

A Few Words about Power and Land: Settler Wronging and Indigenous Belonging

Sean Sturm

s.sturm@auckland.ac.nz

Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland
Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland

ABSTRACT. My short whaiwhakaaro (‘account’) begins to think through the settler ontocide of Indigenous belonging, taking as an example the denial of the mana whenua (‘land’ or ‘place power’) of iwi Māori (‘Māori’ or ‘Indigenous peoples’). It contrasts iwi Pākehā (“settler” peoples) and iwi Māori belonging in terms of their relation to place – and attends to the ontological nature of iwi Māori belonging-with-place as mana whenua. It then conceptualises the settler denial of the ontological nature of iwi Māori belonging in terms of Jacques Rancière’s (1999) ontological account of politics as offering ‘remedies’ for a fundamental wrong that institutes a ‘police’ majority (e.g., iwi Pākehā settlers) and a minority ‘party of no part’ (e.g., Indigenous iwi Māori) in society. The wrong divides those who can ‘speak’ – and thus fully exist – from those who cannot; nonetheless, the ‘disagreement,’ or contestation (‘tautohetohe’), that constitutes this wrong conditions all politics in society. What most remedies for this wrong aim to do is to neutralise politics, to ‘tame’ the party of no part by speaking for it or silencing it. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, three of these remedies have taken the form of the concepts of ‘monoculturalism,’ ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘ethnonationalism.’ My account proposes an alternative iwi Māori ontological politics that offers a remedy for the fundamental wrong of majoritarianism by allowing for a heterogeneity of political positions to co-exist in the light of a more-than-human cosmopolitics, for a common place (‘whenua’) that is nonetheless a place of contestation (‘whenua tautohetohe’).

Keywords: Māori; Indigeneity; Pākehā; settlers; belonging; mana whenua; whenua tautohetohe

How to cite: Sturm, S. (2024). A few words about power and land: Settler wronging and Indigenous belonging. *Knowledge Cultures*, 12(2), 95-111. <https://doi.org/10.22381/kc12220246>.

Received August 1, 2024 • Received in revised form August 12, 2024

Accepted August 12, 2024 • Available online September 1, 2024

Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua [‘the permanence of the language, prestige and land’]. (Ihaka, 1957, p. 42, after Tinirau of Wanganui)¹

Language (‘kupu’) + power (‘mana’) + land (‘whenua’) is the ontological knot that knits together te ao Māori (‘the Māori world’): it is what makes iwi Māori Indigenous, what marks their ways of being and knowing and ensures that they endure. It is not a knot that can be untangled, only puzzled at from different angles. A particularly puzzling angle – seemingly age-old but ever-revenant – is that of the contested ontological relation(s) of iwi Māori with iwi Pākehā that haunts all attempts to settle the issue of who belongs and how in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In this short whaiwhakaaro, I offer a few words about power and land. I attend in a very provisional way to the ontological nature of iwi Māori belonging-with-place, or mana whenua, and to the question of how it endures in the face of the ongoing iwi Pākehā denial of its power.

Belonging Wrongly

Belonging, in the everyday sense of the word, is, as Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) puts it, ‘about emotional attachment, about feeling “at home,” and ... feeling “safe”’ (p. 197). She argues that it ‘tends to be naturalised, and becomes articulated and politicised only when it is threatened in some way’ (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 197). Indigenous belonging too is sometimes defined in terms of an ‘emotional attachment’ (e.g., Highfield & Webber, 2021), one that becomes ‘articulated and politicised ... when it is threatened in some way,’ as it often is in the politics of Indigenous protest (e.g., Houkamau et al., 2020), legal claims (e.g., Mutu, 2019) or, most commonly, identity claims (e.g., Durie, 1997).

What such gestures of Indigenous belonging – in this case, of Māori belonging – have in common is a sense of a relation to land ... and a sense essential to Indigenous belonging that the relation to land has been wronged. For example, the often-heard phrase used to define Indigenous identity with the land, or to define it in terms of a relation with the land, is, ‘we belong to the land; the land does not belong to us’ (see Williams & Hohepa, 1996, p. 23). This sense of a relation to the land is often used to ground a position of stewardship (or what iwi Māori call ‘kaitiakitanga’ [Kawharu, 2000, p. 355]) rather than ownership of land.

But ‘settlers’ (which is what peoples who invade Indigenous land or whose people once invaded Indigenous land prefer to call themselves) often claim to belong to the land in a similar way – if they claim an identity at all, given their ‘unsettled’ position as neither metropolitan nor Indigenous (Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis, 1995). For example, Australian ecologist Brian Roberts (1985) uses the same phrase to ground his ‘land ethics’ in the responsibility of humans to recognise their symbiotic dependence on natural ecosystems and exercise ‘land care’ (p. 10), which he elsewhere calls ‘stewardship’ (Roberts, 1993).

Surely settlers and Indigenous peoples cannot both belong in the same way – or, at least, cannot belong in the same place in the same way? Both cannot be ‘right’?

As Avril Bell (2009, after Kiely et al., 2005) argues, settlers tend to make claims to belong to a place via three ‘identity markers’:

- by ‘birth’: being born in a place (i.e., they were born there)
- by ‘blood’: being descended from people who have strong roots in a place (i.e., their ancestors were from there or were born there); and
- by ‘belonging’: being attached to a place, as demonstrated through commitment and contribution to the place (i.e., they made a home there).

The first two claims to belong imply that settlers are settlers, as it were, *by nature* (i.e., settlers are born settlers); the last, that they are settlers *by nurture* (i.e., settlers are ‘made’ settlers). Bell (2009) found, at least as far as those settlers born in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Aotearoa whom she interviewed were concerned, that they regarded birth as the strongest claim to belonging; blood, less strong; and belonging, the weakest. They tended to consider ‘roots’ (Bell, 2009, p. 154), or birth in a place, i.e., biological if not cultural indigeneity,² to be essential to belonging. They did not often consider ‘routes’ (Bell, 2009, p. 155), or how their forebears came to be in a place – i.e., because of an invasion – to be essential, although they did sometimes consider how long their forebears had been there.

However, according to Bell (2009), whichever claim or claims to belonging the settlers whom she interviewed made, they felt ‘the relative lack of belonging ... , or ... weakness of their claim to place,’ relative lack or weakness, that is, compared to iwi Māori (p. 148). Unlike settlers of the late 19th and early 20th century, Bell implies, they recognised that iwi Māori belonged to the place first and that they could not claim to belong to it in the same way that iwi Māori did (rightly and thankfully, I would say). Nevertheless, they wanted ‘redemption’ (Bell, 2009, p. 158, after Jones, 1999). They wanted to be accepted by iwi Māori as still belonging rightfully (i.e., in accordance with a legitimate claim or claims) and in their own right (i.e., as a result of their own claim or claims, rather than relative to the claim or claims of others, namely of iwi Māori as Indigenous).³ As is the wont of settlers, they wanted to assert their rights in order to deny their wrongs. This move to right their wrong implies what Stephen Turner (1999, after Renan, 2018) has called settlement as *forgetting*, i.e., that settlers want – or need – to forget where they came from and that they invaded the place. In fact, it amounts to settlement as *denial* (Mannoni, 1990; see Mannoni, 2003), i.e., that settlers know very well where they came from and that they invaded the place, but, all the same, they act as if they don’t know and didn’t do it – and, I would add, deny the rights of other peoples to belong in the place rightfully and in their own way. How do settlers get it so wrong?

Wronging and Righting

Settlers get the problem of belonging wrong because they deny that it is ontological or get its ontology wrong – including those settler scholars who have ‘turned’ to

ontology and especially those who appropriate Indigenous ontologies for that ‘turn’ (Todd, 2016). Indigenous belonging is always already ontological – like all belonging, although settlers deny it and thus get belonging wrong.

First off, ‘Indigenous’ peoples exist in relation to a political wrong, namely, the invasion and expropriation of the place where they belong (often framed as ‘settlement’ by ‘settlers’). They are not Indigenous before their encounter with the invading peoples – and they remain other-than-Indigenous after the encounter because they don’t cease to belong to the place where they belong (for iwi Māori, as *tangata whenua* [‘local people’]).⁴ They also retain their history in the place where they belong, relative to which the histories of the invaders and them as ‘Indigenous’ people, together and separately, are short – and ‘broken’ (Turner, 2002) – histories. In ‘Aotearoa,’ they – the Indigenous Māori peoples – remain iwi (‘peoples’): they remain kin, in their ‘bones’ (‘iwi’), with the place that is their *whenua* (‘land’), which unbroken relation is their strength (‘iwi’).

Settlers attempt to ‘right’ the wrong of invasion *discursively*, through the institution of entitative (i.e., objectifying and essentialising) rights such as human rights (nationality, residency, sovereignty) or property rights (ownership). They tend to decide questions of whether and how Indigenous peoples ‘count’ in settler societies via the discourse of the politics of recognition (who gets to exist, i.e., identity claims), i.e., in terms of human rights, and/or the politics of redistribution (who gets what, i.e., economic claims), i.e., in terms of property rights. They often recognise Indigenous identity claims as valid to deny or reduce the need for them to accept Indigenous claims for economic redistribution (e.g., reparations) – even if that recognition takes the form of participatory parity, which it seldom does.⁵

When settlers attempt to ‘right’ the wrong of invasion discursively by ‘wording the world’ in their own image in this way, they deny the long-standing ontological relation of the Indigenous peoples to the place established by ‘worlding the world’ (Mika et al., 2020, p. 19). In the case of Aotearoa, iwi Pākehā (‘non-Māori peoples’) wording of the world is discursive and epistemological. It is about ‘scripting’ the world through contracts, legislation, surveying, nomenclature and so on. In contrast, iwi Māori ‘worlding the world’ is existential and onto-epistemological.⁶ It is about the ‘meaning’ of the world, which is seen by iwi Māori as the world speaking and thinking through things (animate and inanimate), as it does in *tikanga* (‘laws; customs’), *whakapapa* (‘genealogical connections’), *pūrākau* (‘narratives’), *whakatau(ā)kī* (‘proverbs’) and so on. The ontological wrong of iwi Pākehā, which is often treated as an ‘epistemic injustice’ (Fricker, 2007; see Shingade, 2022), a misrecognition of iwi Māori ways of thinking, amounts to an ‘ontocide,’⁷ a denial of the ways of being of iwi Māori (Warren, 2017; cf. Tallbear, 2019).

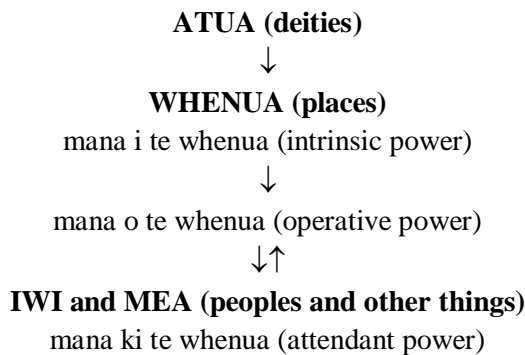
Instead, the long-standing existential and onto-epistemological relation of iwi Māori to place is best described not as a matter of the entitative rights by which iwi Pākehā de-ontologise iwi Māori but as a matter of relational ‘rights,’ i.e., a relation

of belonging. Indigenous belonging is about a relation to place, or land (Māori, ‘whenua’) (Rameka, 2018).⁸ In the case of iwi Māori, belonging *as* Māori – or, rather, belonging *as iwi Māori* – means mana whenua (Māori, ‘land’ or ‘place power’), mana being not so much what, in people, could be called material or, even, ‘spiritual authority’ (Marsden, 2003, p. 4), as a ‘non-ordinary power which comes “from beyond” [from ngā atua (‘ancestral deities’)] and flows into our being and that of the world’ (Royal, 2007, p. 43), i.e., ontological power.⁹ Mana whenua is a threefold relation:

- intrinsic power: te mana *i* te whenua, which is ‘the power *in* the place,’ i.e., the wairua and mauri endowed it by ngā atua, and thus its potential for relation, *as manifest in ...*
- operative power: te mana *o* te whenua, which is ‘the power *of* the place,’ i.e., attested by people in their whakapapa and manifest in their relations with places and other beings (‘mea’), including other peoples (‘iwi’), *which is exercised in ...*
- attendant power: te mana *ki* te whenua, which is ‘the power *toward* [or, better, ‘accessed’ through a relationship with] the place,’ thus, the importance of manaakitanga (‘care’) and kaitiakitanga (‘stewardship’) toward places and their beings, including their peoples.¹⁰

Figure 1

The threefold relation of mana whenua



As illustrated in Figure 1, intrinsic mana whenua is the mana with which land is endowed by dint of its relations with ancestral deities (it is the mana *in* the land, *i* te whenua). It represents its potential for power-ful relations with other beings. Operative mana whenua is the intrinsic mana of the land made manifest in its power-ful relations with other beings (it is the mana *of* the land, *o* te whenua). Attendant mana whenua is the mana exercised by other beings toward the land in and through their power-ful relations with it (it is other beings’ mana *toward* the

land, *ki te whenua*). Operative and attendant mana are extrinsic forms of power. (People and other beings also have intrinsic mana endowed to them by ancestral deities.)

This sense of belonging as mana whenua has been theorised in various ways. Three recent examples suggest a range of meanings of belonging. Lesley Rameka (2018) focuses on whakapapa, arguing that an important aspect of belonging for iwi Māori is the ‘reciprocal relationships’ between peoples and places expressed in ‘manaaki whenua’ (‘caring for land’) and ‘manaaki tangata’ (‘caring for people’) – because caring for the land is caring for its people and vice versa (p. 370). Similarly, Joanna Kidman (2012) focuses on tūrangawaewae (‘a place to be,’ or ‘the right to be associated with a locality’ [Mead, 2003, p. 47]), arguing that iwi Māori belonging relies on ‘connectedness with the land,’ for example, when people gather at their marae (gathering place) [and] are reminded that they are in the presence of their ancestors and together with the wairua o te whenua (spirit of the land)’ (pp. 193, 194). Likewise, Melinda Webber (2024) focuses on mana ūkaipō (‘the power of home’), defined as ‘belonging and relationship to place’ (p. 1), which she sees as ‘inextricably linked with tūrangawaewae’ and fostered through ‘connection both to their environment and to others in that environment,’ i.e., through manaaki whenua and manaaki tangata (p. 6).

But why would an Indigenous sense of belonging be about a relation to land? The answer seems obvious: because Indigenous peoples’ land was stolen by invaders, so land would be a big thing for us. But there is more to it than this political wrong. It is because our senses of belonging are about existential and onto-epistemological relations to land. They are about ways of being and knowing with place; they are about listening to ‘land as teacher’ (Dei et al., 2022, p. 117; see Simpson, 2014). Indigenous belonging is grounded in an existential and ontological wrong that sets up the relation between the invaders and the Indigenous peoples of the place in a certain way.

Being Wrong(ed)

How can this ontological wrong be understood? (From now on, I will say ‘ontological’ as shorthand for ‘existential and onto-epistemological.’) As Elba Ramirez, And Pasley and I (2024) have argued, ‘if belonging is about people’s feeling of being “at home,” or, indeed, longing to be at home ... in a particular place and with their people, it invariably becomes political – and often ontological – when different peoples claim to be ‘at home’ differently in the same place’ (pp. 9-10). It is not just a political problem, of ‘peoples belonging or otherwise to a particular *political* category, in terms of which modern Western thought has demanded that they classify themselves,’ for example, as Indigenous or Māori – or, rather, relative to the master position of the ‘non-white (hu)man’ (Ramirez et al., 2024, p. 11, emphasis given). Such categories are *more-than-political*. In fact, as Elba, And and I put it (Ramirez et al., 2024, after Wynter, 2003), ‘the installation

of the white (hu)man as the ontological master position through the category of race has enabled the North to reduce all ontological positions in the South to various versions of its shadow double, the non-white non-(hu)man' (p. 11). With respect to iwi Māori, this ontological erasure amounts to an ontocide, a denial of the humanity – of the ways of being – of iwi Māori in the name of the humanity of the Pākehā invaders of Aotearoa.

How does this ontological wronging of belonging work? Jacques Rancière's (1999) ontological account of politics is useful here – if it is, as it were, Indigenised. Rancière (1999) understands the wrong that grounds politics as a breach of equality, a 'dis-agreement,' or, in te reo Māori ('the Māori language'), he tautohetohe. He understands equality to be the equality of people as speaking beings, i.e., 'the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being' (Rancière, 1999, p. 30), in other words, the right of speaking beings – human beings, for him – to give an account of their ways of being. But he describes this equality as an *anarchic* equality. It is *anarchic* because it cannot account for and distribute the 'shares of the common' among the community – i.e., what he calls the 'parts' of the 'parties' in society – under some *arkhe* (Greek, 'ruling principle') without there being a 'fundamental wrong' (Rancière, 1999, pp. 6, 12). This fundamental wrong is a 'mis[ac]count' that generates 'a part[y] of those who have no part' and who aren't allowed to speak: they aren't counted and aren't allowed to offer any account of themselves, and, thus, don't count, in society (Rancière, 1999, pp. 6, 11).

Society thus comprises the majority party or parties, which he calls the 'police,' and a minority party, the 'party of those who have no part' in society (Rancière, 1999, p. 28). The 'police order' defines 'the allocation of ... ways of being and ways of saying' via 'distribution and legitimisation,' i.e., 'policing,' which takes the form of various kinds of discursive policy (laws, plans, systems, programmes, etc.) and is secured by the more or less tacit material threat of the police (Rancière, 1999, pp. 28-30). Politics is any 'activity antagonistic to policing,' activity that asserts that the party of those who have no part does have a part to play in society. It thus exists because of, and to 'dispute,' the fundamental wrong of the mis(ac)count, rather than to settle it through 'domination' (Rancière, 1999, pp. 9, 10). While the police order aims at consensus, politics enables dissensus, i.e., disagreement, or tautohetohe. One way to read the situation in Aotearoa is to frame the parties here as made up of an iwi Pākehā police and an iwi Māori party of no part. The Pākehā police aims for a singular ontology (a one-world world [after Law, 2015]), i.e., to 'settle things once and for all' by instituting 'one law for all' because 'we are now one people' post-settlement, as white supremacists in Aotearoa are wont to say. But the iwi Māori party of no part ensures that ontological politics (a world of many worlds) remains alive.

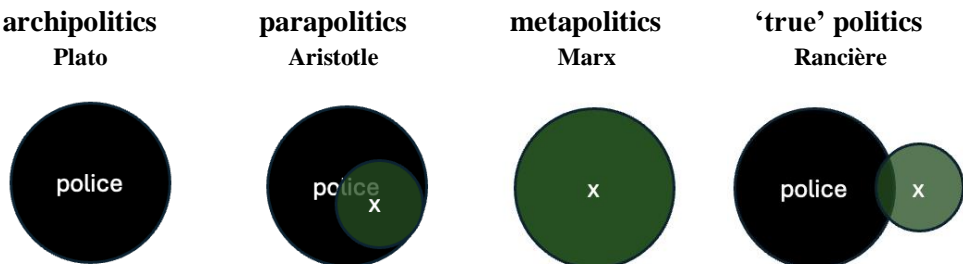
According to Rancière (1999, ch. 4), canonical political philosophers have offered a range of remedies for settling political dis-agreement, none of which gets

the relation between police and politics quite right. All three remedies see disagreement as what Chantal Mouffe (2005) calls ‘antagonism,’ which takes relations to be ‘relations between enemies’ and does not recognise the legitimacy of the other party (p. 52). The alternative is to see dis-agreement as what Mouffe (2005) calls ‘agonism,’ which sees relations as ‘relations between adversaries’ and recognises the legitimacy of the other party (p. 52). As depicted in Figure 2, the remedies are as follows:

- Plato’s ‘archipolitics’ (i.e., literally, ‘singular politics’) advocates for consensus without antagonism, i.e., with no party of no part, and thus for the homogeneity of a police state (in everyday discourse in Aotearoa, this is sometimes called ‘monoculturalism’)
- Aristotle’s ‘parapolitics’ (i.e., ‘side-by-side politics’) advocates for dissensus without antagonism by including the party of no part in the police order as just one of many parties, and thus for the (apparent) heterogeneity of what might be called a ‘polite’ state (in Aotearoa, this is often called ‘multiculturalism’)
- Marx’s ‘metapolitics’ (i.e., ‘beyond politics’) advocates for the sublimation of antagonism, such that the party of no part becomes the police and, thus, for the homogeneity of a proletarian (police) state (in Aotearoa, this has been called ‘Māori ethnonationalism’).

Figure 2

Rancière’s varieties of (non-)politics



Note. After Rancière (1999). x = ‘part[y] of no part.’

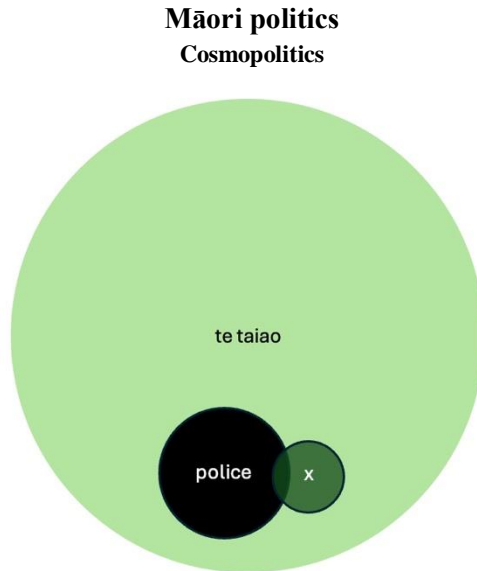
White supremacist iwi Pākehā settlers tend to advocate for the first remedy (monoculturalism), albeit couched in the discourse of Enlightened rationalism, or what might be called (after Wynter, 2003) big-H ‘Humanism’ that seeks to uphold a universalist concept of scientific reason. At the same time, they accuse iwi Māori of agitating for the third remedy (ethnonationalism), for irrational and inhuman tribalism. Liberal iwi Pākehā settlers tend to advocate for the second remedy (multiculturalism), drawing on the discourse of Enlightened cosmopolitanism, or a supposedly small-h ‘humanism’ that seeks to uphold a set of universal human

rights – except insofar as those universal human rights affirms the sovereign rights of Indigenous peoples in their lands (see United Nations, 2008, e.g., articles 25-32).

All that being said, in Rancière’s terms, all these remedies neutralise politics by ‘tam[ing]’ antagonism (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20). Iwi Māori politics does not. (I am not talking about the idealised communitarian Māori politics that some ‘philo-Māori’ settlers liked to imagine existed pre-settlement, which also tends to neutralise politics and serve settler monoculturalism by deeming Māori politics incompatible with the ‘modern’ state [see Best, 1918].) Iwi Māori politics advocates for an agonism in society that negotiates antagonism not by neutralising politics but by seeing human politics as taking place in the light of a more-than-human cosmopolitics (see Verran, 2018, after De la Cadena, 2010 and Blaser, 2016). It prorogues the state, as it were, to allow for a heterogeneity of political positions to co-exist (see Figure 3), such that iwi Māori are hoariri (‘adversaries’) in their relations with each other but hoa (‘allies’) with respect to mana whenua, as expressed not only through their manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga toward places and their beings but also through the ‘reciprocal relationships’ between peoples and places exemplified in manaaki whenua and manaaki tangata.¹¹ Thus, iwi Māori are not only conservators of te taiao (‘nature; the cosmos’) but also cosmopoliticians.

In this way, an iwi Māori politics that recognises its cosmopolitical ground offers an ontological remedy for antagonism. It allows for a common place (‘whenua’) that is nonetheless a place of contestation (‘whenua tautohetohe’¹²). One example of this iwi Māori cosmopolitics in practice is when tāngata Māori mihi (‘welcome; greet’) each other, either formally – through a pōwhiri (‘formal welcome’) on the marae (Mead, 2003, ch. 7) – or less formally – through a mihimihi (‘speech of welcome’) or pepeha (‘recital of whakapapa’). We use whakapapa to recognise mutual genealogical connections with and through other peoples and places, in other words, to find the sameness in our differences (Rewi, 2010, pp. 83-85). However, whatever our whānau (‘family’) connections – which are often, as I have noted, established through whenua connections – we also recognise a mutual cosmopolitical relationship grounded in mana whenua that establishes the kawa (‘protocols’) and underlies the tikanga of the encounter. The recognition of a mutual cosmopolitical relationship not only demonstrates how iwi Māori ground our kawa and tikanga in pūrākau that establish our whakapapa to ancestral deities and ancestors who are identified with aspects of the cosmos and its cosmogeny, including the whenua (Stewart, 2021, pp. 58-61), but also serves as the ground on which iwi Māori who belong together in the same whenua can get on together, how we can recognise differences and negotiate antagonisms amicably by talking them through. In a sense, it is a recognition that the land endures (‘toitū te whenua’) – and the power of its endurance is its power to endure through disagreement. This ontological power of the land is what iwi Pākehā remedies for settling political dis-agreement fail to account for or, in fact, deny.

Figure 3
Māori politics



Note. In this case, the ‘police’ is iwi Pākehā, and the ‘party of no part’ is iwi Māori. x = ‘part of no part.’

He Rite Tonu

This short whaiwhakaaro on the settler ontocide of Indigenous belonging stops short of attending to iwi Māori cosmopolitics, except insofar as it is expressed in the mana, i.e., the ‘non-ordinary [or ontological] power’ (Royal, 2007, p. 43), of mana whenua.¹³ What I would say is that iwi Māori cosmopolitics does not imply a singular ao Māori, which can be set against, for example, a singular ao Pākehā, which is why I have written ‘iwi Māori’ and ‘iwi Pākehā’ throughout. Te ao Māori is a world of many worlds – because different iwi Māori really do live in different worlds (see Ballara, 1998) (and in a different world from iwi Pākehā [Salmond, 2012]) – but one thing that those worlds do have in common is a sense of the power of land (‘mana whenua’) and of the ‘reciprocal relationships’ between peoples and places. It is to that turn of the enduring ontological knot of te ao Māori *kupu + mana + whenua* that these words are dedicated.

Glossary

Aotearoa	name adopted by Māori for New Zealand (Howe, 2020)
atua	ancestral deity
hākari	feast
hongī	pressing noses in greeting

iwi	people, kin; bone, strength
kaitiakitanga	stewardship
karanga	call of welcome onto the marae by women
kupu	word; language
kawa	protocol (not flexible; cf. tikanga)
mana	power, charisma
manaakitanga	care; hospitality
Māori	Indigenous New Zealander(s); normal, common (as in wai māori, ‘fresh water’)
marae	gathering place; precinct
mihi	welcome, greet
mihimihi	speech of welcome
Pākehā	New Zealand ‘settler(s),’ usually those of white European descent
papakāinga	home site
pepeha	recital of whakapapa
pōwhiri	formal welcome, including karanga, whaikōrero, waiata, hongī and hākari (Mead, 2003, ch. 7)
pūrākau	narrative
rite tonu, he	always, over and over
taiao	nature; the cosmos
tangata	person
tāngata	people
tangata whenua	local/Indigenous people; hosts
tapu	sanctity; restriction
tautohetohe	disagreement, contestation
te reo Māori	the Māori language (‘classical,’ or standardised, Māori [Biggs, 1968])
tikanga	custom (relatively flexible; cf. kawa)
tipuna	ancestor; grandparent
tūrangawaewae	belonging, a place to be (literally, a ‘place to stand’)
ūkaipō	source of sustenance (literally, ‘breast that suckled at night’); origin
waiata	singing, song
wairua	soul (as against mauri, ‘spirit,’ which is bodily and mortal)
whaikōrero	formal speechmaking
whaiwhakaaro	account; consideration
whakapapa	genealogical connections
whakataukī	proverb (not attributable)
whakatauākī	proverb (attributable)
whānau	extended family
whenua	land; placenta



Notes

1. This whakatauaākī is somewhat gnomic: *toi* has several meanings, those most relevant here being ‘origin, original; Indigene, Indigenous.’ A more literal translation might be ‘language [‘the word’] is the origin/Indigenous; *mana* is the origin/Indigenous; land is the origin/Indigenous.’ (*Toi* also means ‘art, knowledge,’ which is the everyday meaning of the word, but which, in this context, could imply ‘language is knowledge [etc.]...’) Note that the whakatauaākī is sometimes rendered ‘*Toitū* [or *Toi tū*] *te kupu, toitū te mana, toitū te whenua,*’ *toitū* meaning ‘remain intact; be sustainable’: thus, ‘language endures, *mana* endures, land endures.’

2. These terms have specific meanings as categories of biostatus, ‘native’ (occurring naturally) and ‘alien’ (introduced) being the primary categories:

- native: occurring naturally in a place *and elsewhere* but neither endemic nor having evolved there
- indigenous: occurring naturally in a place but neither endemic nor having evolved there
- endemic: occurring naturally in a place *but not elsewhere*, but not necessarily having evolved there
- autochthonous: occurring naturally in a place but not elsewhere *and* having evolved there
- alien: not indigenous but introduced, intentionally or not
- exotic: not indigenous but intentionally introduced
- invasive: not indigenous nor intentionally introduced
- adventive: alien, exotic or invasive *and not* self-sustaining
- naturalised: alien, exotic or invasive *and* self-sustaining.

Were these potentially biologicistic and essentialist categories of biostatus to be applied to the ethnic situation in Aotearoa, *iwi Māori* would be indigenous, but neither endemic nor autochthonous; *iwi Pākehā* would be alien, i.e., exotic (if they didn’t come of their own free will) or invasive (if they came of their own free will). Whether or not *iwi Pākehā* were adventive or naturalised, i.e., self-sustaining or not, would be contested, given that their belonging is sustained by ongoing colonialism and expropriation of *iwi Māori*.

3. Settlers in Aotearoa are wont to deny the Indigeneity of *iwi Māori* by claiming spuriously that *iwi Māori* are settlers, e.g.,

- that *iwi Māori* were preceded by other Indigenous people, e.g., Moriori, whose genocide and exile to Rēkohu/the Chatham Islands they perpetrated (Shand, 1911)
- that *iwi Māori* were preceded by earlier Pākehā people, e.g., Aryans (Tregear, 1885).

4. The United Nations identification (not definition) of what counts as ‘Indigenous’ is as good as any other, given that some Indigenous peoples contributed to it – while avoiding

endorsing it because it was categorically colonial (see Jackson, 2005). It takes being Indigenous to involve the following:

- self-identification as Indigenous at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member
- historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies
- a strong link to territories and natural resources
- distinct social, economic or political systems, and language, culture and beliefs
- non-dominant status in contemporary society
- a resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities. (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2006, n.p.)

5. Cf. O’Sullivan (2020) on participatory parity. For the uncoupling of redistribution and recognition, and the importance of both to participatory parity, see Fraser (2000).

6. What Karen Barad (2007) calls ‘onto-epistemology’ assumes that ontology (the ‘theory’ of being) and epistemology (the ‘theory’ of knowledge) are entangled rather than separate, i.e., practices of being and knowing, a.k.a. ‘material-discursive’ practices, are mutually implicated.

7. I have amended Warren’s ‘onticide’ to ‘ontocide,’ which is the more common spelling.

8. For entitative and relational ‘ontological styles,’ see Salmond (2012): entitative ontologies give ontological priority to entities rather than relations; relational ontologies, the opposite.

9. According to Charles Royal (2006), mana as non-ordinary power was and is present in the world in several ways:

- pre-invasion, it was ‘alive everywhere’ and seen to be manifest in people’s ‘acts of extraordinary ability’ (p. 10)
- soon-post-invasion, it was seen to be manifest in those people who had adopted Christianity’s ‘acts of compassion’ in not reacting to provocations and expressing forgiveness (p. 10)
- more recently, it has been seen to be manifest in people’s ‘acts of generosity and wisdom’ and is ascribed to ‘people [and] things ... we hold with ... respect and esteem’ (p. 12).

According to Royal (2006), whereas, pre-invasion, people’s mana tended to be seen as present by dint of their whakapapa, post-invasion, it has tended to be seen as present by dint of their actions. ‘Mana tangata’ can be said, to a certain extent, to have superseded ‘mana tipuna’ (Mead, 2003, p. 395).

10. Often, mana whenua is taken to be power *over* the land, as it is treated by Hirini Moko Mead in *Tikanga Māori* (2016, pp. 303-317). (I take power *over* the land to be mana ki te whenua.) This is a misreading of mana o te whenua, which should be read as the operative power *of* the land, as defined, for example, by Pā Henare Tate in *Towards Some Foundations of a Systematic Māori Theology* (2010):

Te mana o te whenua is the spiritual power that derives from whenua itself (te tapu i te whenua [the sanctity of the land], existing in its own right by virtue of the

creative mana o te Atua [‘God’; I would say, instead, ngā atua, ‘the ancestral deities’]). Te mana o te whenua is operative and effective in its relationship to Atua [or ngā atua], to tangata and to all creatures and organisms that live upon the whenua. (p. 105)

Tate (2010) sees the power of the land as manifest in its generation and sustenance of all things that live ‘on’ it, its response to the ‘irresponse-ability’ of human beings towards it, and its care for (‘manaakitanga’) and sharing of its mana (‘mana tuku iho’) with human beings (and, I would say, with other things) (pp. 105-106). He sees the power as made visible in the grandeur and tranquillity of ‘nature’ (divine mana) and in sites that bear the names of tīpuna (‘ancestors’) or events associated with them (human mana). In addition, the power of the land empowers people to exercise mana kawē kaupapa (the power to carry out their plans) and mana whakahaere (the power to organise things) in the places where they belong, i.e., their whenua, marae (‘gathering places’) and papakāinga (‘home sites’) (Tate, 2010, p. 108).

11. The etymology of the word tautohetohe hints at what this negotiation of antagonism might look like. Tau-tohetohe implies both the to-and-fro (tau-, ‘reciprocal’) of argumentation (tohetohe) and the settling (tau-, ‘come to rest, settle,’ literally and figuratively) for the time being (tau, ‘interval, season’) of a dis-agreement (tohetohe) that might have initially been perceived as an attack (tau, ‘attack’).

12. Traditionally, whenua tautohetohe – from whenua (‘land’) and tautohetohe (‘debate, disagreement’) – is contested or shared land, for example, land that borders on the whenua of two or more iwi, or the whenua of iwi and Pākehā, e.g., the Crown. Hirini Moko Mead (1997) describes it as a band of land marked out by an inner and outer boundary: ‘the boundary between tribal territories is not so much like a surveyed line, although a line may exist, but rather is like a band of land which might be likened to a zone of no-man’s-land. The zone has an inner boundary which ... marks the line of heightened collective political concern’ (p. 238). Whenua tautohetohe is often considered unsafe for settlement or cultivation (though resources may be gathered there), as against land settled by ahikāroa or raupatu (long occupation or conquest). Elsewhere, he suggests it could be argued that all land was or is whenua tautohetohe to be defended and disputes as to its ownership were or are to be solved by conquest or alliance (Mead, 1997, p. 240).

13. See Mika and colleagues (2022) for an excellent preliminary discussion of iwi Māori cosmopolitics.

References

- Ballara, A. (1998). *Iwi: The dynamics of Māori tribal organisation from c. 1769 to c. 1945*. Victoria University Press.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Bell, A. (2009). Dilemmas of settler belonging: Roots, routes and redemption in New Zealand national identity claims. *The Sociological Review*, 57(1), 145-162. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2008.01808.x>
- Best, E. (1918). *Social usages of the Māori*. Maoriland Worker.
- Biggs, B. G. (1968). The Māori language past and present. In E. G. Schwimmer (Ed.), *The Māori people in the nineteen-sixties* (pp. 65-84). Blackwood & Janet Paul.

- Blaser, M. (2016). Is another cosmopolitics possible? *Cultural Anthropology*, 31(4), 545-570. <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca31.4.05>
- Dei, G. J. S., Karanja, W., Erger, G., Dei, G. J. S., Karanja, W., & Erger, G. (2022). Land as indigenous epistemology. In G. J. S. Dei, W. Karanja & G. Erger (Eds.), *Elders' cultural knowledges and the question of Black/African indigeneity in education* (pp. 113-126). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84201-7_5
- De la Cadena, M. (2010). Indigenous cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual reflections beyond 'politics.' *Cultural Anthropology*, 25(2), 334-370. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1360.2010.01061.x>
- Durie, A. (1997). Te aka matua: Keeping a Māori identity. In P. Te Whāiti, M. McCarthy & A. Durie (Eds.), *Mai i rangiātea: Māori wellbeing and development* (pp. 142-162). Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Press.
- Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review*, 3, 107-120. <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii3/articles/nancy-fraser-rethinking-recognition.pdf>
- Fricker, M. (2017). Evolving concepts of epistemic injustice. In I. J. Kidd, J. Medina & G. Pohlhaus (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice* (pp. 53-60). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315212043>
- Highfield, C., & Webber, M. (2021). Mana ūkaipō: Māori student connection, belonging and engagement at school. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 56(2), 145-164. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40841-021-00226-z>
- Houkamau, C. A., Stronge, S., Osborne, D., Sibley, C. G., & Dell, K. (2020). Exploring the relationship between support for protest and psychological wellbeing for Māori. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 49(1), 38-47. https://www.psychology.org.nz/application/files/7115/9538/4266/Houkamau_et_al_38-47.pdf
- Howe, K. (2020, September 19). *Aotearoa: What's in a name?* Newsroom. <https://newsroom.co.nz/2020/09/19/aotearoa-whats-in-a-name/>
- Ihaka, K. (1957, November). Proverbial and popular sayings of the Māori: Ngā whakataukī me ngā pepeha Māori, *Te Ao Hou*, 20, 42-43. <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/TAH195711.2.22>
- Jackson, M. (2005). The face behind the law: The United Nations and the rights of Indigenous peoples. *Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence*, 8(2), 10-30. <https://www.nzlii.org/nz/journals/NZYbkNZJur/2005/14.html>
- Jones, A. (1999). The limits of cross-cultural dialogue: Pedagogy, desire and absolution in the classroom. *Educational Theory*, 49(3), 299-316. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.1999.00299.x>
- Kawharu, M. (2000). Kaitiakitanga: A Māori anthropological perspective of the Māori socio-environmental ethic of resource management. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 109(4), 349-370. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20706951>
- Kidman, J. (2012). The land remains: Māori youth and the politics of belonging. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 8(2), 189-202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/117718011200800207>
- Kiely, R., Bechhofer, F., & McCrone, D. (2005). Birth, blood and belonging: Identity claims in post-devolution Scotland. *The Sociological Review*, 53(1), 150-171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2005.00507.x>
- Law, J. (2015). What's wrong with a one-world world? *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory*, 16(1), 126-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1600910X.2015.1020066>

- Lockhart, C., Houkamau, C. A., Sibley, C. G., & Osborne, D. (2019). To be at one with the land: Māori spirituality predicts greater environmental regard. *Religions*, 10(7), 427. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10070427>
- Mannoni, O. (1990). *Prospero and Caliban: The psychology of colonisation* (P. Powesland, Trans.). University of Michigan Press.
- Mannoni, O. (2003). I know well, but all the same... (G. M. Goshgarian, Trans.). In M. A. Rothenberg, D. A. Foster & S. Zizek (Eds.), *Perversion and the social relation* (pp. 68-92). Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822384724-005>
- Marsden, M. (2003). *The woven universe: Selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden* (T. A. C. Royal, Ed.). Estate of Māori Marsden.
- Mead, S. M. (1997). Whenua tautohetohe: Contested land. In *Landmarks, bridges and visions: Aspects of Māori culture: Essays* (pp. 232-242). Victoria University Press.
- Mead, H. M. (2016). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori values* (rev. ed.). Huia.
- Mika, C., Andreotti, V., Cooper, G., Cash, A., & Silva, D. (2020). The ontological differences between wording and worlding the world. *Language, Discourse & Society*, 8(1), 17-32. <https://www.language-and-society.org/the-ontological-differences-between-wording-and-wordling-the-world>
- Mouffe, C. (2005). *On the political*. Routledge.
- Mutu, M. (2019). The treaty claims settlement process in New Zealand and its impact on Māori. *Land*, 8(10), article 152. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land8100152>
- O'Sullivan, D. (2020). Recognition and the politics of indigenous citizenship. *Politics, Groups and Identities*, 8(5), 1074-1082. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1790018>
- Rameka, L. (2018). A Māori perspective of being and belonging. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 19(4), 367-378. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949118808099>
- Ramirez, E., Sturm, S., & Pasley, A. (2024). What it means to belong in the Global South: An introduction to a special issue on 'wrestling with (not) belonging.' *Knowledge Cultures*, 12(1), 7-14. <https://doi.org/10.22381/kc12120241>
- Rancière, J. (1999). *Dis-agreement: Politics and philosophy* (J. Rose, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.
- Renan, E. (2018). What is a nation? In M. F. N. Giglioli (Ed. & Trans.), *What is a nation? And other political writings* (pp. 247-263). Columbia University Press.
- Rewi, P. (2010). *Whaikōrero: The world of Māori oratory*. Auckland University Press.
- Riley, M. (1990). *Māori sayings and proverbs*. Viking Sevenses.
- Roberts, B. (1985). Land ethics: Who needs them? *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*, 1(2), 8-12. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0814062600004493>
- Roberts, B. (1993). *Ground rules: Perspectives on land stewardship*. University of Southern Queensland Press.
- Royal, T. A. C. (2006). A modern view of mana. *Bulletin [New Zealand Psychological Society]*, 107, pp. 8-13. <https://www.psychology.org.nz/journal-archive/Bulletin-Nov06-JC-KeynoteCRoyalsmall.pdf>
- Royal, T. A. C. (2007). *The purpose of education: Perspectives arising from mātauranga Māori*. Ministry of Education. <https://tmoa.tki.org.nz/content/download/761/7205/file/ThePurposeofEducation.pdf>
- Salmond, A. (2012). Ontological quarrels: Indigeneity, exclusion and citizenship in a relational world. *Anthropological Theory*, 12(2), 115-141. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1463499612454119>

- Shand, A. (1911). *The Moriari people of the Chatham Islands: Their history and traditions*. Polynesian Society of New Zealand.
- Shingade, B. (2022). *Hermeneutical injustice in the context of settler colonialism* [Unpublished PhD thesis]. University of Auckland. <https://hdl.handle.net/2292/61599>
- Simpson, L. B. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonisation: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 3(3), 1-25. <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22170>
- Stasiulis, D., & Yuval-Davis, N. (1995). Introduction: Beyond dichotomies: Gender, race, ethnicity and class in settler societies. In D. Stasiulis & N. Yuval-Davis (Eds.), *Unsettling settler societies: Articulations of gender, race, ethnicity and class* (pp. 1-38). Sage.
- Stewart, G. (2020). *Maori philosophy: Indigenous thinking from Aotearoa*. Bloomsbury.
- TallBear, K. (2019). Caretaking relations, not American dreaming. *Kalfou*, 6(1), 24-41. <https://doi.org/10.15367/kf.v6i1.228>
- Tate, H. A. (2010). *Towards some foundations of a systematic Māori theology* [Unpublished PhD thesis]. Melbourne College of Divinity. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.13057/1679>
- Todd, Z. (2016). An Indigenous feminist's take on the ontological turn: 'Ontology' is just another word for colonialism. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29(1), 4-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111%2Fjohs.12124>
- Tregear, E. (1885). *The Aryan Māori*. G. Didsbury.
- Turner, S. (1999). Settlement as forgetting. In K. Neumann, N. Thomas & H. Ericksen (Eds.), *Quicksands: Foundational histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 20-38). UNSW Press.
- Turner, S. (2002). Being colonial/colonial being. *Journal of New Zealand Literature (JNZL)*, 20, 39-66. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20112341>
- United Nations. (2008). *United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples*. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. (2006). *Who are indigenous peoples?* www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf
- Verran, H. (2018). The politics of working cosmologies together while keeping them separate. In M. de la Cadena & M. Blaser (Eds.), *A world of many worlds* (pp. 112-130). Duke University Press.
- Warren, C. (2017). Onticide: Afro-pessimism, gay nigger #1 and surplus violence. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 23(3), 391-418. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-3818465>
- Webber, M. (2024). Teaching the mana model: A Māori framework for reconceptualising student success and thriving. *Set*, 2024(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.18296/set.1545>
- Williams, D., & Hohepa, P. (1996). *The taking into account of te ao Māori in relation to reform of the law of succession*. New Zealand Law Commission.
- Wynter, S. (2003). Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation: An argument. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 3(3), 257-337. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015>
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40(3), 197-214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220600769331>
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2011). *The politics of belonging: Intersectional contestations*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446251041>