

Whakawhanaungatanga as a Māori Approach to Indigenous–Settler of Colour Relationship Building

ARAMA RATA*
FAISAL AL-ASAAD†

Abstract

Communities of colour are racialised and oppressed differentially by settler colonial states (Saranillio, 2013), yet the discourse of diversity and inclusion that dominates state interactions with communities of colour tends to conflate marginalised groups as equivalent and interchangeable to the detriment of intergroup relations. An approach to community building that recognises racial difference in general and the irreducibility of indigeneity in particular is needed if racialised communities are to create solidarities for transformative change. We engage Indigenous and settler colonial theories to address these imperatives, while noting the distinct character of these frameworks. In particular, we seek to highlight the specificity of indigeneity in settler colonial contexts, such as Aotearoa New Zealand, and to generate a model for relationship building that is not founded on settler colonial ideologies, by drawing on Indigenous concepts. Through thematic analysis of interviews with Māori community leaders, we explore Māori–tauiwi (settler) of colour (ToC) relations. The results of our qualitative analysis provide evidence for Māori–ToC relations that are consistent with whanaungatanga (good relationships characterised as family-like, based on similar experiences, and bound in conditional solidarity; see Benton, Frame, and Meredith, 2013). Furthermore, we identify the following four aspects of whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building): positioning, power sharing, dialogue and cultural practice. Thus, we suggest whakawhanaungatanga as a Māori approach to relationship building with the potential to generate Indigenous–settler of colour solidarities towards transformative change.

Keywords: Māori, Indigenous, settler colonialism, diversity, whakawhanaungatanga

* Dr Arama Rata is a senior research fellow at the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA), University of Waikato.

Email: arama.rata@waikato.ac.nz

† Faisal Al-Asaad is a postgraduate student based at the School of Social and Political Sciences, The University of Melbourne.

In August 2017, at a glitzy Auckland gala, Fletcher Building accepted a national award for diversity and inclusion. At the same time, merely 20 kilometres to the south, local Māori (Indigenous New Zealanders) at Ihumātao prepared for another night, occupying and protecting a sacred ancestral heritage site from developers – developers owned by Fletcher Building. The following year, organisers of the Auckland Pride Parade asked marching police officers not to wear uniforms: an effort to ensure LGBTQIA+ community members would feel safe, particularly trans whānau (community members) and people of colour who suffered police harassment. The Police refused. And Fletcher Building responded by pulling their sponsorship of the event. Their claim that the parade was “not in line with the [sic] Fletcher Building’s values championing diversity and inclusiveness” (Fletcher Building, 2018) brings into sharp focus the way in which diversity is performed by both state and private institutions unwilling to give anything up for the communities they claim to celebrate.

Controversy surrounding both the proposed development at Ihumātao and the withdrawal of the Police and corporate sponsorship from the Auckland Pride Parade generated antagonism and division within the communities affected. The use of diversity discourse to perform organisational and national unity while failing to challenge underlying power structures and simultaneously undermining the political movements of oppressed peoples should concern minoritised communities, including racialised communities, on whom our research is focused.

The failure of the state to create unity through diversity discourse is currently on full display, as a replica of HMS *Endeavour* tours the nation, 250 years on from Captain James Cook’s first arrival. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage and local government contributed over 20 million dollars to the event, dubbed Tuia 250. While the word *tuia* means to sew, or to bind, the event has had the opposite effect. Critics have noted the malificence of re-enacting Cook’s murderous invasion of Māori land, and several iwi (Māori groups) refused to welcome the replica to their territories. In addition, Tuia 250’s focus on New Zealand’s ‘dual heritage’ (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2019) serves to erase *taiwi* (settlers) of colour from the national narrative. Responses to Tuia 250 demonstrate that the national settler colonial narrative can no longer be justified, which we argue points

to a larger constitutional crisis, around which communities of colour are beginning to organise.

Communities of colour are racialised and oppressed differentially by settler colonial states (Saranillio, 2013), such that our political projects are “incommensurable but not incompatible” (Snelgrove, Dhamoon, & Corntassel, 2014, p. 3). It is possible for racialised communities to unite for liberation. Yet the discourse of diversity and inclusion that dominates state interactions with communities of colour tends to conflate marginalised groups as equivalent and interchangeable to the detriment of intergroup relations.

An approach to community building that recognises racial difference in general and the irreducibility of indigeneity in particular is needed if racialised communities are to create solidarities for transformative change. Indigenous and settler colonial studies are both well placed to address this imperative. While noting the distinct character of these frameworks, both are engaged to articulate key issues which otherwise remain conceptually opaque. In particular, we seek to highlight the specificity of indigeneity in settler colonial contexts, such as Aotearoa New Zealand, and to generate models for cultural actions not founded on settler colonial ideologies by drawing on Indigenous Māori concepts.

Having outlined recent controversies to provide context, in this study we review international critiques of diversity discourse as used by settler colonial states, before focusing on the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, where Treaty-based biculturalism is often framed as being in opposition to multiculturalism, and where diversity discourse inhibits Māori–tauiwi of colour (ToC) relations. Despite this challenging context, Māori and ToC can and do build relationships, and we analyse interview data to explore how Māori leaders go about this, drawing on Indigenous concepts. We identify that Māori–ToC relations were described as being consistent with *whanaungatanga*: good relationships, characterised as family-like, based on similar experiences, and bound in conditional solidarity (Benton, Frame, & Meredith, 2013). Furthermore, we identify four aspects of *whakawhanaungatanga* (relationship building): positioning, power sharing, dialogue and cultural practice. We suggest *whakawhanaungatanga* as an alternative to settler colonial narratives of

diversity and inclusion, with the potential to generate Indigenous–settler of colour solidarities towards transformative change.

In a sense, this research was itself an exercise in Māori–ToC relationship building. We recognise the importance of positioning (as the themes we extracted from the qualitative analysis listed above attest), so we provide brief positioning statements here. The first author of this paper, Arama Rata, is of Ngāruahine, Taranaki and Ngāti Maniapoto descent. The second author, Faisal Al-Asaad, was born in Iraq and migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand with his family as a child. We began working on parallel research projects: Arama’s focus was on Māori–migrant relations, and Faisal’s Muslim–Māori relations. We attempted to bring our projects together and write a joint piece. However, we soon discovered our approaches to be “incommensurable but not incompatible” (Snelgrove et al., 2014, p. 3), and the productive tension resulted in two separate manuscripts, this being the first. Forthcoming work led by Faisal will analyse interviews conducted with members of Muslim communities in Aotearoa.

Diversity discourse in settler colonial contexts

The concept of diversity has tended to attract critical scrutiny in scholarly writing in almost equal proportion to the symbolic currency it has acquired in administrative and governmental practice. In relation to race and racism, the critique of diversity has been particularly potent by engaging it as a structural or institutional problematic.

Critiques of diversity have included responses to its circulation in discourses and ideologies of nationalism and national culture (Gunew, 2004; Hage, 2012; Stratton & Ang, 1994). In this capacity, and particularly through its permutation as ‘multiculturalism’, diversity was interrogated for its purportedly descriptive value, or rather its role in subtending certain discourses: in describing what the nation *is*, what does diversity actually do in relation to what the nation is not? How is the nation constructed as pluralistic, and what racial histories, asymmetries and inequalities are erased in the process?

More recently, diversity has also been critiqued for its discursive power, specifically and explicitly in its circulation in institutional spaces (Ahmed 2007a, 2007b; Ahmed & Swan, 2006). In this capacity, and particularly as an institutional prerogative to address failures in

representation as well as redistribution, diversity is interrogated for its supposedly prescriptive value, or its presumption to enact certain changes: in prescribing what an institution *should be*, what does diversity actually do in relation to what it shouldn't be (and already is)? How is the diversity of an institution 'performed', and what structures of advantage and disadvantage remain unaltered in the process? These critical currents have helped to render and make visible operations of power that condition the thinking, talking and doing of diversity.

Race, and also gender and sexualities, have importantly been foregrounded as both the social realities and sociological tools constituting diversity discourses. At the same time, the place of and emphasis on colonialism, or more precisely colonial relations, in such discussions remains somewhat ambiguous. As is often the case, colonialism is refracted through the prism of race and racialisation, rather than addressed as a question pertaining to its own specificity – as a specific articulation of diversity. As such, the problem of emphasis is not simply one of quantity so much as quality: it is not that colonialism is ignored, but rather the emphasis is simply elsewhere, and colonialism is generalised – as 'history', for instance. Race, ethnicity, gender, etc. come to the foreground; colonialism moves to the back.

Diversity has been both discursively and analytically optimised to engage the cultural politics of identity rather than the structural dimensions of sovereignty – when in fact the colonial question is, as Steinmetz (2007) puts it, ultimately one of sovereignty. And yet, as historical sociology has often stressed, colonialism can only be weakly and insufficiently engaged as a historical monolith (see Goh, 2009; Steinmetz, 2007, 2014). Correspondingly, a diverse range of colonial analytics have been made possible. For instance, postcolonialism is one particular strand of thought that has tried in archeological fashion to unearth the colonial past in the present, and has often been the 'go to' toolkit for engaging questions of diversity and pluralism (see Goh, 2008). As in relation to other problem spaces, however, this lens has exhausted its capacity to render anything that can't be examined via other frameworks; e.g. critical race theory, critical feminism studies, queer studies, etc. On the other hand, an analytic emphasis on *settler* colonialism can illustrate two things: 1) the specificity and irreducibility of colonialism as a structure and site of analysis, and 2)

the particular, and potentially productive, tension inherent in the encounter between the diversity problematic and the colonial analytic.

Where indigeneity is concerned, both the institutional practice of diversity and its normative critique have often been entirely inattentive. Premised as it has been on frameworks of inclusion and recognition, diversity, like multiculturalism, is woefully ill-equipped to engage Indigenous sovereignty (Coulthard, 2014; Moreton-Robinson, 2015; O’Sullivan, 2017). Interestingly enough, even non-Indigenous scholarly critique of diversity has at times had very little to say about the specificity and singularity of indigeneity.¹ Putting it simply, while Indigenous peoples may have a stake in the diversity game, it is rarely played on their own terms, even when those terms are mobilised around issues of race. This is not least also due to the fact that diversity’s problems – monoculturalism, exclusion, White supremacy,² racism, etc. – are endemic to settler, not Indigenous, societies.

Diversity’s erasure of Indigenous sovereignty is part of a structural tendency exemplified by settler colonialism. As Patrick Wolfe (2013) has argued, settler discourse has historically sought “to shift Native Affairs out of the realm of international relations and reconstitute it internally as a depoliticised branch of welfare bureaucracy” (p. 258). This shift entails a process whereby sovereign collectives are liquidated and alchemically transformed into a collection of groups and individuals. One palpable expression of this transmutation is borne in the fact that even where diversity engages Indigenous peoples, it is not their indigeneity per se but their ‘ethnicity’ that is at stake.

Foregrounding colonial relations, and specifically settler colonialism, underscores the important structural issues in question. Firstly, where indigeneity and Indigenous sovereignty is concerned, diversity is not contingently but inherently and necessarily problematic – consider the place of the ideological and conceptual mainstay of diversity, ‘inclusion’, in the wider colonial dynamic of assimilation whereby entry into settler society has always entailed Indigenous peoples exiting their own. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly for our purpose, recognising the incommensurability of settler and Indigenous life-worlds may in fact help to engage the diverse ways in which diversity can be done.

Māori and diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand

Diversity discourse in Aotearoa must be understood in the context of the colonial project to eliminate and disposses Māori. While He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī (The Declaration of Independence 1835), and te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi 1840) recognised Māori independence, the Crown has used the English language treaty text to claim Māori sovereignty was ceded. In the four decades following the signing of the Treaty, the Crown's presumed sovereignty was asserted through unscrupulous land dealings, legislation, demographic swamping, colonial violence, land confiscation and forced relocation (see Pool, 2015).

By the turn of the 20th century, Māori were largely landless and considered a dying race (Pool, 2015). However, Māori presence continued to challenge the Crown's presumed sovereignty, so the campaign to eliminate the natives continued through attempts to define Māori out of existence. The Crown's assimilation agenda included policies based on ever diminishing 'blood quantum' (Kukutai, 2012), English-medium Native schooling, criminalising Māori knowledge experts, 'pepper potting' (i.e. relocating Māori from tribal homelands and scattering them amongst urban populations), and the removal of Māori children from their parents through closed adoption to Pākehā (New Zealanders of European descent) families. While rhetoric shifted from assimilation to integration, the assimilation ideal continued (Fleras & Elliot, 1992). A relatively recent manifestation of this agenda has been the Treaty settlement process, which requires iwi (tribal nations) to define themselves according to Crown criteria (Jospeh, 2012). Through this process, sovereign nations are reconfigured as trusts operating under Pākehā law.

In contemporary Aotearoa, the state's bicultural foundation is put in opposition to the multicultural demographic reality (Cormack, 2008; Smith, 2007), relegating colonialisation to a historical event as opposed to an ongoing structure. Diversity discourse positions Māori as a minority ethnic group in a multicultural society: as 'other' alongside and equivalent to settler communities of colour (Bauder, 2011). Within this framing, the differential constitutional positioning and settler racialisation experienced by Māori and tauīwi communities of colour is obfuscated. Māori needs are assessed against the competing needs of other communities, presumed to be in an

equivalent struggle for inclusion and equality (see DeSouza & Cormack, 2009; Lawrence & Dua, 2005), overlooking the political projects of Māori who, “unlike ethnic and immigrant minorities who are voluntarily looking to settle down and fit in within the existing social and political framework, Indigenous peoples constitute forcibly incorporated nations who want to ‘get out’ of imposed political arrangements that deny, exclude and oppress” (Fleras & Maaka, 2010, p. 15).

Indigenous–settler of colour relations

Solidarity between Māori and ToC presents a strong challenge to the settler colonial social order. Yet, diversity discourse restricts Indigenous–settler of colour relations. While convivial intercultural interactions are encouraged, the White/non-White binary underpinning settler colonialism, and refracted through diversity discourse, means the only direct relationship open to both Indigenous Māori and peoples of colour is one with Pākehā (the White majority; see Bauder, 2011). These multiple binaries arranged as they are with Whites at the top and communities of colour at the bottom signify oppressive/oppressed relationships (Saranillio, 2013). As Indigenous peoples and settlers of colour engage one another as distinct groups, contention for the position with which they identify – that of the oppressed – results: a conflict that ultimately only serves White supremacy.

Yet settlers of colour and Indigenous peoples exist in a power relationship with one another, albeit indirectly. Settlers of colour often legitimise the White settler state with which they see their interests aligned, undermining Indigenous claims to sovereignty (Saranillio, 2013) and allowing settlers of colour to share in the spoils of Indigenous dispossession (Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Moreton-Robinson, 2003; Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). However, “possession is jealously guarded” in settler colonial states (Moreton-Robinson, 2003, p. 27). The racialised social positioning of settlers of colour excludes them from possession. Thus, they are positioned as complicit but not culpable vis-à-vis Indigenous dispossession.

White supremacy also operates through Indigenous communities who internalise and reproduce European-conceived racial hierarchies, and jostle with minoritised racial groups for social status within a system stacked against both Indigenous people and settlers of colour. Thus Indigenous–settler of colour relations are complex, and continually shifting.

At times, we are in solidarity in our efforts to disrupt White supremacy; at other times, our claims are contradictory and we are in opposition, as White supremacy operates through us (see Saranillio, 2013).

The racialising settler colonial state creates antagonisms between minoritised, racialised groups, and yet, through diversity and multiculturalism discourse, the state detracts from the issues of White supremacy (DeSouza & Cormack, 2009) and positions itself as the answer to the ‘problem’ of racial difference. Foundational settler colonial structures render the state incapable of allowing Indigenous–settler of colour relations to flourish.

Despite this challenging context, Māori and tauwi communities of colour can and do forge relationships that embed mutual accountability, resist reproducing settler colonial domination, and make solidarity in resistance possible (see Snelgrove et al., 2014). The role Māori play in welcoming communities of colour and the appetite of new migrants to engage with tangata whenua (ACE Aotearoa, 2019) provide tangible examples of these, as do the establishment of solidarity groups such as Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, Tauwi mō Matike Mai, Inclusive Aotearoa Collective and others. Despite the relationship building that occurs at the community level between Māori and ToC, there has been little research into how this process occurs to date.

Decolonising Māori–ToC relations requires Indigenous starting points (see Sium et al., 2012). Smith (2007) highlights the need for “strategies based on [the] continuous and mutually transformative process of cross-cultural encounter” (pp. 83–84) and outlines the potential of *tikanga Māori* (Māori laws, protocols) as a living force, to stretch the national imaginary. As an alternative to state diversity discourse, we turn to the Indigenous Māori process of relationship building, whakawhanaungatanga, as a starting point for building solidarity between Māori and ToC in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Whakawhanaungatanga

Any approach to intercultural interactions in Aotearoa must acknowledge the violence of colonisation (see Smith, 2007), as well as the structural racism that shapes the experiences of all non-Pākehā peoples in Aotearoa.

Whakawhanaungatanga provides a framework for intercultural interactions that does not force people of colour to make out their silhouette against the backdrop of Pākehā culture, but rather, allows peoples of colour to define themselves in relation to and build relationships with one another.

The root word of whakawhanaungatanga is *whanaunga* (kin, relation), which, when the suffix *tanga* is added, becomes an abstract noun denoting the state or quality of being related, encompassing “kinship and the rights, responsibilities, and expected modes of behaviour that accompany the relationship” (Benton et al., 2013, p. 524). While the more traditional usage of the term is based on *whakapapa* (genealogy), modern usage is applied broadly to include “kin-like reciprocal relationships among people generally” (Benton et al., 2013, p. 524). What might distinguish *whanaungatanga* from relationships more generally is that these non-kin whanaungatanga relationships are forged through shared experiences (Mead, 2003, p. 28), and imply a “special social solidarity” (Benton et al., 2013, p. 524).

As a fundamental value and regulating principle within Māori culture (Mead, 2003), the importance of whanaungatanga cannot be overstated. Whanaungatanga (along with other tikanga principles) guides social interactions, reinforcing reciprocal obligations and behavioural expectations. However, the ideal of whanaungatanga is “difficult to achieve” as “relationships are fragile and need to be nurtured” (Mead, 2003, p. 28).

Whanaungatanga is established through the process whakawhanaungatanga. The prefix *whaka* means ‘to action’, and when added to *whanaunga* forms the verb *whakawhanaunga* (to get to know one another, or to build relationships). The suffix *tanga* nominalises the verb to form whakawhanaungatanga, which can be translated as the “process of establishing relationships, relating well to others” (Māori Dictionary, 2019).

While contemporary whakawhanaungatanga is often discussed in reference to interactions between Māori individuals and groups, in the following section we explore if and how whakawhanaungatanga might occur between Māori and ToC, despite the tendency of diversity discourse and settler colonial structures to inhibit such relations. We do this through descriptive qualitative analysis of interview data provided by Māori with experience interacting with ToC at the community level.

Method

Participants

As part of a broader study on Māori attitudes to immigration in the Auckland and Waikato regions, the first author conducted one-on-one interviews with six Māori leaders. Participants were recruited through the social networks of the research team and selected because they had experience interacting with tauwi of colour while performing Māori governance roles. The organisations they worked for included a tribal entity, local government, Māori urban authorities, and an NGO. Some participants opted to use their real names, while others opted for pseudonyms.

Materials

The interviews followed a semi-structured schedule, designed to gain information on community members' experiences of engagements with ToC, and their views on immigration. The interviews were recorded on smartphones, transcribed and coded using NVivo software.

Procedure

We obtained ethical approval from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Human Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato. Those interviewed were visited at their homes or workplaces (depending on their preference), were given information sheets and invited to ask any questions before signing consent forms. Interviews (as opposed to focus groups) were held for logistical reasons, as we had identified individuals working for different organisations at distal locations across two regions. The interviews ranged from 39 minutes and 24 seconds, to 1 hour, 23 minutes and 15 seconds, and were conducted in English, with occasional words and phrases in te reo Māori (the Māori language).

Analysis

During the interviews, the participants made reference to whakawhanaungatanga (a process for establishing relationships). While the initial focus of the research had a broader focus on attitudes to immigration and Māori–ToC relations, in order to explore the concept of whakawhanaungatanga, we created a data set by collating interview

excerpts that described the nature of the relationship between Māori and ToC, and/or prescribed ways to foster good relationships between Māori and ToC. The data were, firstly, subjected to *deductive* thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to explore whether those interviewed described whanaungatanga relationships between Māori and ToC; i.e. relationships that are family-like, based on similar experiences, and bound in conditional solidarity. Secondly, the data were subjected to *inductive* thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify the processes through which good relationships are formed. Four such aspects of whakawhanaungatanga were extracted: positioning, power sharing, dialogue and cultural practice. As Māori–ToC relationship building has received limited scholarly attention to date, we chose to present descriptive findings. The results of our analyses are discussed in the following section.

Results and discussion

Whanaungatanga (relationships)

The interviewees described whanaungatanga relations between Māori and ToC as family-like, based on shared experiences, and joined in solidarity (see Benton et al., 2013).

Family-like

In the following excerpt, interviewee Matutaera identifies his ability to interact positively with former refugees by treating them as though they are family.

“If it’s a young man, I look at him. I say, well just imagine if that was my son. How would he be treated in another country?... I’m looking at the lady who’s about seventy-something years old... How would I like my nanny to be treated if she was in a foreign country?... I find that so easy, because I treat them exactly how I treat my own nanny... that’s how simple it is.”

Rangimahora adds that sometimes relations with ToC are not just family-like, but actually based on whakapapa. In doing so, Rangimahora rejects settler colonial binaries (Native/settler, and White/non-White; see Saranillio, 2013), presenting an Indigenous understanding of relationality that moves beyond settler-colonial racialisation.

“There’s a reality with an increasing global world, and that is that our mokos (grandchildren) and our future mokos will be of all colours and all races.”

Shared (similar) experiences

Shared experiences (another aspect of whanaungatanga) are identified in Māori–ToC relations in the following quote as Matutaera describes how former refugees come to Aotearoa with an understanding of what a *tangata whenua* (an Indigenous person) is because they too have likely encountered imperialism in their country of origin.

“They already know what a tangata whenua is. And that’s the reason why all the fighting’s going on in the world. People are standing up because they are tangata whenua of a particular land. So, they’re fighting intruders or people who have come to their country to raid their country.”

Matutaera goes further, drawing parallels between the displacement experienced by former refugees and that experienced by Māori in their own lands.

“We, too, are almost like refugees in our country. We, too, are almost like aliens. We’re aliens to a foreign government that rule over us... Strangely, when we do our pepeha (tribal saying), we say, “Oh so-and-so’s my maunga (mountain) and my awa (river) is so-and-so”. But is it really my maunga? Or does the maunga belong to the Conservation Department?”

In the excerpt above, Matutaera’s use of the phrase “almost like refugees” (as opposed to “just refugees”) acknowledges the similar, yet distinct experiences of members of different communities. Despite sharing similar experiences, the incommensurability of Māori as Indigenous peoples and ToC is made clear in the following excerpt, in which Mereana points out how the Treaty-based constitutional position of Māori is often overlooked by the council she worked for.

“Racism is present all right. They look at us not as a [Treaty] partner. Just as a stake-holder.”

Mereana’s observation highlights the way in which the specificity of Māori identity as tangata whenua is reconfigured as a ethno-racial category and conflated with other minoritised ethnic groups (i.e. stakeholders that must be consulted as opposed to signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi with claims to sovereignty that are external to that of the Crown; see Lawrence & Dua, 2005). This observation was also made by Vanessa as she critiqued

the approach often taken by local government in categorising Māori with Pacific peoples, thereby eliminating Māori claims to sovereignty.

“We say no it’s Pākehā and Pacific Islanders. Not Māori and Pacific Islanders. You’re all on the other side of the Treaty partnership. You’re partners with Māori. So yes, when I say to Pākehās, you’re on the same team as Pacific Islanders, Indians, Americans, Germans, foreigners, they’re all in your team, they can’t cope very well with that. So, we really have to change the narrative that they’ve got locked in their heads through this whole Māori and Pacific Islanders thing. And they try to say to us, well Pacific Islanders have the same issues as you. And I said, well they don’t have the same constitutional rights as us. So that’s a major difference... you sort of put us in the same pile as Pacific Islanders because we look – because we’re brown.”

Vanessa’s analysis illustrates the ways in which Indigenous identification and claims to sovereignty grate against settler colonial racialisation, including diversity discourse that casts racialised communities as equivalent, interchangeable ‘others’ (Bauder, 2011). Her comments demonstrate the need for a complex understanding of how White supremacy differentially oppresses communities of colour, and how these histories of oppression must be understood as existing in “complex unity” (Saranillio, 2013, p. 282).

Conditional solidarity

While the excerpts above note the specificity of Indigenous identity in relation to settlers, in the following excerpt, Helen rejects the settler colonial Native/non-Native binary by outlining how the oppression experienced by ToC distinguishes them from Pākehā. She notes that this may place ToC in solidarity with Māori.

“I understand their reluctance to be classified as Pākehā because people of colour, if you want to use those terms, have also got political connotations of having been oppressed, whether they’re the majority or minority, by White privilege and colonisation, so you hope that they’re allies, and many are.”

The solidarity between Māori and ToC is described as conditional, however, by Rangimahora:

“It depends on context. It depends on people’s moods and what the take (issue) is on the table. There are things that will draw us together and make solidarity really evident. But there’s also things that you put on the table that can make it really clear about how very different we are as well... So, when we have a multi-ethnic day, it’s a day of celebration, there’s stalls, there’s kai (food), there’s dances, and there’s all sorts of

things. We have a debate on the foreshore, and you'll soon see what else comes out on that particular day."

Rangimahora's analysis points to the distinct political projects of Indigenous peoples and settlers of colour, which Snelgrove et al. (2014) describe as "incommensurable but not incompatible" (p. 3).

Whakawhanaungatanga (the process of establishing good relations)

The interviewees identified ways in which good relationships between Māori and ToC could be fostered. We grouped the excerpts into the following four themes: positioning, power sharing, dialogue and cultural practice.

Positioning

The practice of whakawhanaungatanga often involves sharing one's *pepeha* (tribal sayings that reference particular geographic features and ancestors). This process locates the speaker to particular lands and people and allows listeners to find points of connection. In this process, knowing how one is located in relation to the social and natural world allows connections to be made between individuals and groups.

When asked how one might 'manage interactions' with ToC, Kiri rejected the question and spoke instead about what she thought was central to whakawhanaungatanga: knowing oneself.

"Not so much managing interactions, just making sure that I can stand up and be who I am because of what's behind me."

Matutaera, too, understood that knowing and positioning oneself was key when connecting across cultural difference:

"For me, I have to know, how do I connect to myself? Unless I fully understand that... I will be hopeless to communicate with somebody else... get to know who you are, before you launch out and greet another person. Respect yourself. If I do all those things, manaakitanga (caring, hospitality, respect) to myself, to my own whānau (extended family), to my own hapū (tribe), iwi (confederation of tribes), then I'm able to practise that, or to utilise that powerful resource when I greet another people."

These comments resonate with international literature on Indigenous–settler of colour relations that identify the need for solidarities to have Indigenous starting points, to be place-based, and to begin with an

understanding of communities' own positionalities (Sium et al., 2012; Snelgrove et al., 2014).

Power sharing

Power sharing was extracted as a theme in the whakawhanaungatanga process. This theme comprised the subthemes of *manaaki* (mutual respect), *aroa* (compassion, love, charity) and *koha* (reciprocal support).

The idea of *manaaki*, or mutual respect, was raised by Kiri. She noted this as being particularly important for racialised peoples through whom Pākehā supremacy may operate. She gave this advice:

“Not to make judgement on others, and hope that they don't judge me. So again, I give respect and expect respect back. But the way I treat someone is what I expect them to treat me back. So if I'm going to be racist to someone, oh it's my own fault if they're going to be racist to me.”

Intentions are central to whakawhanaungatanga. *Aroa* is seen as an “expected dimension” of whanaungatanga (Law Commission, 2001). And if interactions are not entered into with *aroa* – with open-mindedness and willingness to share power – the interaction will be a *hara* (transgression). In the following excerpt, Matutaera describes the attitude or intention he embodies when meeting former refugees for the first time.

“Welcome, sir'. I'm talking to him in my mind, as I stare in his face, 'Welcome'. I know what you've been through. I know you have been stripped. I know you have been persecuted. Welcome. And let me, let me, for now, embrace you.”

While a translation for *aroa* given here is ‘charity’, it's important to note the reciprocal nature of support in whanaungatanga relationships, which differs sharply from the paternalism the English word charity often implies. The situational nature of this support is alluded to in Matutaera's excerpt above with the words “for now”.

Protocols in Māori ceremonial gatherings of *koha*/whakaaro (gifting) and *hākari* (feasting) demonstrate the importance of sharing or ‘breaking bread’ to build trust and demonstrate generosity in relationships. In the following excerpt, Matutaera outlines how *koha*, or reciprocal support, is part of relationship building.

“Whakawhanaunga means I have to create a relationship where I can support the person. See, there is another saying that our *kaumātua* (elder) always quotes and the saying goes something like this in English: The person who is weak or sick, let him who is healthy reach out to that

one. Because one day it might turn around the other way – you become sick and then that person will come and reach out to you. So, we talk about koha along those principles. It's exactly the same thing. You give, I receive. Tomorrow I give back to you, like that."

Dialogue

Creating space for *whakawiti kōrero* (dialogue) to occur was identified as a process for fostering good relations between Māori and ToC, as Rangimahora explains:

"So honestly just talking and listening to one another, but allowing one another space to respond... just allowing that kōrero (discussion) to flow, to come to end, and then having you're opportunity to come back."

In contemporary Māori settings, when individuals or groups encounter one another, whakawhanaungatanga is often enacted following whaikōrero (formal speechmaking). Through the whaikōrero, take (issues, grievances) are aired and the individuals or groups are brought together: A space is created in which whakawhanaungatanga can occur. Rangimahora goes on to note that airing any take was crucial to creating dialogue between people/s.

"It's like anything, when there's differences in the room, you've got to allow people to have their say and to express their feelings... Unless you allow people to talk things through then you're not going to hear their 'why'. Their 'why' behind the raru (conflict). Their 'why' behind the riri (anger). And you're not going to really get an understanding. And if you don't get an understanding you can't come to a compromise. You can't work together to form a solution."

Matutaera noted how he thinks from their perspective when attempting to understand the position of former refugees:

"Most of the people I work with are people who don't want to be in our country. They don't want our support. But because of whatever's happened to their countries or their people, they have no other options. In fact there are still people in our country that have come from other countries that are very lonely and homesick. Of course they would crave for things like their own food, their own lifestyle, their own tikanga (customs/protocols), their own culture. Like anybody else. If I was taken to another country, how do you think I would feel? I would feel homesick. I would miss my rivers, my eels, and so forth."

This type of dialogue and perspective taking is crucial to allow communities of colour to subvert the colonial lens: that is, to reach "beyond

our deeply learned ways of seeing ourselves and each other through the eyes of the settler nation-state” (Patel, 2015, para. 13).

Cultural practice

Finally, cultural practice was used to whakawhanaunga (build relationships). In the following excerpt, Helen outlines how she was able to foster good relations between Māori and ToC through sharing stories and whakataukī (proverbs).

“We’d do an exchange of whakataukī. So, you know, ‘What’s our view of a leader? Here are some proverbs. What are your proverbs?’ And then from that we’d tell each other our story. And so, from that it’s very humanising, because you can connect on the universal values.”

Helen also noted the importance of understanding and sharing our marginalised histories to connect with each other, and with these lands.

“It’s the fact that we don’t have a decolonised education system, and we do live in a world shaped by media that’s not about telling our stories. So I think the most powerful thing we can do... is actually talk about our histories... I truly believe that people... in knowing the history of this land, can get a sense of where they belong in it.”

Historicising and connecting forms of racialisation and oppression has been identified as conducive to Indigenous–settler of colour solidarities. Saranillio (2013) notes that making these connections could allow settlers of colour to “conceptualize liberation in ways that are accountable to Native aims for decolonization” (p. 282), while Bonita Lawrence suggests that “anti-racism cannot take place without addressing Indigenous decolonisation and Native peoples have to understand that colonialism was not just local; it was (and is) global” (Rutherford, 2010, p. 13).

Conclusion

Through this qualitative analysis of interview data, we explored whether and how Māori are practising whanaungatanga with ToC, against the paradigm of diversity that dominates state interactions with Māori and ToC, and despite settler colonial structural binaries that inhibit Māori–ToC relations. Māori leaders who participated in this research characterised relations with ToC as whanaungatanga, that is family-like, based on shared (similar) experiences, and bound in (conditional) solidarity. Our participants spoke about strategies they used to build good relations with ToC. We

grouped these whakawhanaungatanga strategies into four themes: positioning, power sharing, dialogue and cultural practice.

While the scope of this project was modest (including interviews from only six Māori community leaders), through our analysis we suggest that strengthening Māori–ToC solidarities requires us to subvert the settler colonial lens, deconstruct identity binaries, recognise our distinct yet interrelated experiences of settler colonial racialisation and oppression, accept the conditional nature of inter-group solidarity, and align compatible Indigenous sovereignty and anti-racism movements. Further research canvassing the Māori whanaungatanga initiatives with ToC already taking place at the community level would enhance understanding of Māori–ToC relations and solidarities further.

On a practical level, in Māori cultural contexts, creating spaces in which whakawhanaungatanga can occur often requires whaikōrero to have taken place, during which time take are aired, if not resolved. In the context of Māori–ToC relations, this could take the form of explicit acknowledgement of power relations that exist between groups, or acknowledgement of the ways in which Pākehā supremacy operates through both Māori and ToC.

As we write the conclusion to this paper, tensions at Ihumātao have escalated. Following five years of peaceful occupation, on 23 July 2019 bailiffs delivered an eviction notice and a police cordon was established. The protectors of the whenua (land) have remained steadfast. Supporters of the campaign have flocked to the site, their number swelling to an estimated 5000 at its peak (RNZ, 2019), and additional protests have also been held in Hamilton, Wellington and Dunedin. At the same time, the ‘Hands off our Tamariki’ campaign to end the removal of Māori children by the state, the ‘Kia Mau’ campaign protesting the state-sponsored re-enactment of Captain Cook’s invasion of Aotearoa, and various campaigns around water rights are gaining significant traction, leading these groups to suggest there is “a crisis for Māori rights” (Kia Mau, 2019).

Campaigners at Ihumātao have received support from international Indigenous delegations from Rarotonga, Hawai’i, West Papua, and Turtle Island (among many others), as well as from tauwiwi-led groups including Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, Tauwiwi mō Matike Mai, and

members of Muslim communities in Aotearoa, who themselves are challenging the state's inquiry into the Christchurch terror attacks due to a lack of transparency and failure to centre Christchurch victims. The strength of these movements and solidarities demonstrate widespread resistance to settler colonial racism, and point not only to a Māori rights crisis, but a constitutional crisis.

New Zealand's constitutional crisis arises due to Māori claims to sovereignty that is external to that of the Crown. The Treaty of Waitangi (the nation's founding document) guarantees Māori independence, and the right of Māori to self-determination is affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which New Zealand is a signatory. While the Crown claims that Māori sovereignty was ceded through the Treaty of Waitangi, the Waitangi Tribunal (i.e. the Crown themselves) recently found that the Māori claimant group did not cede sovereignty by signing the Treaty (Waitangi Tribunal, 2014). While the Crown continues to use its own legislative processes in the attempt to extinguish *tino rangatiratanga* (Māori independence), these attempts (including contemporary Treaty 'settlements') will continue to be challenged, as Māori sovereignty is external to that of the Crown, and can only be extinguished through *tikanga Māori* (Māori law). While *tino rangatiratanga* is self-evident to many Māori, achieving a constitutional transformation that gives full expression to the Treaty of Waitangi, such as that envisioned by Matike Mai (2016), will face considerable opposition. But the movement to do so will be strengthened through Māori-ToC solidarities.

Tauīwi of colour supporting the campaign at Ihumātao and those already working to achieve Treaty-based constitutional transformation understand that anti-racism action in a settler colonial context must extend beyond seeking equality within a White-dominated social system to include supporting Indigenous peoples in their sovereignty movements: that is, action that cannot be accommodated within the discourse of diversity and inclusion. But for transformative solidarities to be forged, an alternative to the Crown's settler colonial structures must be available to ToC (see Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009). That is to say, there must be a place for ToC in the power relations Māori imagine. Smith (2007) suggests the cultural forces that prevail beyond settler colonial structures must be subject to "perpetual critique" (p. 67). We offer the iterative process of

whakawhanaungatanga as one method to decolonise relationalities and to build and rebuild solidarities.

Notes

- 1 See, for example, a review of Sara Ahmed's work by Tracey McIntosh (2014).
- 2 Increasingly, critical race and Whiteness studies have sought to conceptually foreground White supremacy as a framework for understanding ongoing, materially and historically grounded practices of race and racism, particularly with a view to settler colonialism. See, for example, Bonds and Inwood (2016).

References

- ACE Aotearoa (2019). *Tikanga Māori helping refugee settlement*. Retrieved 21 October 2019 from <https://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz/news-and-resources/news/tikanga-m%C4%81ori-helping-refugee-settlement>
- Ahmed, S. (2007a). The language of diversity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30, 2, 235–256.
- (2007b). 'You end up doing the document rather than doing the doing': Diversity, race equality and the politics of documentation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30, 4, 590–609.
- Ahmed, S., & Swan, E. (2006). Doing diversity. *Policy Futures in Education*, 4, 2, 96–100.
- Amadahy, A., & Lawrence, B. (2009). Indigenous peoples and Black people in Canada: Settlers or allies? In A. Kempf (Ed.), *Breaching the colonial contract: Anti-colonialism in the US and Canada*. Dordrecht, Germany: Springer.
- Bauder, H. (2011). Closing the immigration–Aboriginal parallax gap. *Geoforum*, 42, 517–519.
- Benton, R., Frame, A., & Meredith, P. (2013). *Te Mātāpunenga: A compendium of references to the concepts and institutions of Māori customary law*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press.
- Bonds, A., & Inwood, J. (2016). Beyond White privilege: Geographies of White supremacy and settler colonialism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40, 6, 715–733.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Cormack, D. (2008). Once an Other, always an Other: Contemporary discursive representations of the Asian Other in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Unpublished PhD thesis). University of Waikato, Hamilton.
- Coulthard, G. (2014). *Red skin, White masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

- DeSouza, R., & Cormack, D. (2009). Returning the indigeneous to the centre: A view from Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Diversity in Health and Care*, 6, 219–221.
- Fleras, A., & Elliott, J. L. (1992). The 'Nations Within': Aboriginal–state relations in Canada, the United States and New Zealand. Toronto, Canada: Oxford University Press.
- Fleras, A., & Maaka, R. (2010). Indigeneity-grounded analysis (IGA) as policy(-making) lens: New Zealand models, Canadian realities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 1(1), Article 4.
- Fletcher Building. (2018). *FB Pride supports inclusivity*. <https://fletcherbuilding.com/news/fb-pride-supports-inclusivity/>
- Goh, J. (2008). Global fields and imperial forms: Field theory and the British and American Empires. *Sociological Theory*, 26, 3, 201–229.
- (2009). The 'new'sociology of empire and colonialism. *Sociology Compass*, 3(5), 775–788.
- Gunew, S. (2004). *Haunted nations: The colonial dimensions of multiculturalisms*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hage, G. (2012). *White nation: Fantasies of White supremacy in a multicultural society*. Sydney, Australia: Pluto Press.
- Kia Mau. (2019, Aug. 7). Multiple campaigns declare crisis for Māori rights. *Scoop*. <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1908/S00090/multiple-campaigns-declare-crisis-for-maori-rights.htm>
- Kukutai, T. (2012). Quantum Māori, Māori quantum: Representations of Māori identities in the census, 1857/8–2006. In R. McClean, B. Patterson, & D. Swain (Eds.), *Counting stories, moving ethnicities: Studies from Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 27–51). Hamilton, New Zealand: University of Waikato.
- Law Commission. (2001). *Māori custom and values in New Zealand law* (Law Commission Study Paper No. 9). Wellington, New Zealand: Author.
- Lawrence, B., & Dua, E. (2005). Decolonizing antiracism. *Social Justice*, 32, 120–143.
- Māori Dictionary. (2019). *Whakawhānaungatanga*. Retrieved 10 August 2019 from maoridictionary.co.nz.
- Matike Mai. (2016). *Report of Matike Mai Aotearoa – The independent working group on constitutional transformation*. <https://nwo.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MatikeMaiAotearoa25Jan16.pdf>
- McIntosh, T. (2014). Reflections of being 'in' institutions. *Cultural Studies Review*, 20(1), 343–7.
- Mead, H. M. (2003). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori values*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage (2019). *Mō Tuia 250: About Tuia 250*. Retrieved 21 October 2019 from <https://mch.govt.nz/tuia250/about-tuia-250>
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2003). I still call Australia home: Indigenous belonging and place in a postcolonial society. In S. Ahmed, C. Castada, A. Fortier, & M. Sheller (Eds.) *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Berg.
- (2015). *The White possessive: Property, power, and Indigenous sovereignty*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

- O'Sullivan, D. (2017). *Indigeneity: A Politics of potential: Australia, Fiji, and New Zealand*. Bristol, United Kingdom: Policy Press.
- Patel, L. (2015). *Nationalist narratives, immigration and coloniality*. <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2015/09/17/nationalist-narratives-immigration-and-coloniality/>
- Pool, I. (2015). Colonization and development in New Zealand between 1769 and 1900. In *Demographic Transformation and Socio-Economic Development, Vol. 3*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
- Radio New Zealand. (2019, July). *Ihumātao: Government ministers welcomed to protest site with powerful powhiri*. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/395326/ihumatao-government-ministers-welcomed-to-protest-site-with-powerful-powhiri>
- Rutherford, S. (2010). Colonialism and the Indigenous present: An interview with Bonita Lawrence. *Race & Class, 52*, 9–18.
- Saranillio, D. I. (2013). Why Asian settler colonialism matters: A thought piece on critiques, debates, and Indigenous difference. *Settler Colonial Studies, 3*, 280–294.
- Sium, A., Desai, C., & Ritskes, E. (2012). Towards the ‘tangible unknown’: Decolonization and the Indigenous future. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1*, I–XIII.
- Smith, J. (2007). Post-cultural hospitality: Settler–Native–migrant encounters. *ARENA Journal, 28*, 65–86.
- Snelgrove, C., Dhamoon, R. K., & Corntassel, J. (2014). Unsettling settler colonialism: The discourse and politics of settlers, and solidarity with Indigenous nations. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 3*, 1–32.
- Steinmetz, G. (2007). *The Devil's handwriting: Precoloniality and the German colonial state in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa*. University of Chicago Press, IL: Chicago.
- (2014). The sociology of empires, colonies, and postcolonialism. *Annual Review of Sociology, 40*, 77–103.
- Stratton, J., & Ang, I. (1994). Multicultural imagined communities: Cultural difference and national identity in Australia and the USA. *Continuum, 8*(2) 124–158.
- Waitangi Tribunal. (2014). *The report on Stage 1 of the Te Paparahi o Te Raki inquiry*. <https://waitangitribunal.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/WT-Part-1-Report-on-stage-1-of-the-Te-Paparahi-o-Te-Raki-inquiry.pdf>
- Wolfe, P. (2013). Recuperating binarism: A heretical introduction. *Settler Colonial Studies, 3*(3–4), 257–279.