

Love and Politics: Rethinking Biculturalism and Multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand*

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Abstract

Biculturalism and multiculturalism are often conceptualised as antagonistic, incompatible and competing frameworks in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Consequently, a formal policy of multiculturalism remains absent, while the state operates an official policy of biculturalism predicated on the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between Indigenous Māori and the British Crown. This chapter makes a case for the simultaneous pursuit and co-existence of biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand. I begin by tracing some debates that frame contesting bicultural and multicultural positions. I then offer a philosophical response to the ethical-political dilemmas posed by such debates, reflecting on the complexities of my own position as an Aotearoa-New Zealand-born Chinese-Thai within a bicultural national framework. I do not outline a prescription for simply harmonious bicultural and multicultural relations. Instead my response entails a leap of faith from the familiar to the discomforts of a more partial, contested, and uncertain territory that lies beyond the horizon.

Introduction

Aotearoa-New Zealand is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic. According to the latest census, those of Pasifika and Asian ethnic backgrounds now comprise 7.4 per cent and 11.8 per cent, respectively, of the country's overall population (up from 6.9 per cent and 9.2 per cent in

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2006) (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). This trend is set to continue with the Pasifika and Asian populations expected to comprise 10 per cent and 16 per cent of the country's overall population by 2026 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Meanwhile, Aotearoa-New Zealand's Indigenous Māori population remains relatively stable at 14.9 per cent of the total population in the 2013 census, up from 14.6 per cent in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). It is projected that those of Asian ethnicities will outnumber Māori by the mid-2020s (Tan, 2014). But despite the rapidity and extent of these demographic changes, and unlike other British settler societies, Aotearoa-New Zealand has yet to formally adopt multiculturalism as public policy. Instead, the state operates a policy of biculturalism, predicated on the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between Indigenous Māori and the British Crown. A clearly discernible tension is now at work between the state's existing commitments to biculturalism and a growing need to also make multicultural policy provisions, not least in education.

Amidst prevailing tensions in relation to biculturalism and multiculturalism, the state has continued to assert a pragmatic, uncritical discourse of inclusion for all as the precursor to a just democratic society. If there is a lesson to be learned from ample historical injustices towards Māori it is that the articulation of a simple politics of inclusion is in fact what perpetuates disadvantage for the minority (see, for example, Simon and Smith (2001) for a discussion on the inclusion of Māori – on the basis of Pākehā mores – in early/Native schooling in Aotearoa-New Zealand). The issue for democratic politics is that any attempts to assert the arrival of an all-inclusive consensus simply masks inevitable exclusions and the relations of power at work in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

With these difficulties and tensions in mind, my central focus within the constraints of this chapter is to reinvigorate discussions about the ways in which local biculturalism *and*

multiculturalism could be approached moving forward. My aim is not to outline a prescription for simply harmonious bicultural and multicultural relations. Instead, I offer a *philosophical* response to the ethical-political dilemmas posed by *sociological* issues of biculturalism and multiculturalism.

The complexities of my own position are the impetus behind, and inform, my theoretical reflections. I am a New Zealander of Chinese and Thai ethnicities. Before I was born, some members of my family perished at the hands of a genocidal regime overseas which advocated an ideology of fear and hatred of the (ethnic) other. The fates of other family members remain unknown to this day; I have never seen some of their faces. Those who survived fortunately resettled and began new lives as refugees in Aotearoa-New Zealand, where I was later born. And as a New Zealander, I face an ethical-political dilemma (one of many in life more broadly): I desire to see to my responsibilities to biculturalism, the Treaty, and Māori and Pākehā without whose aroha (love) and manaakitanga (hospitality) my family and I would be homeless and perhaps have ceased to be at all. At the same time, I also desire to keep space open for the other – the other human being(s) (those other than Māori and Pākehā), and the other things, identities and concepts (such as multiculturalism) we as human beings talk into being and becoming.

But beyond the preceding paragraph, I do not make any further explicit links between my own position and the theoretical reflections contained within this chapter. I question any stringent separation between oppositions: between love and politics; between monoculturalism, biculturalism and multiculturalism; between good and bad/evil; and between the private life of a writer-thinker and the public work(s) to which they affix their signature (Derrida, 2002). Instead, I suggest and will demonstrate that oppositions are always-already (at all times *and*

prior to our immediate consciousness) *inseparable*, always-already *coexisting* in tension. I also wish to maintain a degree of mystery and elusiveness throughout this chapter to reflect the becomingness – and the certainty of uncertainty – of life itself, and to keep open the unconditional coming of the other, and other interpretations and readings of my work. I, too, am an other to the others and, as Emmanuel Levinas (1987) reminds us, “the relationship with the other is a relationship with a Mystery” (p. 87).

Below I begin by briefly tracing the historical, social and political conditions and discourses that frame contesting bicultural and multicultural positions in Aotearoa-New Zealand. What follows in the latter half of this chapter entails a migration from the familiar homeland to resettle in a more partial, contested and uncertain territory that lies beyond the horizon – a leap of faith knowingly not knowing what is to come.

The Traces of Monoculturalism, Biculturalism and Multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand

“New Zealand is demographically multicultural, formally bicultural, and with few exceptions, institutionally monocultural” (Liu, 2007).

While a wealth of ethnic groups now reside in Aotearoa-New Zealand, the country’s context is shaped first and foremost by the on-going relationship between its “founding culture[s]”: Māori and Pākehā (Walker, 2004, p. 390). Māori-Pākehā relations were formalised most notably through the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi by the British Crown and rangatira (tribal leaders) in 1840. However, there are two texts of the Treaty – one in Māori and one in English – that are not exact translations of one another.

Debates over the Treaty's differing texts largely concern the first two articles. In Article One of the Māori version of the Treaty, Māori gave *te kāwanatanga* (a transliteration of 'governance') of their lands to the British Queen. In the English version, Māori ceded *sovereignty* over their territories to the Queen. In Article Two of the Māori version, Māori are guaranteed *te tino rangatiratanga*, unqualified exercise of their *chieftainship*, over their lands, villages and taonga katoa (all treasures – tangible and intangible). In the English version of Article Two, Māori are confirmed and guaranteed "full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties" (in Orange, 2004, p. 280). Although the Treaty seemingly intended to protect the rights of Māori and Pākehā alike, its differing texts in Māori and English have proved problematic for Māori-Pākehā relations and the governance of Aotearoa-New Zealand (to this day) (see Mutu (2010) and Orange (2004) for more comprehensive discussions of the Treaty).

Discussing Aotearoa-New Zealand's colonial history in any depth is beyond the confines of this chapter. Suffice it to say, the Treaty was officially ignored for over 130 years. The Treaty was side-lined by Pākehā politicians and settlers in their pursuit for land, legitimised largely by colonial laws which enabled them to obtain almost all Māori-owned land by the end of the nineteenth century (May, 2010). In 1877, Chief Justice James Prendergast's Supreme Court ruling declared the Treaty "a simple nullity" signed by Māori chiefs who were "semi-primitive barbarians" with no legal competence (in Williams, 2011, p. 2). This sentiment reflected widely held opinions amongst Pākehā at the time.

While other British settler societies adopted policies of multiculturalism in the 1970s, Aotearoa-New Zealand assumed a bicultural framework as a result of growing Māori

activism (subsequently a Māori rights movement) at the time, which brought colonial injustices to the fore, and sought legal and constitutional redress for Māori vis-à-vis the Treaty. But what biculturalism constitutes in Aotearoa-New Zealand continues to be debated. At its simplest, biculturalism refers to the valuing, inclusion and celebration of two cultures (McMurchy-Pilkington, 2001). Biculturalism foregrounds the recognition of Aotearoa-New Zealand's two foundational cultures, presupposed as a result of the signing of the Treaty. Colin James (2004) suggests that biculturalism must not merely connote the "tolerance of and support for" Māori culture, but involves power sharing between Māori and the Crown – what some refer to as "bi-nationalism" (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999, p. 240). Others argue that biculturalism is the unique political foundation upon which citizenship rights and responsibilities can be debated in Aotearoa-New Zealand (Culpitt, 1994). To this end, biculturalism becomes relevant to Māori, Pākehā and New Zealanders of other diverse ethnicities alike.

Aotearoa-New Zealand is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic amidst on-going struggles with biculturalism. Two key factors contributed to the country's changing demographics. The first is the labour migration of Pasifika peoples to Aotearoa-New Zealand, most noticeably during the 1960s and 1970s. Pasifika migrants were regarded as a source of inexpensive, ready labour, most of whom initially found employment in the manufacturing and service industries (May, 2010). The second is the passing of the 1987 Immigration Act, a component of the fourth Labour government's social and economic reform agenda in the 1980s. This legislation ended kinship migration from the United Kingdom and Ireland, and removed national and ethnic origin preferences upon which immigration was permitted, in favour of enticing skilled migrants required to drive economic growth (Smits, 2010). The liberalisation of immigration policy led to the influx of migrants from Asian nations, and substantially

transformed the ethnic composition of Aotearoa-New Zealand and its largest city, Auckland, in particular. Despite its changing demographics, Aotearoa-New Zealand has yet to formally adopt multiculturalism as public policy.

Like biculturalism, what local multiculturalism might constitute remains problematic. The various conceptualisations of multiculturalism feature on a continuum ranging from ‘soft’ to ‘hard’ variants. A soft variant of multiculturalism concedes recognition of, and respect for, ethnic, cultural and/or linguistic differences, but only to the extent that celebration of diversity does not undermine deep-seated adherence to liberal egalitarianism and universalism (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999; May and Sleeter, 2010). Although Aotearoa-New Zealand has never adopted multiculturalism as public policy, the country exhibits soft multiculturalism via, for example, annual Lantern and Pasifika Festivals. These festivals celebrate ‘ethnic’ differences through cuisine, crafts, music and performances but within a milieu of the discourse that ‘we are all *just* New Zealanders’ first and foremost. On the other hand, a hard variant of multiculturalism promotes certain expressions of difference, even though promoting such differences may suppress other equally valid cultures or rights (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999). Malaysia’s “propagation of Islamic values within state institutions and schools” (Noor and Leong, 2013, p. 719) is an example of hard multiculturalism. A hard variant, then, is arguably more reflective of monoculturalism than multiculturalism. Although multiculturalism is itself contentious and difficult, its adoption as public policy in Aotearoa-New Zealand is further complicated by prior, on-going bicultural responsibilities to Māori.

Contesting Discourses

Biculturalism and multiculturalism are often conceptualised as antagonistic, incompatible and competing frameworks in social and academic discourse in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Some –

Māori in particular – are deeply suspicious of multiculturalism, suggesting that the adoption of multiculturalism would betray prior bicultural responsibilities to Māori. A multicultural framework would reduce the status of Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land) to just another group amongst a plurality of ethnic minorities, induce competition among minority groups for already finite resources and thereby perpetuate the status quo of Pākehā hegemony (Kukutai, 2008; O’Sullivan, 2007; Smith, 1990). Māori academic Ranginui Walker (1995) suggested that the liberalisation of immigration policy and multiculturalism are “a covert strategy to suppress the counter-hegemonic struggle of Maori by swamping them with outsiders who are not obligated to them by the Treaty” (p. 292). Walker’s repudiation of multiculturalism shifted somewhat a decade later when he declared that “Māori remind Pākehā that becoming bicultural enough to be at ease in the other founding culture of the nation is the first step towards becoming multicultural.” (2004, p. 390). Others argue that we must address existing bicultural commitments to Māori before we can discuss the prospects of multiculturalism (Sullivan, 1994).

Pākehā perceptions are similarly ambivalent. Some Pākehā espouse a preference for multiculturalism over biculturalism but only because of – and to escape – anxieties that excessive bicultural demands could disrupt the existing normativity and domination of Pākehā norms, values and privilege (Fleras, 2009; May, 2004; Santamaría and Hoskins, 2015). From another perspective, Richard Prebble, a former Minister of Pacific Affairs, argues that the adoption of biculturalism over multiculturalism could constitute reverse racism in simply replacing one form of discrimination with another (in Bartley and Spoonley, 2005). Other Pākehā suggest that the formal recognition of cultural differences through bicultural and/or multicultural frameworks detracts from the sense of a shared national identity that binds a nation together. Instead, the discourse of inclusion – the liberal

egalitarian ideal of ‘one people, one law’ – is the way forward in building “a modern, prosperous, democratic nation” (Brash, 2004). Responding to Brash, Gareth Morgan (2015) claims that the Treaty – and by implication, biculturalism – “relates to all of us and is always going to be part of our lives”.

The perspectives of New Zealanders other than Māori and Pākehā are as diverse. A common argument against biculturalism and the Treaty is that they are too exclusive and ostensibly exclude non-European immigrant groups (Ip and Pang, 2005; Thakur, 1995; Young, 2004). Conversely, the Constitutional Advisory Panel (2013) identified support from New Zealanders of other diverse ethnicities for a “Treaty-based multicultural future” in which the Treaty “is seen as being more about relationships, not just between Māori and the Crown, but also between Māori and all other New Zealand citizens” (p. 32). Saburo Omura (2014) similarly argues that biculturalism “is capable of hosting the scope of multiculturalism within the Treaty framework” (p. 25). Others suggest that the Treaty can serve as the foundation “for an immigration policy agreement that allows for multiculturalism” (Nakhid and Devere, 2015, p. 79).

The contested nature of biculturalism and multiculturalism is perhaps most evident in Aotearoa-New Zealand education policy. For instance, the centrality of biculturalism is unequivocal in the *New Zealand Curriculum’s* (NZC) “Treaty of Waitangi” principle (the eight principles of the NZC are assertions about what is deemed essential and desirable in school curricula, and comprise: high expectations, Treaty of Waitangi, cultural diversity, inclusion, learning to learn, community engagement, coherence, and future focus) (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9). The NZC’s Treaty of Waitangi principle states that the “curriculum

acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the *bicultural* foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9) (emphasis added).

The curriculum principles do not make specific reference to ‘multiculturalism’ per se, despite the extent and rapidity of Aotearoa-New Zealand’s changing demographics. Multicultural discourse is instead articulated through the principle of “cultural diversity” which states that, “[t]he curriculum reflects New Zealand’s cultural diversity and values the history and traditions of all its people” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9). Yet this principle also contains bicultural and monocultural overtones with its reference to “all [Aotearoa-New Zealand’s] people”, which includes Māori, Pākehā and New Zealanders of other diverse ethnicities and cultures alike. The enunciation of multicultural discourse via the principle of “cultural diversity” rather than any explicit mention of ‘multiculturalism’ – and the inclusion of Māori and Pākehā within this principle – could be read as an attempt to avoid pitting multiculturalism against the state’s official policy of biculturalism.

A Politics of Inclusion

In the midst of prevailing tensions in relation to biculturalism and multiculturalism, the state has asserted a pragmatic, uncritical discourse of inclusion for all as the precursor to a just society. The recognition of biculturalism and multiculturalism in policy (in their current forms) are developed in ways that ensure that the unity and legitimacy of the liberal nation-state remains unchallenged. The state determines the shape and extent of the recognition of difference to ensure its overarching authority is maintained. Māori differences, for example, are recognised in education policy but are contained *within* the inclusive national identity of ‘New Zealander’. To highlight one example, bicultural and multicultural discourses in the *National Education Goals (NEGs)* are articulated against a discursive backdrop of inclusion

(the *NEGs* set desirable achievements and policy objectives for the Aotearoa-New Zealand education system). *NEG* 10 stipulates: “Respect for the diverse ethnic and cultural heritage of *New Zealand people*, with acknowledgement of the unique place of Māori” (Ministry of Education, 2015). Further, at the outset, *NEGs* 1, 2 and 3, respectively, refer to the state’s desires to develop, “the values needed to become full members of *New Zealand’s society*”, “equality of educational opportunity for *all New Zealanders*” and “the knowledge, understanding and skills needed by *New Zealanders*” (Ministry of Education, 2015) (emphases added). The acceptance of cultural differences is afforded in the *NEGs* but only against a deeper overt commitment to sameness, to the dominant discourse of ‘we are all *just New Zealanders*’ first and foremost.

Through such policy pronouncements, Māori, for example, are not recognised on their own terms but rather in ways the state can comfortably contain. In this way, ‘recognition’ performs both inclusions *and exclusions* of Māori culture and political aspirations. The dominant discourse of inclusion contained in the *NEGs* masks the partial exclusion of Māori and other ethnic minorities, despite appearing to include them through “respect for” their diversity and their “unique place” *within* Aotearoa-New Zealand society (Ministry of Education, 2015). State policies unevenly represent the influences of various groups and sectors in society. In the Aotearoa-New Zealand context, the ground rules are undeniably entrenched in Pākehā norms, values and structures. Pākehā norms, values and structures eschew questioning, and endure as the unmarked benchmark through which others are socially recognised and arranged.

In the preceding discussion, I have provided an inevitably partial account of the debates encompassing biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand. I have included

and, simultaneously and necessarily, excluded certain aspects of history. Discussing the complex intersecting monocultural, bicultural and multicultural terrain in any detail is beyond the confines of this chapter (see Fleras (2009), Fleras and Spoonley (1999) and May (2010) for a more comprehensive overview). Nevertheless, a clearly observable tension exists between the state's commitment to biculturalism and an increasing need to also develop multicultural policy provisions, not least in education. How might we then respond to the Treaty relationship, *and* Aotearoa-New Zealand's increasing ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity?

Will Kymlicka's (1995) Theory of Minority Rights

The possible implementation of Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka's theory of minority rights in Aotearoa-New Zealand is ground that has been covered by commentators with unanimity (see, for instance, Bartley and Spoonley, 2005; May, 2002, 2013; Santamaría and Hoskins, 2015). Such commentators claim Kymlicka's (1995) attempt at justice or closure through his distinction between "national minorities" and their entitlement to "self-government rights", and "ethnic minorities" and "polyethnic rights" (p. 10-33) is one opening for differentiating between, and jointly pursuing, bicultural and multicultural rights in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

According to Kymlicka, national minorities have occupied a certain territory or homeland but have been subject to colonisation, conquest and/or confederation. As a result, national minorities now hold minority standing within a certain nation-state. Such groups include, for instance, the Québécois in Canada, the Welsh in Britain and some Hispanic groups in the United States of America. National minorities also include Indigenous peoples and thus, by extension, Māori in the Aotearoa-New Zealand context. National minorities are entitled to

self-government rights, which recognise that the “nation-state is not the sole preserve of the majority (national) group”, and acknowledge that national minorities are entitled to equal inclusion and representation in the public domain (May, 2013, p. 202). These rights are not primarily, nor necessarily, associated with secession as the term ‘self-government’ so often implies. The core tenet is that national minorities are entitled to greater autonomy and administrative control over their own affairs within the nation-state. The affordance of self-government rights can be observed through *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) in the Aotearoa-New Zealand context and the state’s bicultural obligations to Māori set out in the Treaty of Waitangi (Durie, 2005; May, 2002). Self-government rights are permanent – they are not viewed as a provisional solution that may one day be retracted.

Ethnic minorities, on the other hand, have emigrated from their country of origin to a new host nation-state or are subjected to involuntary relocation in the case of refugees (May, 2002). Polyethnic rights are afforded to ethnic minorities to assist them to continue to express their cultural heritages, should they so choose, without such expressions hindering “their success in the economic and political institutions of the dominant society” (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 31). Like self-government rights, polyethnic rights are afforded permanent status – they seek to protect cultural differences, instead of banishing them (May, 2002). The point of distinction here is that polyethnic rights aim to promote the *integration* of ethnic minorities into broader society, as opposed to advancing self-governance amongst such groups.

The tension between biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand could be resolved through an implementation of Kymlicka’s theorisation of self-government rights pertaining to national minorities and the polyethnic rights of ethnic minorities. These two conceptualisations of minority groups, and the rights attributed to them, are different but not

necessarily incompatible. Kymlicka's approach to minority rights opens up the possibility of both differentiating between and jointly pursuing bicultural and multicultural rights in Aotearoa-New Zealand, at least in theory.

While meaningful, Kymlicka's minority rights have limitations. Kymlicka's defence of liberalism, in unquestionably retaining the unity of the nation-state, conforms to a kind of totalising logic that is unproductive for democratic politics. Specifically, his progressive pursuit to extend liberal traditions to include the demands of national and ethnic minorities overlooks, "the first step which is questioning the sovereignty of the authoritative traditions and institutions they serve to legitimate" (Tully, 1995, p. 53). Whether included or excluded by the political order of liberalism, national and ethnic minorities within Kymlicka's formulation are forced to structure and pursue the preservation and survival of their culture against hegemonic (Pākehā) norms and traditions, and the uniformity of liberalism. At best, universal liberalism can only include the demands of national and ethnic minorities within existing dominant traditions, while their unifying rationalities eschew questioning. The issue for democratic politics is that any attempts to assert the arrival of consensus and resolution, within the unity of the nation-state, simply masks the unchanged nature of power relations and renders invisible the partial exclusion of those it seeks to represent or include.

Separate yet Inseparable: Love and Politics, and Biculturalism and Multiculturalism to come

I turn now to proposing one *possible* way through which we might accommodate both bicultural and multicultural interests in Aotearoa-New Zealand that takes differences more seriously. My philosophical point of entry centres on the relationships between love and politics, and biculturalism and multiculturalism. The ensuing reflections are an attempt to

make more explicit what is implicit, and to play out the supposed good (for example, ideas of love and justice discussed below) against the always-already presence of the absent: the bad/evil (ideas of betrayal and injustice). I take issue with the societal illusion of self-containment of any identity, and advocate instead the more *relational* character of life in the hope that we can come to love and appreciate more fully the other(s) we too conveniently dismiss or overlook. I desire not to have the final word but to unfold necessary and provocative closings that are simultaneously (risky) openings that affirm the unconditional coming of the other. I proceed in the recognition that all encounters with alterity bear the possibilities of every opportunity one may desire *and* every threat one may dread (Hägglund, 2010).

My use of the ‘other’ is not limited to denoting the other human being, as conceived in the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas (1991). For my purposes here, the other refers to the (constitutive) outside of any identity whatsoever, for example multiculturalism to biculturalism, betrayal to love or injustice to justice (*separate*). Yet the outside is always-already partially inside (*inseparable*; to which I return below) (Derrida and Ferraris, 2001). Biculturalism carries traces of multiculturalism within it. If biculturalism (and the Treaty) includes only Māori and Pākehā, it *also* excludes at the same time New Zealanders of other ethnicities and, by implication, multiculturalism. This exclusion is also a subtle inclusion. And it is partially the traces of multiculturalism that give biculturalism life. No identity is self-contained. It is only through the existence of an-other that any identity at all is possible. This is why I argue the other – be it other human or living beings, things, or concepts such as biculturalism and multiculturalism – demands our ‘love’. I interpret love as a relational force binding – yet separating – ethical ideas of care and responsibility for, and hospitality towards, the other (Derrida with García Düttmann, 1997; Levinas, 1991).

Following mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and Theravāda Buddhist philosophies, I suggest that aroha (love) and mēttā (unconditional love or loving-kindness) must be at the heart of all relationships. For kaumātua (Māori elder) Cleve Barlow (1991), aroha “is an all-encompassing quality of goodness, expressed by love for people, land, birds and animals, fish and all living beings” (p. 8). Aroha, according to Māori academic Te Kawehau Hoskins (2012), is the “prerequisite” for all productive social and political relations, and “is the unconditional concern and responsibility for others that operate in excess of who (culturally, socially, economically) others might be, or what they may have done.” (p. 91). In the same – yet different – breath, Venerable Dhammananda (1989), a Sri Lankan monk and scholar, suggests that Buddhism encourages us “to love and protect all beings” without desire for ourselves to be loved (p. 178). He defines love as “an endless self-immolating compassion, freely flowing towards all living beings” – human or otherwise (p. 198).

I argue that the discourses of biculturalism *and* multiculturalism should be welcomed into – ideally, as overarching – state policies going forward. In their broadest senses, biculturalism and multiculturalism are expressions of love for others, for national and ethnic minorities. Biculturalism and multiculturalism are concerns for movements away from the prevailing authoritative discourses of the liberal nation-state that have been designed to assimilate or eliminate cultural differences and to rationalise and justify uniformity. The accommodation of biculturalism and multiculturalism is thus an act of love or ethical responsibility, one that acknowledges that the state has participated in the exclusion of national and ethnic minorities while maintaining the unity of the liberal nation-state.

Yet simultaneously I suggest that we should also recognise the unattainability of love for all, all of the time. To live in society is to be unconditionally exposed to the multiplicity of other others – who have passed, who are present and who are to come – to whom we are bound by the same, yet different, infinite demands of love. Our experiences of love are not limited only to the realm of the good (Derrida with García Düttmann, 1997). Love is always-already political. Love hurts. To decide to love the other is to strike the faces and to shatter the hearts of the multiplicity of others for whom betrayal is fate. We inevitably betray non-Māori (and indeed other Māori and Pākehā) in attempts to respond to our bicultural commitments (if we understand biculturalism as a relationship between only Māori and Pākehā). We betray, to some extent, our prior bicultural commitments with every attempt to see to multiculturalism (if multiculturalism is synonymous with multi-ethnicity, as is the prevailing discourse in Aotearoa-New Zealand). There is a non-loving opening of love, a “violent opening” of love (Derrida, 1997, p. 140). Such is the madness and law of love. But is this violence not the price of love? Would there be a need to speak of alterity, politics or justice if we could love and respond to the demands of all? Does the desire to love all at once not constitute a subsuming of the demands of all others to that of the same and thus annihilating the otherness of the others for which we seek to be hospitable? We must calculate precisely because we are faced with incalculable others (Hägglund, 2010).

Discrimination, exclusion, violence and betrayal are the inextricable conditions for the very possibility (and impossibility) of love itself (Hägglund, 2008). The impossibility of the erasure of betrayal is the opening of any possibility of love whatsoever. Love cannot be love in and of itself. Love is only love by virtue of being partially otherwise than love, by the perversion of betrayal that is at once inscribed within love, *and* which “must remain present, in the wings”, striking at every instance of love (Derrida with García Düttmann, 1997, p. 9).

There is betrayal in the name of (within and for the sake of) love. Betrayal demands our love too since the impossibility of love for all is what keeps open the possibility of any love at all.

The distinction I have made between love and politics is not one in which love instructs, or is a linear progression towards, politics; rather my distinction is a philosophical one. Such a distinction allows assessment of the implicit double-bind I seek to make more explicit, and which runs throughout the remainder of this chapter: that love and politics (and the other themes that follow) are at once *separate yet inseparable*. Love and politics are radically heterogeneous (separate) – otherwise they would simply be the same, and fail to exist altogether since nothing can be in and of itself – but they are always-already both involved (inseparable).

The unattainability of love for all, then, necessitates the in(ter)vention of justice (my use of ‘in(ter)vention’ is discussed further below). Justice here is the turn towards the inevitably betrayed other other(s) in the service of love. That is, justice is love for the “third party”, the other other(s) (Levinas, 1991, p. 16). But justice is always-already haunted by injustice. Injustice is at once inscribed within justice; otherwise, justice would not be what it is (inseparable). After all, would love and justice be desirable at all if we exclude the undesirability of betrayal and injustice (if such an exclusion is even possible)? Could we speak of the idea(s) of justice at all without the idea(s) of injustice?

In the same – yet different – stroke, we inescapably amplify injustices in the struggle to serve the exigency of justice. Injustice strikes at every moment of justice (separate). The service of love to the other necessitates that we then turn towards the inevitably betrayed third party to serve love and justice. Yet in serving love and justice to the third party, we inevitably betray

the other (to whom we have previously served love) and the multiplicity of other others in society who demand our love too (fourth, fifth, etc. parties). Only through the necessity of failing and sacrificing someone and something else can one succeed in serving love, justice and closure to an-other. We are always-already guilty. We are inescapably inscribed in an “economy of violence” (Derrida, 2001, p. 145-146), where violence is the condition for what is desirable *and* undesirable (Hägglund, 2008). Nothing could or would ever happen in a world devoid of exclusions and violence. In sum, injustice is in justice *and* infinitely outside of justice.

One may well argue that ‘biculturalism’ and ‘multiculturalism’ in their present incarnations are not the best terms in the Aotearoa-New Zealand context. Biculturalism is too exclusive for some, while multiculturalism is too inclusive for others. Biculturalism and multiculturalism also defy attempts at a singular reading or interpretation. However, to provide spaces for *both* biculturalism and multiculturalism in and as policies is not grounds to cement them as fixed, codified and orthodox sets of principles that attempt to eliminate ambiguity. To cement biculturalism and multiculturalism into perpetuity as though they are sacrosanct is to be re-incarcerated by the will to permanent closure and totalising propensities of dominant models of democratic politics which I seek to resist (see Mouffe (2005)). To dictate in advance what constitutes biculturalism and multiculturalism is to close that which I am at pains to keep open: love or hospitality towards alterity.

I suggest we retain the terms biculturalism and multiculturalism precisely to (em)brace the multiplicity of their interpretations. The illusion of, and longing for, simple and clear answers is partly at the root of much useless suffering. The bicultural and multicultural debates delineated thus far *all* reveal valid, heartfelt sentiments that ought not to be simply dismissed.

The partial incommensurability of biculturalism and multiculturalism – like the Māori and English texts of the Treaty that are not exact translations of one another – constitutes not an impasse but enables the very ‘thing’ that democratic politics must continue to permit: a love for and openness to alterity and contestation beyond any apparent resolution.

Biculturalism and multiculturalism in and as state policies are in(ter)ventions. They intervene to demand the invention (and reinvention) of love and justice for others whom decisions may necessarily exclude. There is invention *in* intervention, hence my preference to write intervention as ‘in(ter)vention’. Biculturalism and multiculturalism, which could comprise Kymlicka’s theory of minority rights, are necessary and *possible closures* that bring “*hoa riri*” (angry friend/s) face-to-face (Hoskins, 2012, p. 94). Justice necessitates “something that binds rivals” because “[i]f separateness is *all*, then the grounds of justice dissolve” (Sharp, 1990, p. 41-42). We must also love and be grateful for our *hoa riri*, who should not be perceived as threats to be eliminated but as “adversaries” whose ideas we contest (Mouffe, 2005, p. 101). There can be no politics and no justice without *hoa riri*.

Yet bicultural and multicultural in(ter)ventions must remain infinitely held *open*. They are peripheral conditions or partially empty (and partially filled) arenas that continue “to be politicised, inhabited and constituted by contestation, disruption and contingency as well as stability” (Barclay, 2005, p. 135). Policies are not deterministic; nor should they be in a democracy. Biculturalism and multiculturalism are always-already exposed – and must remain open – to interpretation and circumscription by the infinite, unpredictable and incalculable other. They must be constantly challenged and contested in the realms of the social and the political to meet the demands of contemporary society. Biculturalism and multiculturalism should be viewed as contingent points of departure that provide a nexus

through which negotiation *and renegotiation*, love and betrayal, and justice and injustice may unfold. We must be preparedly unprepared for the heterogeneity of what is to come.

To summarise the arguments made thus far, there can be no point at which biculturalism and multiculturalism (and love, politics and justice) will be permanently closed and complete; no point at which all accounts can be settled once and for all. First, each decision taken in relation to biculturalism and multiculturalism must be different if we are to take differences seriously. As Simon Critchley (2014) writes, “each time I decide, I have to invent a new rule, a new norm, which must be absolutely singular in relation to both the other’s infinite demand made on me and the finite context within which this demand arises.” (p. 311). *And*, second, each decision demands the invention of another decision. To succeed in serving love, justice and closure to the other necessitates that we betray, fail and commit violence to the plurality of other people and things to whom we must then turn and attempt justice, and betray and fail other others in the process. We therefore cannot wait until we have completed existing bicultural responsibilities before we can begin to discuss the prospects of multiculturalism, since such a completion is impossible. We must pursue both simultaneously to seek love for all and fail at such if love is to be possible at all. Love is always being worked out, always to come one fine day, although its coming for the other is at once and necessarily a not coming for other others to whom we must then turn. There are endless endings.

I argue that any workable solutions to political relations in Aotearoa-New Zealand must acknowledge the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and the nation’s bicultural foundations. Some in(ter)ventions must be more conspicuous than others, otherwise there would be no need to speak of justice (Barclay, 2005). To acknowledge the significance of the Treaty and biculturalism is not grounds to simply relegate them to the ivory tower,

safeguarded by absolute immunity. Rather, it is an acknowledgement that biculturalism – again – is not beyond question, despite occupying a crucial nexus in Aotearoa-New Zealand. To inflict biculturalism (or monoculturalism and multiculturalism) as an untouchable, absolute order is to close all openness to the infinite, unpredictable and incalculable other. It is to close the doors on the opening that is life itself since no one or thing can be in and of itself, and nothing would ever happen without violence.

In the terrain covered in this chapter, I do not feign – nor would anything permit me – to wholly know anything about Māori. As Derrida claims, “I can have no direct access to what the other lives in...[itself], that is something which remains absolutely inaccessible for me, at least in the form of intuition.” (Derrida with García Düttmann, 1997, p. 13). Not knowing cannot continue to be viewed principally or only in a negative light. Knowingly not knowing is precisely the condition for any love for and to the other for better and for worse, for any relation to the other whatsoever. To love is to take a leap of faith, since “[t]he other who is welcomed as peaceful may turn out to be an instigator of war...the other may always change.” (Hägglund, 2010, p. 299).

The risky, relational account proposed here is not foreign to Māori ontological and epistemological traditions. Indeed, “Māori initiated a dangerous and risky relationship with the cultural other [Pākehā], risking their alteration for such a risky relationship.” (Hoskins, 2012, p. 92). The welcoming of manuhiri (visitors/guests) in a pōwhiri (Māori welcoming ceremony) in peace and war, and in difference and kotahitanga (unity, togetherness) is another – different – example of the certainty of uncertainty and relationality advocated here (Barclay, 2005; Barlow, 1991). The irreducible double injunction of dependence on *and* vulnerability to the other that may erase someone and thing is what affords anyone and thing

the opportunity to live (on). It is the existence of an-other that makes anything possible – yet impossible – and to whom we are shackled by the same – yet different – infinite demands for love.

Closing Reflections–Infinite Openings

I began the chapter wishing to reinvigorate discussions concerning the simultaneous pursuit and coexistence of biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand. The chapter traced some debates encompassing biculturalism and multiculturalism thus far, followed by my philosophical response to the ethical-political dilemmas posed by these debates. I have attempted to resist the will to permanent closure. My reflections here are incompletely complete – they are inevitably works in progress that are subject to change by what lies beyond the horizon.

I close the chapter necessarily and momentarily in the recognition that it is always-already an opening for the unconditional coming of the other. The chapter is akin to a branch of a mānuka tree laid down in a wero (challenge), a challenge “waiting to be picked up and taken somewhere” (Stewart, Tamatea and Mika, 2015, p. 101). Who knows what is to come...

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