Learning Across Borders

Learning Across Borders:

Perspectives on International and Transnational Higher Education

Edited by

Leslie Seawright and Amy Hodges

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**Section III: Transnational and International Student Voices
on Identity and Learning**

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Lastly, we would like to thank all of the teachers, instructors, and professors around the globe who are dedicated to student learning and pedagogical research. It is our hope that this book can aid them in their teaching and theorizing.

—Leslie Seawright and Amy Hodges

INTRODUCTION

We live in an educationally mobile world: instructors deliver courses at two or more different campuses, students transfer from community colleges to universities (and others do the reverse), new curricula are offered in hybrid online and physical spaces, and innovative programs defy traditional disciplinary boundaries. On a global scale, many students move across oceans to obtain a degree, and faculty members travel to new countries and work with diverse populations of students. Increasingly, universities are adopting cross-border curricula and partnerships in order to help their graduates compete in a globalized economy. Those of us who live and work in such transnational and international spaces have become interested in how these larger trends impact the learning that happens in our classrooms.

This book is the extension of that intellectual and personal curiosity, stimulated by conversations the contributors had at the 2015 Liberal Arts International Conference in Doha, Qatar. Under the theme of *Looking Forward, Looking Back: Transnational Perspectives on Globalization*, scholars from many different liberal arts disciplines convened to discuss the impact of globalization on teaching and learning. As these authors explored the city of Doha – its world-famous Museum of Islamic Art designed by I.M. Pei, the riot of color and spice in *Souq Waqif* (a reconstruction of Doha's traditional marketplace), and the cutting-edge design of Education City where a number of the world's leading universities have branch campuses hosted by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development – they were struck by the mix of old and new, of modern and traditional, the seamless integration and incongruities that marked the footprint of globalization on what was, in many ways, historically a globalized region where West mingled with the East.

Adding to our motivation, David Jolliffe presented a thought-provoking keynote address titled "Global Corporate Decisions, Local Impacts and the Need for Economic Literacy." His talk connected the decisions of large multinational corporations with the everyday lives of citizens in a rural Arkansas town, an excellent model for examining global and local networks. Furthermore, Jolliffe called upon us to teach our students to become *liberal artists* – active citizen-scholars who draw upon

an extensive liberal arts background to enter many different types of conversations on local and global issues. This keynote refined a central question of this volume: What role does a liberal arts university education play in the lives of transnational and international students?

The trend of "academic mobility" (Knight, 2011, p. 223) has resulted in a variety of higher education structures across the world. Our collection examines the interactions between teachers and students in the following settings:

- The broader category of cross-border education, or "the crossing of national jurisdictional borders by teachers, students, curricula, institutions and/or course materials" (Waterval et al, 2015, p.2)
- The inclusion of students outside of the US in US university classrooms, or internationalization, "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions (primarily teaching/learning, research, service) or delivery of higher education" (Knight, 2004).
- And finally, transnational education, where "learners are located in a country different to one where the awarding institution is based" (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012, p. 627); international branch campuses (IBCs) are one of the most prominent forms of this arrangement.

Between 2000 and 2009, the number of students leaving their home countries to seek further education increased by 85 percent: some of the most recent figures estimate that 3.7 million people are enrolled as international students at universities around the world (Wildavsky, 2010). Over two hundred international branch campuses are in operation, according to the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education report in 2012 (Lawton and Katsomitros, 2012). In light of these growing numbers, we believe it is all the more important to add to the case studies of researchers like Knight (2013), as each of these institutions operates within its own context. Although our authors' situations are impacted by the shape of their local cultures and educational systems, we also hope to provide a solid base of theoretical knowledge and practical applications to readers in similar situations.

Thus, when we ask, "What role does a liberal arts university education play in the lives of transnational and international students?" our contributors use a variety of tactics and disciplinary methods. For many authors in our volume, answering this question begins with the larger structures of tertiary education: choices of curricula, academic majors, and the scope of the university as a whole. While noting that "rarely, if ever,

do academic innovations emanate from the periphery to the centre" (Altbach, 2004, p.17), the contributions to this volume form one small step towards redirecting this flow of information and provide understanding about how people adapt, adopt, and reimagine the role of a university in a region. For others, self-reflection and analysis of teaching practices form the foundation of inquiries into international and transnational classrooms. It can be easy to employ the rhetoric of difference to define our relationships with the men and women in our classrooms: they come from a different culture, they expect different behaviors from their instructors, they have different definitions of what an education should be, and we, their faculty members, know what is best for them. Our authors examine their own tendencies towards self-other binaries and represent the complicated dialogue between learners – both students as learners *and* faculty members as learners. Overall, listening to our students forms an important epistemological base for the volume's investigation into issues of international and transnational education.

We know that students choose to attend international and transnational institutions for a variety of factors, such as their comfort level with the culture and lifestyle in the host country, their prospects in the labor market, convenience, quality of educational choice in their home country, and international reputation of the institution (Li & Bray, 2007; Wilkins, Balakrishnan, and Huisman, 2012). Research also shows that they often develop more open-minded attitudes towards diversity because they interact with different ethnic and national groups (Summers & Volet, 2008). On the other hand, students attending an international or transnational institution can feel like they do not belong to the university, the disciplines represented by faculty members, and the professions the IBC is preparing them for (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006). Different dialects or expectations of English fluency can prevent students from moving forward in the curriculum or even being accepted into the university, and students' secondary school curricula may not match up with the introductory courses in the traditional "gatekeeping" subjects of writing and mathematics, in particular.

Faculty perspectives on international and transnational institutions' quality vary, particularly as many face entirely new teaching situations and student populations upon being hired to teach at such a university. Experiences at transnational university partners have led faculty members to call for more "honest and complete" communication between the home institution and the faculty member about the realities of international branch campus (IBC) teaching (Getty, 2011). Others have expressed dissatisfaction over teaching materials and student assessment, adherence

to irrelevant or non-contextualized curriculum, and a lack of respect from faculty at the home institution (Dobos, 2011). Models of Western pedagogy and learning styles may not translate into local cultures (Eaves, 2011). Moreover, faculty are also overwhelmingly concerned about quality assurance given that many live in, as a faculty interviewee in Dobos (2011) put it, "a culture of bend the rules" (p. 29). Additionally, faculty members living abroad can feel like administrators at home campus "do not really know what is going on" in the host country (Smith, 2009).

On the other hand, teaching overseas or teaching international students can be a powerful and life-changing experience, as Saudelli's (2012) study of international educators in the United Arab Emirates shows. Her interviewees' insistence on "recognition of the ease of colonizing and an embrace of blending in based on new experiences" (p. 107) is sadly underrepresented in the literature on faculty at international and transnational institutions. As editors of this volume, our experience living and working in the hybrid space of transnational education has brought a double meaning to phrase "Learning Across Borders" in our title. We have learned as much or more about ourselves – our limitations, our shortcomings, and our potential for growth; our roles as educators, women, and white Americans – in the process of opening up access to learning for others.

However, we cannot ignore the "deep inequalities that are part of the world system of higher education" (Altbach, 2004, p. 8). Our classrooms are a space where some of these inequalities surface, as Pratt (1991) explains in her concept of "contact zones," or "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (p.34). In order to help our students learn, it is all the more important that growing numbers of instructors reflect on the power dynamics in their own classrooms. How do we make safe spaces in transnational and international classrooms? Whose voices are heard, and whose voices are silenced? How does my course reflect the multifaceted identities of the students within it? What is the role of English (or world Englishes) in my teaching and my multi- and monolingual students' learning?

In this volume, these questions are addressed from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Education, English language teaching, higher education administration, indigenous studies, literature, mathematics, rhetoric and composition, and writing center studies are represented in this collection, and authors from Germany, Ghana, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia,

Singapore, Yemen, and the United States of America reflect on their experiences teaching and learning across the world.

The first section, "Theorizing Transnational Education and International Educators," takes a broad cross-cultural perspective on education. Anne Grob analyzes indigenous higher education institutions in order to redefine relationships between nations and their universities. She also discusses the efforts by Indigenous universities to create a global Indigenous education network, to share Indigenous-based research skills between Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions, and to serve as important agents in the cultural and linguistic revitalizing processes that are underway in Indigenous communities around the globe. Marcia Grant details the choices made by administrators, faculty, and students at a Ghana university to combine Western liberal arts traditions with local contexts, and argues that Ashesi University College's hybrid liberal arts curriculum, stressing ethical leadership and entrepreneurship, has created a campus culture that empowers its students and gives them agency. Sarah Hudson argues that American transnational educators may benefit from reading narrative literature before embarking on their teaching in a new culture. She suggests that the added benefit of such a program will likely reduce at least some of the cross-cultural tension and confusion that is bound to arise in such situations, making transnational education a far more enjoyable and productive experience for both faculty and students.

Next, the section "Pedagogy in Transnational and International Spaces" interrogates how instructors can innovate in curricula and teaching methods. Summer Bateiha explores Western bias in mathematics education and reports on the success of a mathematics course that emphasized critical consciousness. Her findings indicate that providing space for critical consciousness appeared to enhance her students' understanding that mathematics is more accessible to them and more relevant to their understandings about their world outside of the classroom than they believed prior to this course. Mohanalakshmi Rajakumar, Jessica Hammam, and Rumsha Shahzad collaborate on the importance of communication between peer tutors and faculty members at their university in Qatar. In addition to improving student writing, their strategy allows peer tutors to reflect on their experiences in the sessions and also gain advice or confirmation of the strategies that work from a more experienced writer. Stephanie Scott analyzes a composition course in the U.S. which used graphic novels to broaden students' understanding of other cultures. Such a course, she states, responds to students' need to belong, to connect to other cultures, and to develop a basis of responsible knowledge about the world and the people who populate it, in addition to

teaching the relevance of writing. Jeannie Waller examines the complexity of business faculty and business communication tutors' responses to the language of second language writers at an American university. Her chapter concludes that building trust with all of the business students means individualizing the way the tutors work with the students, which means that they listen more carefully for the students' language goals and stances towards language assimilation.

The final section, "Transnational and International Student Voices on Identity and Learning," considers who the students are in transnational and international classrooms, and what their motivations are for being there. Zohreh Eslami, Leslie Seawright, and Angelica Ribeiro report on the findings of their survey on attitudes towards the English language among university students in Qatar. Based on these results, they advocate for a bilingual approach in which both English and Arabic are used as a medium of instruction and competency in both languages is maintained for uses both in academic and non-academic settings. Gamil Alamrani examines educational and cultural factors contributing to breaches of academic integrity at a university in Saudi Arabia. His chapter shows that social and cultural concepts of collaboration, help, and honor common to Saudi students overlap with expected academic behaviors of honesty and ownership. Jeremy Cook considers the experiences of Saudi students who attend a two-year college in the U.S. and adjust to life in a small Oklahoma town. His chapter details how Northern Oklahoma college works to connect with this student population and help them progress towards their educational goals. Colby Seay reviews the literature on third culture kids and discusses adjustments they may make as they transition into higher education and how universities can better serve these global citizens. He concludes that, because they have grown up in many societies, third culture kids may be able to act as a cultural link between students from different backgrounds. Magdalena Rostron looks at the complicated ways in which the concept of the "cultural Other" manifests in a transnational classroom in Qatar. Her analysis reveals the impact of globalization on students' growing ability to see, identify, and define issues and processes that may have gone unnoticed without Western education and its relentlessly probing, questioning nature.

As a whole, the collection looks to the future of education in an increasingly globalized world. The transnational and international classrooms presented in this volume offer a glimpse into the complexity of identity, teaching, and learning in the 21st century. We hope that readers – those who have learned or taught abroad, those who have never crossed

the borders of their own country, and all those somewhere in between –
will find these chapters illuminating and thought-provoking.

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SECTION I:

THEORIZING TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS

CHAPTER ONE

CROSSING BORDERS TO BUILD BRIDGES:
READING INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION
IN A (NEW) TRANSNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

ANNE GROB

In the past two decades, the higher education field has become highly diversified and increasingly interconnected on a global scale. Internationalization efforts including networking activities and diverse forms of collaborations and exchanges between institutions, departments, faculty and students have not only become widespread at universities but are at the core of most university agendas. Following this internationalization strategy, universities are directly answering to labor market demands that favor graduates with an intercultural skill set enabling them to work internationally. Innovations in information and communication technology have further contributed to the rise of interconnected global networks and facilitated the emergence of new forms of education programs and methods of instruction (Henard, Diamond, & Roseveare, 2012, p. 7). Among these new forms of educational provision is transnational education. Transnational education is characterized by higher education institutions moving beyond national borders to offer their programs, and according to recent research this educational structure will continue to grow substantially over the next few years (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, pp. 1-13).[1] In addition to the ever-increasing number of students studying abroad, border-crossing higher education institutions substantially contribute to the internationalization of tertiary education. A second relatively new higher education system that has also started to increase its international connectedness is Indigenous

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[1] See also Chen, 2015, p. 634; Knight, 2007, p. 134, p. 145. According to Mercardo and Gibson (2013) the transnational education market has "doubled in size since 2000" (p.1).

higher education.[2] Developed by indigenous groups to respond to decades of ethnocentric and assimilationist education efforts by conventional universities,[3] Indigenous colleges and universities (ICUs) provide affordable and cross culturally-sensitive education opportunities to predominantly tribal populations. Controlled and operated by indigenous groups, many of these ICUs are significant players in their tribes' culture and language restoration and revitalization efforts (Robbins 2002, p. 83; AIHEC, 2006, pp. A-1-A-2).

Following a short introduction into the concepts of transnational and Indigenous higher education, this chapter seeks to answer the question on whether these two forms have anything in common. It will further offer an additional and annectant reading to the term "transnational education." By juxtaposing the new reading of "transnational" with Indigenous higher education, it will contribute a new layer of analysis by illustrating key issues like funding, accreditation, evaluation, and reputation among Indigenous postsecondary education providers. The final section of this paper will then return to the traditional reading of "transnational" education and will discuss the efforts by Indigenous universities to create a global Indigenous education network. Featuring specific examples from long-term research at two tribally-run higher education institutions in the US and Aotearoa[4] (New Zealand), the article will demonstrate how

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[2] Much of the information provided in this paper is based on the fieldwork at Salish Kootenai College in the US and at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi – *indigenous university* in Aotearoa (New Zealand). Without the support, assistance, and willingness of over ninety faculty and staff members to share their knowledge with me, this article would not have been possible - thank you. While my name appears on the first page as the author of this article, I consider all of you as co-authors of the tribal university-specific knowledge provided, and the knowledge will remain yours.

[3] While many scholars use the term "mainstream" university when referring to long-established non-Indigenous university providers in both the US and Aotearoa (New Zealand) I refrain from using this term, as the term "mainstream" contains an ingrained power divide implying the marginal/minority status of Indigenous education models. Instead, I will follow Graham Hingangaroa's advice to use the term "conventional university" to refer to non-Indigenous universities in this paper.

[4] Te Reo (the Maori language) is one of three official languages in New Zealand (English and Sign Language are the other two official languages) (Stefani, 2015, pp. 111-113). Throughout this chapter, I will use the term "Aotearoa" to refer to New Zealand, specifically when alluding to Indigenous groups in New Zealand. "Aotearoa" is the Maori term for New Zealand and can be translated into "the land of the long white cloud".

Indigenous-based research skills are shared between Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions and how research capacity with a particular Indigenous focus is increased. It will provide evidence of the heightened global interconnectedness and the growing potential of interacting on a global basis that both transnational and Indigenous higher education providers have realized is of utmost importance, and will note the crucial role of Indigenous universities as important agents in the cultural and linguistic revitalizing process that is underway in Indigenous communities around the globe.

The Concepts of Transnational Education & Indigenous Higher Education

In the field of education, the term "transnational education" is used to describe the multifaceted and complex processes by which education providers deliver their educational programs and courses to students located in a different country than where the education provider is based (Clark, 2012, p. 1).[5] While traversing national boundaries by students and scholars represents an established form of academic mobility well documented in the higher education literature, cross-national or cross-border educational mobility by higher education institutions is not yet as common but has increased remarkably since the 1990s. According to McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), this development is "at the leading edge of the most fundamental changes taking place in higher education today" (p.1). The delivery and engagement models of transnational education range widely and include international branch campuses in foreign countries, articulation and collaboration agreements between home and host institutions, online learning and distance delivery, as well as franchising, twinning and validation agreements, and credit transfers (Clark, 2012, pp. 3-4).[6] While opponents of transnational education particularly fear the commercialization of higher education and see the local public education systems at stake, proponents most notably emphasize the role of transnational education as a catalyst for developing

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[5] See also McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007, p. 1, p. 21; Chen, 2015, p. 634; Vignoli, 2004, p. 1-3; and Mercardo and Gibson, 2013, p. 1, who provide similar definitions of the term transnational education. At times, some researchers also employ the term "cross-border education" when referring to activities in which the student population is located in another country than the awarding institution (Mercardo and Gibson, 2013, p. 1; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007, p. 22).

[6] For a more detailed discussion on delivery modes please also consult Chen, 2015; Vignoli, 2004; Knight, 2007; and Mercardo and Gibson, 2013.

countries to expand educational opportunities and to stimulate economic development (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p. 1, p. 21). Additionally, Vignoli also highlights that transnational education has the potential to not only benefit the receiving party but also entails benefits for the education provider that offers its services abroad (p. 8).

Similar to transnational education providers offering a response to a demand for higher education that is not being met by the national education system of the host country (Rauhvargers, 2001, p. 2), Indigenous tertiary education as a fairly young educational format also tries to respond to the still unanswered needs of a specific target group: Indigenous communities that are situated within their particular nation states. Not unlike to the growing importance of cross-border education initiatives, ICUs are becoming increasingly significant in the tertiary education landscapes of their respective nation-states, as well as in the global postsecondary education market and are predicted to substantially grow in the coming years (Maxim Institute, 2006, p. 1). Historically, Indigenous communities around the globe have always been active in holistic, Indigenous forms of tertiary education reflecting the cultural, economic, and political needs of their respective tribal communities. However, with the introduction of formal, westernbased schooling built with a clear national assimilation and acculturation policy in mind and with the intention to "civilize" Indigenous groups, most Indigenous higher education strategies were effectively suppressed (Reyhner and Eder, 1989, p. 1). While the specific contexts and historical experiences of tribal groups in regard to educational policies in the various nation states have differed, the unifying stories of language and culture loss still resonate on a tribal and intertribal level.

Bound by a common story of experiencing colonialism, [7] the desire to respond to decades of unsuccessful and ethnocentric education efforts by conventional western-based education institutions grew stronger among many Indigenous communities in the 1960s and 70s. The wish to create Indigenous education models from and for Indigenous peoples, joined by changes in the social and political climate nationally and globally, and the drive for more Indigenous self-determination worldwide fostered the development of Indigenously-driven and tribally-run higher education initiatives (Jacob *et al*., 2013, p. 1; Cole, 2011, p. xviii). The first such

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[7] While the colonization efforts in the US and Aotearoa (New Zealand) differ in scope, Indigenous groups in both countries still face the effects of colonialism until today, and similarities regarding cultural survival and healing strategies can be found in both countries.

initiative was spearheaded by the Navajo Tribal Council on the Navajo Reservation in 1968. Chartered as Navajo Community College, and later renamed *Dine College*, this Indigenous education provider laid the groundwork for many more tribal colleges in the United States to come and also influenced the creation of higher education initiatives in other countries (Bordeaux, 1989, p. 11; Stein, 1990, p. 18). Higher education initiatives by Indigenous groups have been developed in a number of countries with Indigenous populations, and among the most successful are tribally-run colleges and universities in the US, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Australia, Canada, Scandinavia, Russia, and Latin America (Cole, 2011, p. 2).

Although it is important to stress that Indigenous communities and their education providers are characterized by unique cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical realities in the nation states they are situated in, the main goal of Indigenous higher education providers globally is the same: to increase the access of their particular Indigenous population to higher education. Through their work, many Indigenous higher education institutions around the globe are key players in their respective Indigenous communities' efforts towards culture and language revitalization, and this strong focus and commitment towards cultural and linguistic preservation and transmission makes them unique in their countries' higher education landscapes.

As this chapter will focus on and provide examples from two specific Indigenous higher education institutions in the US and Aotearoa (New Zealand) it is apt to provide a short glimpse into the Indigenous higher education landscapes of these two countries. In the United States, thirty-seven Indigenously-operated higher education institutions known as tribal colleges and universities[8] (TCUs) serve a predominantly[9] American Indian student population in geographically isolated and rural areas on or near reservations (Thornton, 2006, p. 35).[10] With Native Americans making up about two percent of the overall US population in 2013,[11] TCUs serve the smallest minority in the US and cater to a group who otherwise might not have been able to attend and graduate from a university (American Indian Higher Education Consortium [AIHEC], 2006, pp. A-1-A-2; U.S. Census

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[8] At times, they are also referred to as tribally controlled community colleges.
[9] While the majority of students attending tribal colleges are of Native American descent or ancestry, TCUs are open admission schools, and are open to any student who wishes to enroll (Collegefund, "Tribal Colleges: Educating the Spirit and Mind", 2015, para. 2)
[10] See also His Horse is Thunder, 2006, p. 3.
[11] US Census Report, 2014.

Bureau, 2014). Tribal colleges started out as two-year institutions with certificate and associate degree programs and as such responded to the initial goal of tribal colleges to provide vocational training and job preparation. The great number of TCUs remain two-year community colleges, but some have also begun to offer Bachelor and Master's degrees (His Horse is Thunder, 2006, p. 3).[12] The degrees and programs offered at Tribal Colleges are directly related to tribal community needs, with the most popular fields of study being business, health professions, education, computer/office technology and vocational/technical trades (Cunningham & Redd, 2000, p. 8; The Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2006, p. 21).

In Aotearoa (New Zealand), Māori-led education providers and universities are referred to as wānanga. Designated under the Education Act of 1989, they offer higher education based specifically on Māori values principles, and Tikanga (behavioral codes and customs). The three existing wānanga of Aotearoa (New Zealand) are all located on the northern island and are committed to preserve, create, and disseminate mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). Similar to tribal colleges in the United States whose mission is to serve their respective tribal community, wānanga are catering to develop and enhance whānau (family), hapū (subtribe), and iwi (tribe) wellbeing and prosperity (Tertiary Education Commission [TEC], 2014; Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 13). The first wānanga established in Aotearoa (New Zealand) was Te Wānanga o Raukawa founded by the three iwis[13] of *Te Āti Awa*, *Ngāti Raukawa* und *Ngāti Toa Rangatira* in 1981 ("Establishment of Te Wānanga o Raukawa," para. 1).

Serving as case studies that will provide specific examples within this article are Salish Kootenai College (SKC) in the United States and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi - *indigenous university* (TWWoA) in Aotearoa (New Zealand). Salish Kootenai College is situated on the Flathead Reservation in the northwestern part of Montana, in the US, and was chartered in 1977 to serve its tribal population that consists of three tribal groups: the *Salish*, *Pend d'Oreille,* and *Kootenai*. Considered a leader among tribal colleges in the US, it offers Certificates of Completion, Associate degrees as well as Bachelor's degrees. Unlike many other tribally-run colleges in the US, it not only attracts tribal members as students but students from a wide variety of American Indian

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[12] See also Kaya, 1998, p. 244; and O'Laughlin, 2002, p. 6.
[13] "Iwi" is the Maori term for tribe.

and Alaska Native tribes[14] and is also attended by non-Indigenous students from the vicinity (Salish Kootenai College [SKC], "Mission Statement", 2015, para. 1; Robbins, 2002, p. 57). Established to answer to the need of higher education on the reservation, it set out to increase the number of tribal members with college degrees and to reverse the dismal fifty percent drop-out rate of Salish and Kootenai tribal members in conventional universities before SKC was built in 1977 (Tyro, 2004, p. 61). *Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi*, located in the coastal town of Whakatāne, Aotearoa (New Zealand) opened in 1992 and was assigned as a wānanga in 1997. Considered a leading Indigenous education provider in Aotearoa (New Zealand) it provides opportunities to engage in community education programs, offers Certificates, Bachelor's and Master's degrees, and is currently the only wānanga offering doctoral programs in Aotearoa (New Zealand). The Indigenous university is named after Awanuiārangi, an ancestor many tribal groups claim their descent from, among them tribal groups such as *Ngāti Awa, Te Whanau-ā-Apanui, Whakatōhea, Tuhoe, Ngāti Manawa, and Ngāti Whare*. Although it has strong ties to these tribal groups and predominantly follows *Ngati Awa* cultural protocols as it is situated on *Ngati Awa* traditional tribal lands,[15] the wānanga is open to all other Māori tribal groups, to non-Māori New Zealanders, and to international students (Te Rūnanga o Ngati Awa, "Te Whare", 2015, para. 1-3).

An Additional Reading of the Term "Transnational Education" through the Lens of Indigenous Education

As alluded to at the beginning of this chapter, transnational education and Indigenous higher education do not seem to have much in common at first glance. Representing two distinct education models, they nonetheless share a number of characteristics which will be presented by featuring the various global networks and partnerships that Indigenous higher education institutions are in the process of building and expanding. Prior to focusing

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[14] Many tribal colleges primarily attract students from their own tribal communities. Blackfeet Community College in Montana, US, would be an example of a tribal college with a high percentage of Blackfeet students.

[15] Although Māori tribes are united by the same language (with regional dialects), there are cultural differences among tribes, and the cultural, linguistic, and social realities and uniqueness is fostered by the common practice to follow the cultural protocols of the particular tribal group. At *Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi – indigenous university*, *Ngati Awa* are tangata whenua (the people of the land) and during official welcoming ceremonies, *Ngati Awa* cultural protocols are followed.

on the more traditional reading of "transnational" in Indigenous higher education and the attributes they share, this section aims to add an additional layer of analysis to the term "transnational" when juxtaposed with Indigenous higher education.

According to Vignoli (2004), transnational education "implies the crossing of cultural, linguistic, legislative as well as national and often intercontinental borders" (p. 3). McBurnie & Ziguras (2007) further underscore this notion of crossing by referring to the "range of ways in which education can cross borders" (p. 22). Taking these two propositions to think beyond the original scope and meaning of transnational education, is a different, additional reading of the term "transnational" education imaginable? Do Indigenous educational institutions such as tribal colleges and wānanga necessarily have to physically cross national boundaries to fit the category of a new reading of "transnational" education or can the crossing take place on a more metaphorical level as well?

Indigenous groups are characterized by their unique legal and political status, and their "exceptional claims to sovereignty under international and domestic law" (Cole, 2011, p. xviii) have significantly contributed to the emergence of Indigenous postsecondary institutions worldwide. In the US, American Indian tribes, also referred to as tribal nations, enjoy a quasi-sovereign status: While they are not granted full sovereignty equivalent to self-governing rights of foreign nations, each tribal nation possesses and exercises its inherent right to sovereignty within the borders of the United States – including education – and the right to open tribally-run postsecondary education institutions. Often termed domestic dependent nations or nations within a nation, American Indian nations' unique political relationship with the US federal government on a government-to-government basis arises from signing treaties[16] (National Congress of American Indians [NCAI], "Tribal Nations" 2015, pp.16-17; US Department of the Interior, "Why Tribes" para.1). In Aotearoa (New Zealand), a single treaty, the Treaty of Waitangi, shaped and continues to shape the relationship between Māori tribal groups and European settlers, and, similar to treaties in the US, the Treaty of Waitangi has implications in terms of educational provisions for Māori (Stefani, 2015, p.111).

While not treated as full sovereign entities by the nation states they reside in, Indigenous groups are nonetheless considered unique political entities. By applying the terms "nation", "nation-state" and by extension "national," their legal and political standing warrants the notion to

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[16] In the period from 1778 to 1871, more than 370 individual treaties were signed with tribal nations in the US (US Department of the Interior, "Does the United States" para.1).

respectively consider Indigenous higher education institutions as educational entities that engage in a new reading of "transnational" education that I hereby propose. Without physically leaving the respective nation state they are embedded in, and positioned between tribal, state, and federal law regulations, ICUs constantly cross (quasi) national borders in a metaphorical rather than physical way. The structure of Indigenous higher education providers, including their funding, accreditation, and evaluation frameworks, attest to Indigenous postsecondary institutions' engagement in the complex process of crossing and negotiating national borders on a daily basis.

Indigenous postsecondary education facilities are distinct from conventional universities in both their structure and mission. With traditional Indigenous higher education systems destroyed to a great degree by western education initiatives over hundreds of years, a simple return to pre-contact Indigenous higher education structures was not an option for any of the tribal communities that have Indigenous colleges and universities today. Globally, tribal leaders were aware that Indigenous youth needed an education model that would respond to the still widely unmet cultural needs of their populations within higher education. Ensuring that education is relevant to their students' lives and to provide students with a cultural grounding in their tribal communities were considered important goals of the education model that was to be developed. Commitment towards cultural preservation and transmission by teaching traditional cultural values and languages formed and still forms the bedrock of Indigenous higher education (Oppelt 90). Many Indigenous universities and colleges are crucial forces in language revitalization efforts in their communities by offering language courses to students and the tribal community as is the case at Salish Kootenai College and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi – *indigenous university* (observation, July 2007; observation, October 2011). Depending on the number of fluent speakers and the wellbeing and status of the Indigenous language, ICUs also support the local Indigenous languages by teaching part of the curriculum in the Indigenous language as can be seen at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi – *indigenous university* (observation, October 2011).

In addition to the cultural and linguistic focus and commitment, tribal leaders were also mindful to create an education model that would offer a pathway for success not only in the Indigenous but also in the non-Indigenous world by offering transferable general education courses, and by establishing avenues for Indigenous students interested in furthering their education beyond the qualifications offered at Indigenous postsecondary

providers (Stein 1986, p. 32). In an effort to answer to these demands, Indigenous postsecondary institutions were created that are structurally positioned at the intersection of westernbased education models and traditional Indigenous forms of knowledge. They infuse culturally distinct tribal aspects into western academic structures by varying degrees. In the United States, Tribal Colleges are modeled after community colleges. US community colleges' mission to respond to the needs of students and the community, an open door policy, and a curriculum reflecting community educational needs and transferable general education, were pivotal reasons for Indigenous leaders in the United States to choose this education form as a model that would best correspond to the needs of tribal communities (Stein, 1988, p. 38; Oppelt, 1990, p. 32). In Aotearoa (New Zealand), Indigenous universities have been remodeled from the traditional Māori concept of "wānanga" (houses of learning) and are rooted in distinctly Māori or specific iwi (tribal) values and mātauranga (knowledge). Rather than simply alluding to a specific place of learning the term and concept relates to a holistic "mental process of learning" (Stefani, 2015, p. 113). Unlike tribal colleges in the US, wānanga are not modeled after a conventional higher education model, which seems to make the inclusion of mātauranga Māori within the wānanga curriculum less challenging. However, receiving funding and being subject to accreditation also necessitates wānanga to navigate and negotiate between Māori and non-Māori education and social structures.

The positioning of ICUs at the intersection of differing educational structures that are often based on divergent ideals and values is not free of conflicts and misunderstandings. A recent article entitled "Tribal colleges give poor return on more than $100 million a year in federal money" appearing online in *The Hechinger Report*[17] in November 2014 illuminates two important issues Indigenous higher education providers globally and tribal colleges in the US more specifically are confronted with: they have to engage with complex funding structures, are subject to evaluation and accreditation schemes that are based on non-Indigenous frameworks, and need to create an understanding of these issues among the non-Indigenous community. In her article, Sarah Butrymowicz points out that despite federal funding and grants for low-income students, low success rates of tribally-run colleges are a clear sign of their failure. While mentioning some of the reasons for this "failure", such as a lack of funding, she nonetheless points to an education researcher who believes that taxpayers spending "tens of millions on tribal colleges and universities deserve to get

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[17] The Hechinger Report is a non-profit newsroom.

more for their money" (Butrymowicz, 2014, para. 14). This quote reveals two viewpoints widespread among critics of Indigenous higher education: first, that postsecondary higher education institutions receive a lot of money, and second, that taxpayers providing the money for Indigenous universities are entitled to expect better outcomes. What the author of this article fails to provide is the socioeconomic and financial context tribal colleges operate within. Federal funding for Indigenous postsecondary education providers, and education for Indigenous groups in general, arise out of treaty obligations nation states at various times in history have entered into with tribal groups around the globe. Although some critics consider these treaties and the provisions they entail a relic from the past, they are still valid today carrying much political significance in regards to the sovereignty of tribal nations and their education systems. While TCUs are entitled to federal funding through these treaties, they still face numerous challenges. They receive far less funding than non-Indigenous community colleges. Although Butrymowicz in her article correctly points out that 100 million dollars in funding goes to tribal colleges, she neglects to mention the Gasman and Stull findings that the total annual expenditure for education by the federal government is a total of 140 billion dollars. Receiving a small fraction from the total amount spent for education, dividing the allocated tribal college funds by the number of TCUs and students enrolled, this accounts for only 3,333 dollars per student per year (Gasman & Stull, 2014, para. 2).[18] Additionally, TCUs, unlike community colleges, cannot rely on local state support due to their government-to-government relationship with the federal government which leads most states to consider educational support for TCUs a federal task and not a state responsibility. Following the same line of argumentation, and adding that TCUs are open-admission schools, many states further refuse to financially support non-Indigenous students attending tribal colleges, while being aware of the fact that TCUs receive no federal funding for about 20% of tribal colleges' non-Indigenous student body (Oppelt, 1990, p. 86; Raymond, 2004, p. 177; Hill, 1994, p. 9; Gasman & Stull, 2014, para. 5). Unlike conventional universities that at times rely heavily on student fees, tribal colleges can only count on tuition and fees on a small scale due to many Native American students' socioeconomic backgrounds

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[18] In Aotearoa (New Zealand), the three wānanga receive $158.6 million in federal funding which makes about 6% of the funding the government is investing in the New Zealand tertiary education sector (Tertiary Education Commission, "Wānanga Performance", 2015, para. 1).

(AIHEC, 2006, E-3).[19] Growing American Indian enrollment at tribal colleges yet stagnating federal funding schemes further complicate the fiscal situation of these postsecondary institutions. It is further crucial to note that TCUs need to spend much more time, effort, and money on providing incoming students with remedial education than their conventional university counterparts. Without receiving additional money for this work, TCUs nonetheless work hard to eliminate the numerous barriers that can lead Native students to drop out of college (Crazy Bull, 2014, para. 3, 5). Relying solely on quantitative measures such as graduation numbers as indicators for success of Indigenous colleges and their students does not do justice for either of them, especially considering that Indigenous students in many cases still have to overcome substantially more socioeconomic and historical barriers to enter and successfully finish their higher education journey than non-Indigenous students.[20] Evaluating tribal colleges in regard to taxpayer benefit only fails to acknowledge their unique mission and neglects to recognize the positive outcomes for Indigenous students and tribal communities not measured in western-based evaluation and accreditation frameworks (Crazy Bull, 2014, para. 12). Gasman and Stull (2014) poignantly illustrate that:

> "[m]ainstream measures of success […] are often at odds with Tribal Colleges' unique institutional missions. Mainstream discussions of institutional success often focus on enrollments numbers, 4 or 6-year graduation rates, standardized test scores, rankings, faculty research output, and so on. However, TCUs find success in Nation Building, language revitalization, personal student growth and increasing Tribal sovereignty. Who measures these contributions to society and education?" (para. 3)

What ICUs, conventional universities and transnational education providers offering their services abroad have in common is the understanding

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[19] Competitive government and foundation grants are other sources tribally controlled colleges can rely on as a funding basis. Equity grants to strengthen agricultural and natural resources and extension program funding are available thanks to the status of tribal colleges as land-grant universities. Some tribal colleges also receive additional funding from the Aid for Institutional Development program, as well as other sources like state block grant programs and funds that are directed towards specific programs (AIHEC, 2006; Boyer, 1997).

[20] Closely tied to socioeconomics, reasons for Native students to drop out include low income, high unemployment rates in tribal communities, long commutes to college due to the rural areas TCUs are located in, extended family obligations, and insufficient scholarship structures (Crazy Bull, 2014, para. 2, 7, 9; Gasman & Stull, 2014, para. 5).

that maintaining high educational standards and assuring the quality of academic provision through national or regional accreditation agencies are key for the success of tertiary education institutions and their students (Knight, 2007, p. 134). However, as was pointed out, for the most part, accreditation and evaluation frameworks and procedures of assessment are still based on western-education ideals and educational performance indicators, not recognizing or leaving out tribal colleges' and wānanga's impact on the community they closely work with and for. It is essential though to understand Indigenous postsecondary education institutions as community-focused entities that center on tribal student success and community development (Gasman & Stull, 2014, para. 7).

Creating such an understanding among accreditation agencies as well as changing the lens through which evaluations are conceptualized by developing and incorporating culture-based indicators of success is a mission Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi – *indigenous university* in Aotearoa (New Zealand) has set out to achieve by working closely with the accreditation agency, NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) and with the government commission TEC (Tertiary Education Commission) (Graham Hingangaroa Smith, personal communication, September 12, 2011). During an external site visit at TWWoA by NZQA in September 2011, the former CEO Graham Hingangaroa Smith emphasized the close connections of TWWoA to the tribal community as "an intrinsic part of the school" (personal communication, September 12, 2011). He also highlighted that the wānanga has an important responsibility to the surrounding Indigenous communities it serves by developing learning avenues in and with the communities. Referring to culture-based indicators of success, he accentuated the unparalleled success of TWWoA in family education. Applying a Māori whanau-oriented (extended-family-oriented) teaching and learning pedagogy steeped in Indigenous values and practices, it is not unusual at TWWoA to have various members of an extended family in the same classroom. Smith referenced a successful example of eight students belonging to two families who started out in the community education programs at TWWoA and together worked their way up to degree level qualifications. Unlike conventional universities who aim to empower the individual, Indigenous universities like TWWoA focus on strengthening the (tribal) community to empower the individual (Graham Hingangaroa Smith, personal communication, September 12, 2011). As this example shows, ICU's modification of the educational framework and the tailoring of learning environments and contents to Indigenous students' needs result in community and individual student success. Changing government policy