

**GUEST EDITORIAL:
SPECIAL ISSUE ON “ASIA AND EDUCATION”**

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The past three decades have seen profound changes to education in parts of Asia and to patterns of educational mobility within, from, and to the Asia region. Internationally, many countries compete to attract Asian international students, while top Asian universities also attract students and scholars from across Asia and the rest of the world. Asian countries and cities were at the top of the OECD’s 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) rankings in mathematics, reading, and science (OECD, 2014), leading to intense global interest in Asian school systems. However, some parts of Asia remain marked by striking educational inequalities and lack of access to formal education at all levels. New Zealand’s educational connections with countries in the Asia region are well established but have changed over time, from an initial focus on education as a form of foreign aid to the annual recruitment and enrolment of thousands of full fee-paying international students (Tarling, 2004). At the same time, New Zealand schools are increasingly promoting Asian languages, particularly Chinese, and schools and tertiary education institutions alike are endeavouring to promote strengthened exchange relationships with Asian educational institutions.

This special issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* is themed “Asia and Education,” with a focus on local knowledge in an international context. The articles were originally presented at a 2015 conference with the same focus, hosted by the University of Otago Asian Migrations Research Theme. The presentations touched on important issues connected with the conference theme, including educational mobilities from, to, and within Asia; Asian education systems, policies, and practices; comparative perspectives; Asia-New Zealand educational connections; education and development; education and inequality; education in post-conflict settings; and intersections between health and education. The eight articles selected for publication are diverse in their topics, methodologies, and scope, providing a rich insight into the range of ideas that occupy scholarly attention relating to Asia and education. Of course, such a short special issue cannot possibly cover all fields relating to Asia and education. However, this issue contributes to contemporary ways of thinking about educational epistemologies; it opens up avenues for re-thinking disciplinary approaches to education; and it celebrates different perspectives on Asia in the fields of education and Asian Studies.

Specifically, the articles in this issue discuss: a historian’s impressions of international student mobility (Tarling); Asia and higher education mobilities, or “internationalization” (Doyle); educational leadership research in East Asia (Notman); health education in the Philippines and Cambodia (Sana, Atienza, and Nodora);

identity in Japanese Early Childhood Education (Burke); Protestant theological education, indigenisation, and contextualisation in Singapore and Malaysia, 1948-1979 (Roxborough); music, multiculturalism, and the national curriculum in Singapore (Eikaas-Lee); and multiculturalism and social justice in Sri Lankan education textbooks (Nissanka).

We wish to express thanks to each of the authors for submitting their work to this special issue, and to the team of leading international scholars who reviewed each paper, offering constructive critique and suggestions. We also thank our research assistant, Lisa Marr, who has provided invaluable editorial support during the final stages of the project. The *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* is an ideal publication for this special issue and we would like to thank its Editor, Paul Clark, and Production Editor, Hamish Macdonald, for their outstanding support for this project and help in producing this issue. Lastly, we hope that this special issue sparks further research interest relating to Asia and education as an important and richly diverse field of scholarly inquiry.

References

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