Ex 9843, Fax. 64 9 443 9716 E-mail: W.J.Tie@massey.ac.nz

Andrew Butcher,
Massey University,
New Zealand

APPENDIX D:

CONSENT FORM

Massey University Letterhead

Consent to participate in research.

Title of project: No Place Like Home? The Re-entry Experiences of Malaysian and Singaporean Chinese students who have studied at a tertiary level in New Zealand for at least two years and have returned to their countries or communities of origin within the last two years.

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I may withdraw myself (or any information that I have provided) from this project (before data collection and analysis is complete) without having to give reasons or without penalty of any sort.

I am willing to provide the preliminary information requested about my studies in answering the question below:

During what years were you a student at a New Zealand University?

What subject did you study at a New Zealand University?

If relevant: When did you return to your home community or country?

I understand that if I do not answer these questions then I am indicating I do not wish to participate in this research.

I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisors.

I understand that the published results will not use my name unless I have given consent in addition to this form and no opinions or quotations will be attributed to me or presented in any way that identifies me without my additional expressed consent.

I understand that the tape recording of interviews will be destroyed at the end of the project unless I indicate that I would like them returned to me (please indicate by ticking the box clearly).

- I would like the tape recordings of my interview returned to me at the conclusion of the project. (Please indicate by ticking the box clearly).

I understand that the University retains insurance cover against claims relating to harm, loss or damage suffered by participants in research projects as a result of any negligent act, error or omission by or on behalf of the University.

I understand that I will have the opportunity to check the transcripts of the interview before publication.

I understand that the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent.

- I would like to receive a summary of the results of this research when it is completed (Please indicate by ticking the box clearly.)

I agree to take part in this research.

Signed:

Name of participant (Please print clearly):

Date

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