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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

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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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 someway 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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# TABLE OF CONTENTS


**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION ..... 1**

*INTRODUCTION ..... 1*
*PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ..... 1*
*Research on re-entry ..... 4*
*Research on Return Migration ..... 6*
*Research Methodology and Empiricism ..... 6*
*RESEARCH HYPOTHESES ..... 8*
*ETHICS OF RESEARCH ..... 9*
*METHOD ..... 10*
*STRUCTURE AND APPROACH OF THESIS ..... 16*

**CHAPTER 2**

**FROM AID TO TRADE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'EXPORT' EDUCATION POLICY IN NEW ZEALAND ..... 25**

*INTRODUCTION ..... 25*
*THE COLOMBO PLAN ..... 28*
*The Impetus behind the Colombo Plan ..... 30*
*Details of the Colombo Plan ..... 32*
*NEW PRESSURES: NEW RESPONSES ..... 33*
*Changing Ideologies ..... 34*
*Changing Foci ..... 36*
*UNDER PRESSURE: THE NEW PERILS ..... 41*
*THE END OF THE COLOMBO PLAN ..... 42*
*CONCLUSION ..... 43*

**CHAPTER 3**

**WHITHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS? UNIVERSITY REFORMS FROM 1984 TO 1999 ..... 46**

*INTRODUCTION ..... 46*
*TERTIARY EDUCATION UNDER LABOUR (1984-1990) ..... 48*
*Treasury's Government Management Report ..... 49*
*Critique of the Treasury Report ..... 53*
*Business Roundtable: Reforming Tertiary Education in New Zealand ..... 55*
*The Hawke Report ..... 57*
*The 1989 Education Act and its Amendments ..... 57*
*TERTIARY EDUCATION POLICY UNDER NATIONAL (1990-1999) ..... 59*
*Lower Subsidies, Higher Fees ..... 60*
*Trade Imperatives and Fiscal Necessities ..... 61*
*CONCLUSION ..... 63*

**CHAPTER 4**

**QUALITY CONTROL? GOVERNMENT POLICY FROM 1999 TO 2002..... 65**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 65
*THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS* ..... 66
*THE TEAC REPORTS* ..... 70
*THE TERTIARY EDUCATION STRATEGY 2002* ..... 73
*EXPORT EDUCATION STRATEGY 2001* ..... 74
*TERTIARY EDUCATION REFORM BILL 2002* ..... 77
*Supplementary Order Papers to the Tertiary Reform Bill* ..... 78
*Responses from the export education industry* ..... 79
*The significance of SOP 264/SOP 25* ..... 80
*CONCLUSION* ..... 83

**CHAPTER 5**

**WORLDS OF PERCEPTION: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND ..... 86**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 86
*PERCEPTIONS OF ASIAN PEOPLES IN NEW ZEALAND* ..... 89
*Arrival of Asian peoples to New Zealand* ..... 90
*Recent arrivals of Asian migrants* ..... 91
*Arrivals of international students* ..... 93
*Students' reasons for studying in New Zealand* ..... 96
*Contemporary attitudes toward Asian peoples* ..... 102
*Perceptions by the Other Students* ..... 104
*PERCEPTIONS ABOUT NEW ZEALAND: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT STUDENTS* ..... 107
*Students' perceptions about New Zealand* ..... 108
*Perceptions from others* ..... 110
*Experiencing racism* ..... 111
*The University Life* ..... 115
*University support* ..... 118
*CONCLUSION* ..... 120

**CHAPTER 6**

**HOME IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY: TRANSITIONS OF RE-ENTRY ..... 123**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 123
*THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF RE-ENTRY RESEARCH* ..... 125
*Culture and learning approach* ..... 126
*Stress and coping approach* ..... 127
*DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF* ..... 128
*CHANGING WORLD VIEWS* ..... 132
*Culture shock* ..... 135
*EXPECTATIONS ON RE-ENTRY* ..... 137
*Employment in their countries of origin* ..... 139
*Familial relationships* ..... 143
*Filial piety* ..... 144

*Religious conversion and familial tensions* ..... 149
*Religious conversion and social support* ..... 150
*Other relationships* ..... *151*
*CONCLUSION* ..... 153

**CHAPTER 7**

**LONGING FOR BELONGING: SEARCHING FOR A PLACE TO CALL 'HOME'** ..... **155**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 155
*IN SEARCH OF IDENTITIES* ..... 158
*Disrupting the narrative* ..... *159*
*FINDING A PLACE AND SPACE* ..... 163
*HOMELESSNESS* ..... 167
*'Third Culture Kids'* ..... *169*
*Ethnic identities: Takeaway Chinese* ..... *170*
*Strategic identities? Singaporean-Chinese returnees* ..... 171
*Second-class citizens: Malaysian-Chinese* ..... 173
*A special kind of refugee? Hong Kong-Chinese returnees* ..... 174
*COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNITIES* ..... 176
*Two realities: The use of CMC's in the host country* ..... *177*
*Is anybody out there? Returnees' use of CMCs* ..... *178*
*CONCLUSION* ..... 181

**CHAPTER 8**

**DEPARTING FOR THE FOREIGN CONTINENT OF LIFE: PREPARING TO RE-ENTER** ..... **183**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 183
*NARRATIVES BROKEN...* ..... 185
*...AND BUILDING BIOGRAPHIES* ..... 188
*Reluctant returnees* ..... *189*
*Self-reflexive preparation* ..... *190*
*Social support* ..... *192*
*TRANSFORMING INTIMACY, (RE)CREATING THE SELF* ..... 198
*CONCLUSION* ..... 201

**CHAPTER 9**

**CONCLUSION: A NEW PLACE LIKE HOME** ..... **202**

*INTRODUCTION* ..... 202
*THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH* ..... 202
*RE-VISITING MARKERS ON THE ROUTE* ..... 205
*The Broad View: Policies of Context and Consequence* ..... *205*
*The Antipodean View: Perceptions and Experiences in New Zealand* ..... *208*
*The Retrospective View: Re-entry, Re-placing, and Re: Home* ..... *209*
*CONCLUSION* ..... 211

APPENDIX A: DETAIL OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS ..... 212

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ..... 213

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET ..... 216

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM ..... 218

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 220