

New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies

Volume 17 Number 2

December 2015



Editor's note: 2015 marked the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Asia: New Zealand Foundation. These first two articles mark this milestone in the promotion of ties between New Zealand and the nations and cultures of Asia.

MAKING ASIA KNOWN: TWENTY YEARS OF THE ASIA NEW ZEALAND FOUNDATION

ANDREW BUTCHER
Asia New Zealand Foundation

Introduction

The Asia New Zealand Foundation (the Foundation) celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2014. The first section of this article charts its history; those present at its creation and the impetus behind its establishment; its early days of funding and its links with the business community; and its mission and work.

The Foundation was created in – and largely in response to – a particular climate. The second section looks at New Zealand's tightening and deepening economic links with Asia. The rapid ascension of Asian countries into New Zealand's major trading partners and the equally rapid negotiations and conclusions of a flurry of free trade agreements signalled New Zealand's interest to Asia and Asia's to New Zealand. No greater evidence of this is revealed than in New Zealand's relationship with China which, having not featured at all among New Zealand's top twenty trading partners when the Foundation was established was its top trading partner twenty years later.

Simultaneously, New Zealand's population was undergoing rapid ethnic diversification brought about by high levels of migration from Asia. That is the focus of section three. When the ideas for the Foundation were being formed New Zealand was still a largely ethnically homogeneous country, as it had been for most of its history. But the 1990s saw a rapid increase in the number of New Zealanders born overseas and particularly in Asia and the contours and composition of New Zealand society changed, and changed rapidly. This can be best seen in a brief statistic: in 1991 New Zealand's Asian population was 2.8 percent; by 2013 it was 10.4 percent.

Some of the more negative responses to this growth ignited the idea of setting up the Foundation and much of the work of the Foundation ever since has been to prepare New Zealanders for its future (let alone its present) with Asia. The fourth and final section of this article considers how New Zealanders' attitudes have changed, and draws on the extensive opinion polling that the Foundation has undertaken since 1997. In particular it considers changes in the perceived importance of Asia to New Zealand's future, in trends in attitudes toward Asian immigration to New Zealand, and in the perceived impact of Asia on New Zealand. These results reveal a generally positive trajectory: the more contact New Zealanders have with Asians the warmer their attitudes are toward them. But the surveys also show points of anxiety, some of which echo the same anxieties that were around when the Foundation began.

Those present at creation: the beginning of the Asia New Zealand Foundation

The Asia New Zealand Foundation opened its doors in September 1994. But its antecedents go back to 1989 as the result of a series of initiatives and a meeting of minds by politicians, diplomats, and academics (particularly the Institute of Policy Studies and the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research). These various players put out a call to take East Asia more seriously, both for its economic benefits to New Zealand and for New Zealanders to improve their own knowledge and education about Asia, which up to that point was largely the purview of the elite, well-educated and well-travelled. Most New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia was fairly limited at best. Leading the charge were two Ministers in Bolger governments: Don McKinnon, the Minister for External Relations and Trade and Philip Burdon, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade relations.

Trade was an obvious, growing and important part of New Zealand's links with the countries of Asia but it was not the only motivation for setting up the Foundation. Philip Burdon, his biographer Edmund Bohan records,

was passionately convinced that New Zealanders had to develop a much deeper and more widely based understanding of Asian culture.... He also lashed out at the rising tide of anti-Asian sentiment from those alarmed by increasing Asian – and especially Japanese – investment, which was being portrayed, often almost hysterically, as a threat to the 'Kiwi' way of life.¹

Burdon had no tolerance for public anti-Asian sentiments and “responded to these outbursts with a series of blunt demands that New Zealanders needed to show maturity and self-confidence to put behind them past anti-Asian discrimination and manage the new and exciting challenges provided by the increased links with Asia.”² Countering the anti-Asian sentiment of the time, which were based on “wrong perceptions... manifested in increasingly ugly ways,”³ became an important part of the Foundation's ongoing work. As noted in 1996: “The reason for setting up the foundation was simple. If New Zealand did not keep us with the economic dynamism of Asia, it risked being left out or marginalised.”⁴

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. To advance the cause, groundwork needed to take place. By 1993 momentum had sufficiently progressed that the government held an “Asia week”, which, Don McKinnon noted, “will be one of our most ambitious

1 Edmund Bohan, *Burdon: A Man of our Time*, Christchurch: Hazard Press, 2004, p.197.

2 Bohan, *Burdon*, p.198.

3 Bohan, *Burdon*, p.197.

4 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/1996/NZOYB_1996.html

foreign policy efforts” of that year.⁵ 1993 was a remarkable year in other respects too. New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade celebrated its half-century and New Zealand was elected to the United Nations Security Council. (This was a feat, as symmetry would have it, which was repeated in the 20th anniversary year of the Asia New Zealand Foundation in 2014). And on the trade front, the GATT Uruguay Round was finally settled.⁶

The 1995 Yearbook records the activity in this way:

Launched in November 1991, the Asia 2000 Programme is a major government initiative to encourage New Zealanders to build up the skills and awareness necessary to be even more effective participants in the Asia-Pacific region. Initially administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the aims and objectives of the programme are now carried out by the Asia 2000 Foundation. In support of the foundation’s objectives, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade continues to administer the Asia 2000 programme of inward visits by key business people from Asian countries.⁷

By 1998 the initiative:

is now well established; the Asia 2000 Foundation has a network of ‘honorary advisers’ in the region and draws support in New Zealand from both the public and private sectors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade works closely with the Foundation on key activities, such as the organisation of the Williamsburg conference to be held in 1998, and visitor programmes. The Asia 2000 Foundation contributes to regional policy analysis and discussion.⁸

The cornerstones were in place for what was to become the Asia 2000 Foundation and, as we shall see, many were present at its creation. With the end of the millennium approaching the name given to the Foundation was deliberate. There was a view of those around at the time that the Foundation’s work would be done by the year 2000;⁹ a sunset clause was added to its trust deed with that in mind.

5 Quoted in Richard Nottage, ‘A new era of Asia-New Zealand relations’, Asia New Zealand website, 2014, online at: <http://asianz.org.nz/content/new-era-asia-new-zealand-relations>

6 Nottage, ‘A new era’; Bohan, *Burdon*, pp.201-203.

7 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 1996*

8 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1998*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/1998/NZOYB_1998.html

9 Don McKinnon, *In the Ring: A Commonwealth Memoir*, London: Elliott and Thomson, 2013, p.14.

Funding and links with business

The government would provide the seed funding (in 1997 it gave \$1.7 million, an indication at least of money given in the years prior). There was a strong expectation at the time, and on its first executive director Dr Peter Harris that, following the model of similar Foundations overseas (especially the Asia Society and Harris' previous employer the Ford Foundation)¹⁰ funding would be heavily supplemented by the private sector.¹¹ This initially proved to be the case as Burdon and McKinnon drew on their connections in the business community (notably Carter Holt Harvey, ANZ, the New Zealand Dairy Board and Brierley Investments) who put modest funding into the Foundation's work: a total one-off contribution of \$1 million in 1995/1996 and an additional \$1m per annum for the following three years.¹² Leading business people also formed part of the original 11-member board, chaired by Sir Frank Holmes.¹³

Approximately half of the Foundation's funding in 1997 was from corporate and off-shore sponsorship,¹⁴ including a substantial grant from a Japanese benefactor.¹⁵ In the financial year 1997/8 the Foundation had sufficient funds to provide almost \$2 million to programmes in education, business, media and public affairs, which remain substantial programmes in the Foundation's work.¹⁶ It soon became clear, however, that business-sponsorship was only ever short-term and was not sustainable enough to ultimately replace Crown funding.¹⁷ That remains the case to this day where the government, via Vote Foreign Affairs, provides the baseline funding of four million dollars, while another million or so (so much less than half of the total) comes from a mixture of corporate and philanthropic sources.

Nonetheless business people have supported the Foundation in other ways. Two Chairmen have had strong links into the dairy industry: Sir Dryden Spring, erstwhile Chairman of the Dairy Board, and present Chair John Luxton, a ministerial colleague of Burdon and McKinnon with extensive interests in the dairy industry, including as Chair of Dairy NZ. The head of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise is an *ex officio* member of the board, alongside the secretaries of foreign affairs and education. Other long-term board members included Sir Anand Satynand (1997-2006), who went on to become

10 Richard Nottage, 'History', 2014, Asia New Zealand website: <http://asianz.org.nz/content/richard-nottage>

11 Sir Don McKinnon, 'History, 2014, Asia New Zealand website: <http://asianz.org.nz/content/sir-don-mckinnon>; Nottage, 'New era'.

12 Nottage, 'New era'.

13 Nottage, 'New era'.

14 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook*, 1998.

15 Nottage, 'New era'.

16 Nottage, 'New era'.

17 Phillip Gibson, 'History', 2014, online at <http://asianz.org.nz/content/phillip-gibson>

Governor-General, Professor Manying Ip of the University of Auckland (1994-present), and trade unionist Ken Douglas (1997-2014). Richard Nottage, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs at the time of the establishment of the Foundation, joined the board as Deputy Chairman in his retirement, a path similarly followed by his replacement as both foreign affairs' secretary and Foundation's deputy chairman, Simon Murdoch.

The Foundation was set up to be deliberately bi-partisan (or, perhaps, non-partisan) even though its board is appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. To that end, replacing Douglas as Deputy Chairman in 2014 was Steve Maharey, former Labour government minister and current Vice Chancellor of Massey University. Harris' tenure as executive director (1994-1996) was followed by diplomat Philip Gibson (1996-1999) (starting a trend of senior diplomats holding the role), then Tim Groser (2000-2001), Christopher Butler (2001-2004), banker John Austin (2005-2007), Richard Grant (2007-2012), John McKinnon (2012-2014), and Simon Draper (2015-).

The mission and work

The Foundation's early mandate was "to increase the knowledge and understanding of New Zealanders of the countries of Asia and their peoples and cultures so that they are able to develop relationships in the region more comfortably and effectively." Its mission, albeit in briefer form ("prepare New Zealanders for a future with Asia" and then "equip New Zealanders for the Asian Century"), has remained the same ever since. Beginning with a handful of staff in Wellington, in 2015 (at the time of writing) it now has twenty staff in both Auckland and Wellington.

In its early days the Foundation was a predominantly a grant-giving organisation, toward initiatives in research, culture and media; in that way it mirrored international philanthropic foundations. It also ran events. In 1997, one of its major events was the Festival of Asia in March: "[t]his involved street festivals in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch; more than 100 international performers; art, craft and photography exhibitions; films, plays and seminars; and almost 300 school events."¹⁸ These Festivals of Asia would be repeated in 1999 and 2001,¹⁹ and branched out from the main centres into secondary centres.²⁰

The Foundation has, initially single-handedly and later in collaboration with local councils, brought Asian festivals to the attention and, ultimately, the popularity of New Zealanders. Henry Johnson discusses this further in his article in this volume but brief mention is made here. The Lantern Festival, which marks Chinese New Year, began in the year 2000, and as a "Chinese festival" but, as long-term trustee Manying Ip records, "it's no longer a Chinese festival in New Zealand – it is a New Zealand festival."²¹

18 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 1998*.

19 Jennifer King, 'History', 2014, online at: <http://asianz.org.nz/content/jennifer-king>

20 Gibson, 'History'.

21 Manying Ip, 'History', 2014, online at <http://103.253.194.15/content/manying-ip-0>

The festivals, Tim Groser notes, “give[s] Asian New Zealanders a voice.”²² The Lantern festival regularly attracts hundreds of thousands of Aucklanders to the central Albert Park over a weekend in February. Other festivals, celebrating Japan, ASEAN and Diwali followed. The instigator of these festivals, Asia New Zealand Foundation Director, Culture Jennifer King, recalls that: “we had a book of remembrance at that first Diwali, and in it someone wrote, “Today I feel really proud to be an Indian”. I think that is the really important thing about festivals – they give people a chance to share their heritage with other New Zealanders.”²³ Over the (continuing) lifetimes of these festivals over 1,000 performers have been brought to New Zealand: “everything from stilt walkers to jugglers, puppeteers, fire eaters, magicians, dancers of all descriptions, rockbands and acrobats”²⁴

Some may criticise the festivals for introducing New Zealanders to a “superficial” Asia. The rejoinder, certainly applicable in the early days of the Lantern Festival (and of the Foundation itself) is that for many New Zealanders this superficial encounter with Asia was the first they had ever had, or at least had had that went beyond Chinese takeaways and what they read in the newspapers. Philip Burdon has written that he and Don McKinnon were “amazed at how widespread the lack of awareness of Asia actually was at all levels of New Zealand society, and how great the need was to go back to basics.”²⁵ “For most New Zealanders”, McKinnon has written elsewhere, Asia was “alien territory”.²⁶

Another major initiative of the Foundation was in 2003 and called ‘Seriously Asia’. It came about as a request from then Prime Minister Helen Clark²⁷ and was an effort to promote a New Zealand-wide conversation about all aspects of the Asian relationship, from culture, people-to-people links, trade, security and political relationships. A year of effort and fundraising culminated in a one-day seminar in Parliament hosted by the Prime Minister and featuring an impressive line up of speakers from around the Asia-Pacific [including Lee Hsien Loong, at the time an Honorary Adviser for the Foundation and soon to be Singapore’s Prime Minister.] A substantial document was producing recommending various actions be taken, including the establishment of a

22 Tim Groser, ‘History’, 2014, online at <http://asianz.org.nz/content/tim-groser>

23 Jennifer King, ‘History’.

24 Jennifer King, ‘History’.

25 Philip Burdon, ‘History’, 2014, online at <http://asianz.org.nz/content/philip-burdon>

26 McKinnon, *In the Ring*, p.14

27 Recorded almost verbatim in Sir Dryden Spring ‘History, 2014’, online at <http://asianz.org.nz/content/sir-dryden-spring>

network of young leaders,²⁸ and a fund to be administered by MFAT.²⁹ The Leadership Network, as it became, now boasts over 300 members based around the world. At its twentieth anniversary celebrations the Foundation noted that in its two-decade existence three million New Zealanders had enjoyed its festivals, 34 artists had benefited from exchanges in Asia and 300 Kiwi journalists had had experience and exposure in Asia.³⁰

The growth, and indeed continuity, of the organisation beyond the year 2000 reflected not only ongoing government (and thereby financial) support. It also reflected and responded to a changing New Zealand, where links to Asia became both deeper and wider. Since the Foundation was established Asia is now more present in the everyday lives of New Zealanders: some of that can be attributed to the work of the Foundation in raising the awareness of Asia; some to the simple reality of more Asians in New Zealand. As is discussed further below, the growth of the Foundation paralleled a growth in New Zealand's Asian populations and economic links with the Asia Pacific region.

The changing climate: tightening and deepening economic links with Asia³¹

As a result of New Zealand's realignment of trade from Great Britain, the region of the Asia-Pacific developed into an export destination that was first equally as important and then vastly *more* important as New Zealand's traditional markets of Europe and the United Kingdom. To illustrate: in 1993, twenty years after Britain's accession to the EEC, and a year before the Foundation opened its doors, the Asia-Pacific region absorbed:

- 73 percent of all New Zealand exports and provides 71 percent of imports.
- 70 percent of New Zealand's exports of processed primary products.
- 91 percent of New Zealand's elaborately transformed manufactures.

28 Christopher Butler, 'History', 2014, online at: <http://asianz.org.nz/content/christopher-butler>

29 "The Government's 'Seriously Asia' fund aims to build links with rising Asian leaders and those well placed to influence public opinion. Long term, the trend towards closer integration in the Asian region and the possibility of a future East Asia community is of particular significance to New Zealand. New Zealand's intentions to strengthen its engagement with Asia have been outlined in the Government's white paper on New Zealand's relations with Asia, *Our Future with Asia*." Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2008*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/2008/NZOYB_2008.html

30 'Asia New Zealand Foundation', 2014: online at <https://vimeo.com/110943591>

31 Material in this section draws on data from Statistics New Zealand and material in its annual year-books from 1994 onwards, available online at http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/digital-yearbook-collection.aspx

And provided:

- 13 of New Zealand's top 20 markets and 11 of the top 20 suppliers.
- 12 of the 20 fastest growing markets.³²

Asia was the main region for all of New Zealand's exports three years later. In the June 1997 year, it accounted for 37.6 percent (even in the depressed market caused by the Asian financial crisis); and 29.7 percent of imports. The North Asian markets of Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan took almost 28 percent of New Zealand's merchandise exports in 1997, worth just over \$5.7 billion. Despite only China showing growth in 1997, these markets remained New Zealand's 2nd, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th largest markets respectively.³³ In the year ending 30 June 2007, Asia was home to 11 of New Zealand's top 20 markets for goods exports. The region took nearly 40 percent of New Zealand's exports by value, totaling more than \$11.7 billion for the June 2007 year.³⁴

Two years later, in the year ending 30 June 2009, Asia was home to six of New Zealand's top *ten* markets for goods exports. The region took 35.1 percent of New Zealand's merchandise exports by value, totalling more than \$15 billion for the June 2009 year. The global economic downturn impacted on trade in tourism and education, but Asia remained a key services market, especially the large economies of North Asia. China was New Zealand's third-largest trading partner in the year ending June 2009 after Australia and the United States, with Japan in fourth place. South and South-East Asia also became increasingly important markets for New Zealand. There were significant flows of direct investment between Asia and New Zealand.³⁵

From 1998 to the present, New Zealand has also accelerated the number of free trade agreements with countries of the Asia Pacific. At the time of writing (July 2015) they include:

- Australia and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations (1983)
- New Zealand and Singapore Closer Economic Partnership (2001)
- New Zealand and Thailand Closer Economic Partnership (2005)
- Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership (Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, Singapore) (2006)

32 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 1995*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/1995/NZOYB_1995.html

33 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 1998*.

34 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2008*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/2008/NZOYB_2008.html

35 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2010*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at: http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/nz_official_yrbk_2010.pdf, p.61

- New Zealand-China Free Trade Agreement (2008)
- ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (2009)
- New Zealand-Malaysia Free Trade Agreement (2009) – signed but not yet entered into force
- New Zealand-Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership (2010)
- New Zealand-Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement (2010)
- New Zealand-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (2015)
- New Zealand-India Free Trade Agreement (under negotiation)
- Expansion of the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership (under negotiation)
- Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (under negotiation)

China

As we have seen, New Zealand's economic relationships with the countries of Asia grew, tightened and deepened considerably in the last two decades. The best example of this is to consider New Zealand's economic relationship with China. The growth of China in New Zealand's trade profile during this period is remarkable. It did not appear in the top ten trading partners until 2001 (at number 8), but from there progressively moved up the rankings (number six from 2002-2006; number five in 2007, number four from 2008-2011, and number two from 2012-2013). From 1994-2013, Australia was New Zealand's largest export market, losing the top place to China in 2014. There is other evidence for New Zealand's tightening economic links with Asia, but this is the most compelling.

A quick survey of New Zealand's trade with China is illustrative, as Table 1 illustrates.

Table 1: Selected data of New Zealand's growing trade relationship with China

Year ending (June)	NZ merchandise exports to China	PRC imported goods to NZ
2003	\$1.5b	\$2.7b
2004	\$1.6b ³⁶	\$3.0b ³⁷
2005 ³⁸	\$1.6b	\$3.7b
2006	\$1.7b ³⁹	\$4.4b ⁴⁰

– continued over page

36 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2006*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, online at http://www3.stats.govt.nz/New_Zealand_Official_Yearbooks/2006/NZOYB_2006.html#idtable_1_155582

37 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2006*.

38 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2006*.

39 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2008*.

40 Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2008*.

Year ending (June)	NZ merchandise exports to China	PRC imported goods to NZ
2007	\$1.9b	\$5.3b
2008 ^{41,42}	\$2.1b	\$5.8b
2009 ⁴³	\$3.4b	\$6.7b
2010 ⁴⁴	\$4.1b	\$6.1b
2011 ⁴⁵	\$5.6b	\$7.1b
2012	\$6.1b	\$7.7b
2013 ⁴⁶	\$7.7b	\$7.8b
2014 ⁴⁷	\$11.6b	\$8.5b

China's economic growth not only changed New Zealand; it transformed China's role internationally and geopolitically. Likewise, China's growth impacted New Zealand in other ways. Chinese migrants were among the early settlers to New Zealand in the late 19th century but they, along with migrants from other parts of Asia, came in high numbers from the mid-1980s onwards. It is the growth of New Zealand's population, and its impact, that is discussed in the next section.

New Zealand's changing population

Alongside and preceding these trade flows were the movement of people from Asia to New Zealand, which began in the mid-nineteenth century but accelerated significantly in the late-twentieth century. This section discusses this people movement in detail.⁴⁸

41 The NZ-China FTA took effect in October 2008.

42 Data derived from tables in Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Official Yearbook 2012*, Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2012, online at: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/yearbook/tables/overseas-tra-yrbook-2012.xlsx>

43 Data derived from tables in Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2012*: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/yearbook/tables/overseas-tra-yrbook-2012.xlsx>

44 Data derived from tables in Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2012*: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/yearbook/tables/overseas-tra-yrbook-2012.xlsx>

45 Data derived from tables in Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Yearbook 2012*: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/yearbook/tables/overseas-tra-yrbook-2012.xlsx>

46 Data derived from Statistics New Zealand, 'Overseas Merchandise Trade: June 2013', online at: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/Browse percent20for percent20stats/OverseasMerchandiseTrade/HOTPJun13/omt-jun13-tables.xls>

47 Data derived from Statistics New Zealand, 'Overseas Merchandise Trade: June 2014', online at: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/Browse percent20for percent20stats/OverseasMerchandiseTrade/HOTPJun14/omt-jun14-tables.xls>

48 This section draws on Statistics New Zealand Census data.

In 1991, so in the year in which the Foundation was in its gestation, the top five countries or regions of birth (outside of New Zealand) for New Zealanders were Australia, Pacific Islands, British Isles, Netherlands and Germany. Moreover, in the period from 1986 to 1991, the vast majority of New Zealanders (96.7 percent) identified with only one ethnic group. Both New Zealanders' birthplace and their ethnicity were to change and diversify significantly in the decades to come. Between 1991 and 1996 New Zealand's overseas-born population increased by almost 78,000 people, with 72 percent of that population born in Asia. There were marked increases between 1991 and 1996 in the number of New Zealand residents born in Northeast Asian countries such as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea, which together accounted for an increase of almost 37,000 people.

A brief survey of the growth of New Zealand's Asian population is instructive.

- In 1991, New Zealand's Asian population (by ethnicity) totalled **99,756**, which was **2.8 percent** of the entire population of 3,516,000. The three largest groups, with populations of over 10,000, were Chinese (44,793), Indian (30,609) and what was called 'Other Southeast Asian nec [not elsewhere classified]' (16,626). The next largest Asian population, at some way behind, were Filipinos, with 4,920 people. In that year, New Zealand-born Asians (28,416) made up 28 percent of the total Asian population in New Zealand of which Chinese made up 53.7 percent (15,264 people) and Indian 33.4 percent (9,501 people).
- By 1996 New Zealand's Asian population had increased to **173,505** people, which made up **4.6 percent** of New Zealand's population of 3,762,300. Chinese remained the largest Asian ethnic group (at 81,309), followed by Indian (42,408). The Korean population was now the third largest group, with a population of 12,753 (a significant increase from a population of only 930 in 1991). The Filipino population was once again the fourth largest group and had almost doubled since 1991, with a population in 1996 of 8,190. In 1996, New Zealand-born Asians (43,404) made up 25 percent of the total Asian population in NZ, of which Chinese made up 51.8 percent (22,494), Indian 33.6 percent (14,619)
- By 2001, the Asian population had increased to **238,176**, which made up **6 percent** of the total New Zealand population of 3,916,200. The Chinese population surpassed 100,000 (to be precise: 105,057) and four other ethnic groups had populations larger than 10,000 people: Indian (62,187), Korean (19,026), Filipino (11,091) and Japanese (10,026). In 2001, 22 percent of the Asian population were New Zealand-born (53,262 people).
- By 2006, the Asian population had increased further, to **354,549** people, which was **8.4 percent** of New Zealand's total population of 4,211,400. By this Census five Asian groups exceeded populations of 10,000 (Korean at 30,792, Filipino at 16,938 and Japanese at 11,907), with two exceeding 100,000 (Chinese at 147,570 and Indian at 104,580). In 2006, 19.9 percent of the Asian population were New Zealand-born (70,650).
- Further increases in the Asian population were evident at the 2013 Census (noting it was seven years since the previous Census), which made up **10.4 percent** of New Zealand's total population of 4,504,600. The Asian population totalled **471,708** and

now seven Asian groups exceeded populations of 10,000, with both Chinese and Indian populations exceeding 100,000 people (171,411 and 155,178 respectively). In order, the next three largest Asian groups were Filipino (40,347); Korean (30,171), which was a decrease in the Korean population since 2006; Japanese (14,118); and Sri Lankan (11,274). In 2013, 22 percent of New Zealand's Asian population were New Zealand-born (105,729).

This brief survey reveals what, in short-hand, Bedford and Ho have described elsewhere:

Between March 1986 and March 2006, New Zealand's resident population that had been born in countries in Asia increased almost sevenfold.... The Chinese and Indian components of the Asia-born population increased even more – by more than 800 percent during the 20 years. The population that identified with Asian ethnicities (including the New Zealand-born) increased by 550 percent.⁴⁹

The growth of the Asian population in the twenty years of the Foundation's existence, and for several years before, was rapid and unprecedented. And herein lay one of the challenging tasks of the Foundation: to make New Zealanders more confident in and comfortable with this change.

New Zealanders changing perceptions of Asian people

Has the Asia New Zealand Foundation made any difference? One way we may be able to measure this is through examining how New Zealanders' attitudes have changed towards Asian peoples. The Foundation has undertaken opinion polling on this topic since 1997. A summary of poll findings by Gendall, Spoonley and Butcher⁵⁰ from that year to 2011 showed the following:

- Since 1997, most New Zealanders (between 70 percent and 80 percent) have regarded Asia as important to New Zealand's future. Only during the Asian economic crisis of 1998–2000 did this proportion fall below 70 percent while, during the global financial crisis 10 years later, the perceived importance of Asia among New Zealanders was higher than it had ever been.
- The average proportion of New Zealanders who rated Asia as important or very important to New Zealand's future increased from 70 percent between 1997 and 2000 to 77 percent between 2007 and 2011. This confirmed the increasing perception among New Zealanders of Asia's importance in the 15 years, from an already high level in the late 1990s.

49 Richard Bedford and Elsie Ho, *Asians in New Zealand: Implications of a Changing Demography*, Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2008, p.11.

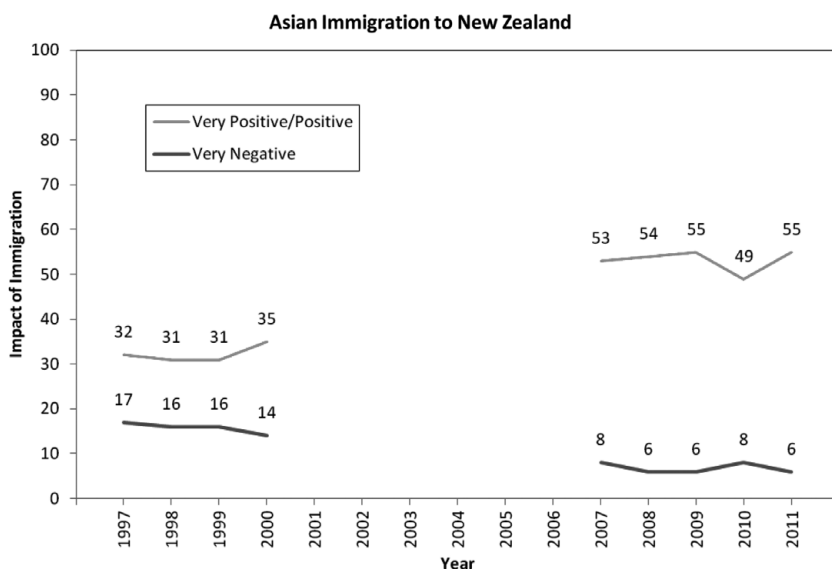
50 Philip Gendall, Paul Spoonley and Andrew Butcher, *New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples*, Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2011, online at http://asianz.org.nz/files/04382_ANZF_NZ_Perception_of_Asia_1997-2011_E_Publ_FA3.pdf; Andrew Butcher, Paul Spoonley and Philip Gendall, 'New Zealanders' attitudes to Asia and Asian peoples: An exceptional case?', *Political Science*, 67, 1 (2015): 38-55.

The following three tables, on the importance of Asia to New Zealand's future, on the impact of Asia on New Zealand, and on trends in attitudes towards Asian immigration illustrate this further.

Table 2: Importance of Asia to New Zealand's future⁵¹

Country or Region	Important or Very Important	
	1997 percent	2011 percent
Australia	na	88
Asia	79	83
Europe (incl UK)	67	69
South Pacific	50	51
North America	60	58
South America	32	30
Africa	na	16

Table 3: Trends in attitudes toward Asian immigration in New Zealand⁵²



51 Reproduced from Gendall *et al.*, *New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia*, np.

52 Reproduced from Gendall *et al.*, *New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia*, np.

Given potential and actual attitudes toward the rapid growth of the Asian populations in New Zealand, the early signals of which were partly responsible for the establishment of the Asia New Zealand Foundation in the first place, these survey findings are very positive. Where there is some anxiety, even negativity, is in the ways Asia is perceived to impact New Zealand. This is shown in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Impact of Asia on New Zealand

	Impact Somewhat or Very Positive				
	1997 percent	2011 ⁵³ percent	2012 ⁵⁴ percent	2013 ⁵⁵ percent	2014 ⁵⁶ percent
Asian tourism in New Zealand	83	92	88	93	91
Exports from Asia to New Zealand	80	92	92	94	91
Economic growth of the Asian region	-	83	80	83	80
Asia as a tourist destination for New Zealanders	47	76	74	80	76
Imports from Asia to New Zealand	80	67	64	70	66
Asian cultures and traditions	33	61	56	62	62
Population growth of Asia	-	49	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
Investment from Asia	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	74	64
Immigration from Asia to NZ	Not asked	Not asked	51	54	53

As can be seen in Table 4, even though attitudes toward Asian immigration have clearly become more positive since 1997 (see Table 3) still only a small majority of New Zealanders see a positive impact on New Zealand of immigration from Asia. There are also clear anxieties about investment and imports from Asia, which both recorded statistically significant and negative declines. This reflects a generally increasing negativity in recent polls about Asia's economic impact on New Zealand.

53 Gendall *et al.*, *New Zealanders' perceptions*.

54 http://asianz.org.nz/files/Perceptions_of_Asia_report_2013.pdf

55 Asia New Zealand Foundation, *New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples in 2013*, Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2014, online at: http://asianz.org.nz/reports/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/ANZF1020-POA-pdf-Report_FA.pdf

56 Asia New Zealand Foundation, *New Zealanders' perception of Asia and Asian peoples in 2014*, Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2015, online at: <http://asianz.org.nz/reports/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ANZF1046-Perceptions-of-Asia-Report2.pdf>

Since the first days of the polling (and of the Foundation) New Zealanders' exposure to, experience of and attitudes toward Asian peoples have increased positively. But the issues that were irritants in the mid-1990s largely remain, even if the specifics have changed (i.e. from anxieties about Japan to those about China). At one level these continuing anxieties reinforce the need for the Foundation and its work. At another level they reveal the seemingly intractable challenges that New Zealand faces as it continues on its significant reorientation from its Anglo-Saxon roots to its reality as an Asia Pacific nation. As these and other surveys show, not all New Zealanders fully embrace this reorientation. Some feel threatened, some unsure, some ill-prepared. But the ways in which these anxieties are articulated *has* changed. New Zealand media, for example, are now more sympathetic about reporting super-diversity than they were twenty years ago.⁵⁷ The cultural festivals are now an accepted and welcomed part of the landscape in Auckland, and increasingly elsewhere.

By sheer force of the numbers of Asian migrants, more New Zealanders now live, work and play with people of Asian ethnicity. As contact between Asians and other New Zealanders has increased so have attitudes toward Asians become more positive.⁵⁸ But "[t]his link between contact and attitudes... is not necessarily a given. International literature and experience also illustrates that large migrant or minority populations can lead to higher levels of discrimination, antagonism and outright opposition."⁵⁹ Despite particular anxieties noted earlier, New Zealand has not experienced wide levels of discrimination toward and opposition to Asians. If anything, attitudes have become *more* positive not less. That said, the direction of travel of projected future growth of the Asian populations and increasing economic links to Asia will continue the reorientation that began well before the Foundation itself did, and was an important factor in its coming into being. For that reason, if for no other, the work of the Asia New Zealand Foundation will remain an important element in building New Zealanders knowledge and understanding of Asia and in preparing them for this, the Asian Century.

Conclusion

The Asia New Zealand Foundation began in the early 1990s as a meeting of minds in response to a rapidly changing climate. New Zealand's engagement with Asia economically and demographically was undergoing rapid and unprecedented change and New Zealanders' needed to be prepared to face this new reality. Begun with a belief that its work would be done by the year 2000, the Foundation celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2014. On present trends it may well last at least another twenty years. Through festivals and forums, surveys and scholarships, and links with business, media and academia, the Foundation has more than proved the worth of

57 Paul Spoonley and Andrew Butcher, 'Reporting superdiversity: the mass media and immigration in New Zealand', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 30, 4 (2009): 355-372.

58 Butcher *et al.*, 'New Zealanders' attitudes to Asia', p.54.

59 Butcher *et al.*, 'New Zealanders' attitudes to Asia', p.54.

the idea that inspired it. Not all the ambitions that began it came to fruition; securing substantial private funding remains elusive. But, as its own surveys reveal, New Zealanders attitudes toward Asia and Asian peoples have generally become more positive. Some of that may have happened anyway, but it was helped along and hurried up by the activities and initiatives of the Foundation. When the Foundation began few people knew much about Asia. Twenty years later there would be fewer New Zealanders still in that category. In large part that is because over the last two decades, and in the context of rapid demographic and economic changes, the Asia New Zealand Foundation has made Asia known.

Biographical Note

Dr Andrew Butcher was Director, Research and Policy for the Asia New Zealand Foundation 2006-2015. Concurrently he was a Teaching Fellow in the Political Science and International Relations programme at Victoria University of Wellington (in 2012) and a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore (in 2011). He holds degrees in History and Criminology from Victoria University of Wellington a PhD in Sociology from Massey University. He is now an Adjunct Researcher in the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor, College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. Correspondence to: outforasong@icloud.com