The “other Other” perspective: Reflecting on encounters of bicultural Aotearoa New Zealand as experienced by non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists

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Abstract
Aotearoa New Zealand is a bicultural nation, yet home to peoples of many different ethnicities. Among the many immigrants to these shores are a growing number of non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists. This article draws on findings from a small qualitative study with four non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists practicing and residing in Aotearoa New Zealand, to explore and understand their lived experiences. Additionally, current literature is drawn upon to supplement findings and to reflect on what it means for non-indigenous ethnic minorities to encounter and exist within a bicultural sphere.

Whakarāpopotonga
He iwi tikanga rua a Aotearoa Niu Tīreni, ahakoa tonu he kāinga ki te mātawaka. Kai roto i te manene maha ki tēnei whenua, e rahi haere ake ana nga kaiwhakaora hinengaro manene iwi hauiti. He tirohanga tā tēnei tuhinga ki ngā hua puta ake i tētahi mātai ine kounga i waenga i ētahi kaiwhakaora hinengaro manene hauiti tokowhā e mahi ana e noho ana i Aotearoa Niu Tīreni kia kite kia mātau ki ō rātau wheako koiora. I tua atu ka honoa atu ngā tuhinga o ēnei rā hai kīnaki i ngā hua, ka āta whai whakaaro ai hoki he pēhea tēnei āhua ki ngā iwi ehara i te tangata whenua , ā, he iwi hauiti ki te tuki ki te whaiora i roto i te awe o tikanga ruatanga.

Keywords: biculturalism; ethnic minority; indigenous; psychotherapy.

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Introduction

The signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840 officially set the foundation of Aotearoa New Zealand as a bicultural nation. However, it has only been since the mid-1980s that the government has actively started recognising the relationship between indigenous Māori and settler Pākehā based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and, in doing so, embraced a bicultural ideology. As New Zealanders in general grappled with what this meant, the situation rose in complexity with radical changes in immigration policy resulting in an influx of immigrants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Thus, while Aotearoa New Zealand, in legislation, is a bicultural nation, it is, also, a multicultural society.

The growth in diverse ethnic communities within New Zealand has led to discussions regarding the impact on New Zealand's emergent biculturalism and attempts to address indigenous rights. In many ways Aotearoa New Zealwand is still grappling with its bicultural identity and attempts to develop a workable biculturalism (Pearson & Ongley, 1996; Williams, 1996). On the other hand, compared to other British settler countries such as Canada and Australia, New Zealand is yet to develop a locally relevant multicultural framework that complements and expands on biculturalism (Belgrave et al., 2004; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Williams, 1996). As a result, it can be a struggle for migrant and non-indigenous ethnic communities to place themselves within Aotearoa New Zealand society (De Souza & Cormack, 2009; Pearson & Ongley, 1996).

I was born and raised in Sri Lanka, a place with its own colonial past, and immigrated to Aotearoa New Zealand as a young adult. I spent the first few years of my life here adjusting to a social and cultural environment that felt vastly different to the one I was familiar with, navigating experiences of otherness and belonging almost exclusively in relation to a western (Pākehā) cultural context. Without a forum in which to engage in any meaningful way with my experience of looking and feeling different, I learnt how to keep these feelings in check so I could protect myself from the pain of confronting issues of race and cultural difference.

This defensive adaptation no longer served me as I undertook my training in psychotherapy, and I was challenged to explore and reflect on constructs and representations of otherness inside of myself, and how I respond to these representations as they manifest in interpersonal and group settings. It is also in the context of my training through a Pākehā institution that I first had opportunity to engage somewhat intimately with tangata whenua and aspects of indigenous Māori culture. Although inconsistent and dispersed throughout a predominantly western curriculum, I found these encounters with Māori culture to be significant and memorable. However, it presented me with a dilemma around situating myself within the prevailing discourse around biculturalism; where is my place, as tauiwi, visibly and noticeably different to the dominant group, but also as tangata tiriti, as an immigrant who now calls Aotearoa New Zealand my adopted home? To keep quiet was to be subsumed under the category of the dominant group, but without access to the power and privilege of being white or of European descent.

The research that this article is based on was originally undertaken as part of my Master of Psychotherapy degree. As a fairly new immigrant to these shores, it was my personal struggles to locate myself and my experience within the dominant discourse of biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand that fuelled my curiosity to explore and understand the experience

of other non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists, and their encounters with biculturalism.

In the original study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with four psychotherapists who self-identified as non-indigenous ethnic minorities in Aotearoa New Zealand (Salpitikorala, 2015). In this article, I focus on discussing some of the main themes that arose from this study, drawing on current literature to supplement findings and further concepts explored in the paper such as 'visibility' and 'otherness'.

The paper begins with a discussion of the 'visibility' of immigrants, leading into how immigrants make sense of different experiences in the dominant cultural and indigenous settings. Next, the construct of 'other' is introduced and includes consideration of how learning to see one other may pave the way for seeing many others, as well as a discussion of immigrant others and indigenous others. The article concludes with some reflections for the psychotherapy community with respect to practice and research. Throughout this paper, use of the word 'participants' will denote findings from the original study (Salpitikorala, 2015), unless specifically cited in the context of another study.

The Visibility of Immigrants

In the immigration literature, a distinction is frequently made between visible and invisible immigrants, the former term denoting immigrants who are visibly different to their host cultural (usually Anglo-Saxon) residents. The latter term is used to denote white immigrants, usually from European backgrounds (George & Fitzgerald, 2012; Leinonen, 2012; Trlin, 2012). Such a distinction has been necessary, as evidence suggests that visible immigrants face significantly more challenges and hardships compared to invisible immigrants (Bartley & Spoonley, 2004; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Leinonen, 2012; Preston & Murnaghan, 2005; Statistics New Zealand, 2013). This study included the experiences of two non-European (visible) and two European (invisible) participants, and findings indicated that all four participants felt visibly different in some sense, making it possible to identify common themes and patterns across their experiences. These visible differences comprised of more straightforward differences based on skin colour (non-European participants) and accents (European participants); as well as their self-identification as ethnic minorities, and their lived experience of feeling 'other' to the dominant Pākehā group.

New Zealand has a long history of racialising visible immigrants such as those of Asian and Polynesian origin, including the implementation of assimilationist migration policy aimed at keeping the country 'white', that specifically excluded the entry of non-European, visibly different migrants (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). De Souza (2006) asserted that, at an implicit level, these policies and attitudes continue to shape the treatment of immigrants in Aotearoa New Zealand; an assertion corroborated by evidence from research on New Zealanders' attitudes towards immigrants (e.g. Ward and Masgoret, 2008).

However, research exploring the experiences of invisible immigrants indicate that they too experience settlement difficulties owing to perceived social and cultural disparities, and despite their apparent invisibility, experience prejudice and discrimination at less overt levels (Trlin, 2012). Findings of my study (Salpitikorala, 2015) reflected that the two non-European psychotherapy participants experienced acculturative stress directly related to

reconciling conflicting cultural values, and feeling pressure to assimilate; struggles that were not referred to by the two European participants. Overall, however, findings highlighted that acculturating to mainstream Pākehā culture, including adapting to and making sense of the dominant cultural attitudes, values, structures and practices, constituted a significant set of adjustments for these foreign-born therapists.

Making Sense of the Difference in Experiences in the Dominant Cultural and Indigenous Setting

An important finding in the study was that participants' experiences of relating to mainstream Pākehā culture differed quite significantly from their experiences of relating to indigenous Māori culture (Salpitikorala, 2015). The former was characterised by disconnection, alienation, overwhelm, otherness and pressures to assimilate. In contrast, the latter engagements were characterised overwhelmingly by identification, support, and connection. Indeed, for the two non-European therapists, these identifications were based on cultural affinities and similarities with Māori culture. Nevertheless, these positive experiences and engagements ensued, even when some participants encountered cultural differences that necessitated adjustment of their own cultural frameworks and viewpoints in order to understand the indigenous experience. There could be several reasons for the contrast in experiences between these two cultural settings. On the one hand, unlike with mainstream culture, engaging with Māori culture was not underscored by some of the pressures to acculturate and assimilate in order to 'make it' in the new dominant culture. So although participants commented on the lack of access to Māori cultural experiences in the mainstream, this also meant, perhaps paradoxically, that participants had more choice and control over the level of engagement they initiated with the indigenous community and culture.

On the other hand, as epitomised by participants' experiences on the marae, Māori philosophies and cultural values that underpin how engagement is initiated and relationships are developed with others, contributed significantly to the differences in participants' experience in the dominant cultural setting *vis-à-vis* the indigenous setting. Hence, if we attempt to understand this experience by situating it within a particular moment in time, the marae encounter is perhaps the best example. This encounter provided a gateway into the indigenous context and set the foundation for continued engagement with Māori. This initiation into Māori culture, etched in participants' memories and, as characterised by their recollections, seemed to be underpinned by manaakitanga: the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others (Māori Dictionary, 2021). At the gates of the marae, they were ceremoniously welcomed (pōwhiri) and, in accordance with the tradition of pepeha, invited to bring themselves in by relating their own story of who they are, where they come from and how they came to be here. Thus, the indigenous context provided relief from the cultural pressures that participants felt in the mainstream, and offered an alternative way of engaging and being in the world, quite different to the dominant cultural ethos and ways of being.

Relations between immigrant and indigenous communities have received scant attention as a topic of empirical inquiry. However, some support for the kind of inferences

made above have been found in the writings of migrant scholars, especially postcolonial feminist writers (De Souza, 2006, 2011; Mohanram, 1998; Wittman, 1998), who have explored these relations and their implications. For instance, De Souza, a nurse academic of Goan Indian ancestry, maintains a blog where, among other topics, she explores and writes about the shared cultural spaces occupied by immigrants and indigenous groups in white-settler societies (De Souza, 2011). In one of her articles, she describes an experience she witnessed at a refugee conference at New Zealand's AUT university, where a refugee participant had delivered a mihi, reflecting on how a pōwhiri held for refugees as part of their resettlement process, "helped him regain his *mana* after the dehumanizing experiences of his refugee journey" (De Souza, 2011, para. 8). This refugee participant's experience in many ways parallels experiences described by the participants in this study, and indicates that they felt cared for by Māori in the indigenous setting, in a way that allowed them to regain a sense of integrity following the disintegrating experience of their immigrant journey.

Wittman (1998) talked about the commonality or shared reality endured by both indigenous Māori and many immigrants to Aotearoa New Zealand. Wittman asserted that both groups need to be bicultural by necessity "if they are to both make it in present day New Zealand society and retain their own culture" (p. 58). She also reported findings from interviews conducted with 48 Jewish women residing in New Zealand, in which some participants expressed a natural sense of affinity with Māori. For instance, Wittman quotes a participant who was born and socialised in New Zealand but who strives to retain ties with her Jewish ancestry as part of her identity: "I can identify with the Māori side of being a New Zealander very easily … that Māori side is as natural as swimming for me" (p. 62). The kind of cultural pressure many immigrants describe encountering in mainstream society and, by contrast, the almost automatic sense of affiliation they felt with Māori, indicates that the recognition of this commonality may underpin their sense of identification with, and support for, the indigenous experience.

Some immigrants may also recognise the historical plight they share with Māori, albeit from opposite angles. For one participant in the current study, awareness of his own colonised cultural history naturally led to identify more with Māori than with Pākehā. For another participant, identification with the sense of shame, of which she heard Māori speak, resonated with her own sense of shame rooted in her colonising cultural heritage. These experiences represent the many cultural positions and spaces that are shared by non-indigenous ethnic minorities and Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, both as part of their cultural histories, and as part of their current struggles in a context where practices and structures that govern their daily lives and experiences are by default monocultural and othering.

Construction of '*Competing Others*' and its Implications

Despite the sense of affiliation that foregrounded participants' engagement with indigenous Māori, some tensions and difficulties became apparent in the therapeutic context (Salpitikorala, 2015). Notably, one therapist described having to work through transference reactions where they felt positioned as an invader, "just like Europeans but probably worse" (p.46), a cultural other who has displaced Māori and taken their place in society. Participants

struggled as immigrants and ethnic minorities for a place in a society where cultural understanding and resources are only extended to the indigenous group; and reflected how experiencing biculturalism is often simultaneous with experiencing further marginalisation and invisibility as non-indigenous ethnic minorities. These dynamics reflect wider debate surrounding biculturalism and multiculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly in relation to resource allocation, where indigenous and immigrant groups are often positioned as "*competing others*" (De Souza & Cormack, 2009, p. 219, emphasis in original). Arguments have been raised in support of each group or position, usually in opposition to the other.

The unprecedented rise in immigration, following the restructuring of immigration policy in Aotearoa New Zealand, drew protest from Māori who were concerned about the cultural and economic implications of immigration, but for different reasons than Pākehā. Some of these concerns persist into the present (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). Pressure for recognition of greater cultural diversity is seen as diluting the primacy of biculturalism, of Māori as tangata whenua and their claims for special status and rights under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Asian immigration, in particular, has been criticised as a quick fix economic solution, and as posing a threat to improving Māori employment and participation in the labour market (Walker, 1995).

Similarly, arguments have been made against biculturalism in favour of multiculturalism, based on the premise of a multicultural state where all ethnic groups have equality of access to support, resources and legal processes, as opposed to a state where one group has special status or rights based on indigeneity (Thakur, 1995). De Souza and Cormack (2009) argued that this construction and perpetuation of "competing others" only serves to maintain the dominance of white-settler practices, by obscuring the monocultural core around which these arguments are made. Similarly, Mohanram (1998) contended that far from being a vehicle for equal power sharing, biculturalism in the way it is currently set up is "ultimately revealed to be something that can be initiated only by Pākehā, because it is Pākehā who control the resources" (p. 26). In this mode of biculturalism, Mohanram pointed out, "Pākehā have, Māori have not. Pākehā give, Māori receive" (p. 26). Understandably, then, such an environment would be further muddled by the addition of "others" whose needs also claim visibility, yet who then find themselves competing with the "have nots", but without the status of the indigenous group and without clearly demarcated policy or processes to support their needs.

Nevertheless, as one study participant reflected, "[biculturalism in New Zealand] is a very unique outcome … it's an attempt at getting out of colonialism in a different way" At the least, central to most bicultural endeavours in Aotearoa New Zealand, is an ambition towards balancing power relations between two cultural groups in a different way than that allowed by assimilation or even integration (Durie, 1998; Spoonley, 1993). Further, biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand has been the result of a long and arduous struggle by Māori to reclaim their Māoriness and the sovereignty promised to them under Te Tiriti. Colonisation had a devastating impact on the well-being and culture of indigenous Māori, with Māori facing significant depopulation and near genocide during the nineteenth century (Durie, 1998), and Māori continue to face significant barriers to access and inclusion (Webby, 2001). The ongoing impact of colonisation on Māori is evident in the significant disparities in health, education, employment, and socio-economic advancement (Durie, 1998).

Despite the signing of Te Tiriti, successive governments pursued a course of assimilating Māori into mainstream European society, amidst tribal protests and Māori voices of opposition, which were largely ignored and did not influence any restructure in policy (Durie, 1998; Hill, 2010). In essence, Māori had to continue on their quest for reparation and justice based on Te Tiriti and its principles long after the document was signed. According to Hill (2010), a key factor that led to the overturning of the assimilative policies pursued by the government was the "longevity of Māori resistance and its intensification following the advent of what is generally called the Māori renaissance" (p. 293). According to Durie (1998), the move towards biculturalism rather than assimilation or integration resulted in a necessary and, in some ways, radical restructuring of New Zealand's approach to health. Te Tiriti o Waitangi eventually came into effect in health policy over 150 years after its signing. However, there are still significant gaps in how Te Tiriti has been translated into practice to ensure health gains for Māori (Webby, 2001). To summarise, the historical factors described above reflect only a brief overview of the enormous effort that Māori had to make to retain their Māori identity, well-being, cultural practices and structures from being completely eroded by colonising processes.

Seeing One "Other"—Seeing Many "Others"

In light of the historical developments outlined above, some migrant authors, like De Souza (2009), emphasise the importance of returning the indigenous to the centre, because "Māori have paved the way for others to be here in Aotearoa/New Zealand" (para. 38). There is, indeed, some promise in the hope that the understanding and acceptance extended to one "other" will eventually be extended to many "others". However, there seems to be little realisation of this hope reflected in the way cultural diversity is currently being approached and engaged in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Findings in this study revealed, that the four psychotherapist participants perceived and experienced biculturalism in the professional context as a welcome alternative to the dominant westernised perspectives and approaches to mental health and treatment (Salpitikorala, 2015). However, these cultural services are exclusively reserved for Māori, while other ethnic minorities are usually subsumed under the mainstream model, making invisible their disparate needs. Participants indicated that while they felt resourced to work with Māori, and could engage the support of Kaupapa Māori services when required, they felt significantly under resourced when it came to supporting clients of other ethnic groups. Some practitioners were left carrying the burden of bridging these cultural gaps in mainstream treatment.

One participant made the observation that in mainstream mental health treatment, cultural awareness and understanding generated via bicultural training is not extended to other ethnic communities whose customs, traditions, and values resemble that of Māori. Other research has reported similar patterns. Pavagada and De Souza (2007) drew attention to the lack of official data available for the mental health of Asian ethnic groups, illuminating the paucity of research efforts aimed at these communities. This is concerning, given that Asian ethnic groups constitute the fastest growing ethnic group in Aotearoa New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Despite their population growth, national health surveys

tend to subsume members of Asian ethnic groups in with New Zealand Europeans. Asian ethnic groups have been overlooked in health research and policy, despite evidence that prevalence rates for major illnesses like Type 2 diabetes amongst certain Asian groups exceeds that seen in Māori (Duncan et al., 2004). In some cases, reservations have also been expressed by educators regarding the addition of an Asian cultural competency dimension to a curriculum that has already been stretched to include Māori and Pacifica cultural issues (Nayar et al., 2009).

The above-cited research focused specifically on the overlooked needs of Asian ethnic groups, currently the largest non-indigenous visible minority group in Aotearoa New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Indeed, it would be reasonable to assume that disparities are more apparent when visible minorities are subsumed in with New Zealand Europeans, given the significant cultural distance between these groups and Pākehā culture. The two non-European psychotherapy participants alluded to the significant differences in cultural values between their cultures of origin and Pākehā culture. Thus, speaking specifically of visible migrants, Mohanram (1998) questioned, "what place does the visibly different body of the coloured immigrant occupy within the discourse of biculturalism?" (p. 27). Mohanram argued that in New Zealand, whiteness is constructed in opposition to indigeneity and, consequently, New Zealand's biculturalism has become a model that is predicated on race — "whiteness and blackness that does not extend beyond the Māori" (p. 27). The literature seems to suggest that there are implications, perhaps less well researched, in subsuming less visible migrants in with New Zealand Europeans, and expecting their course of assimilation will be relatively smooth.

Immigrant Others and Indigenous Others

As discussed in the foregoing sections, thus far efforts to address non-indigenous cultural diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand have been seen as conflicting with efforts to realise the needs and rights of indigenous Māori. However, as demonstrated by findings in Salpitikorala (2015), which parallel observations made by other migrant scholars, immigrants and Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand share many cultural spaces and positions that have the potential to develop into mutually enhancing relationships. Immigrants who feel other to Pākehā in significant ways feel identification and affiliation with Māori. Sometimes these identifications are rooted in and strengthened by the cultural wounds they carry as part of their own cultural heritages. Being positioned as "competing others" may prevent immigrant minorities and indigenous Māori from utilising these shared experiences as instruments for empowering each other in meaningful ways. Indeed, immigrants have been supporting indigenous rights and claiming justice for both groups, in Aotearoa as well as overseas. For instance, in New Zealand, a young Asian feminist movement has come together in support of indigenous rights under the collective, "*Tau iwi* people of colour supporting tino rangatiratanga" (Bamboo, 2013).

In the mental health context, Pavagada and De Souza (2007) noted that other ethnic communities can draw from Māori experiences and initiatives to address health and treatment gaps in their own communities. Sachdev (1998, cited in Pavagada & De Souza, 2007) pointed out that two factors are necessary for the realisation of this change; first, that

ethnic communities themselves take the primary initiative, and second, that an appropriate socio-political environment is created to facilitate such initiatives.

One participant highlighted the paradox he faced as a new immigrant, needing to reconcile the internationally promoted image of New Zealand as a flourishing multicultural society, and the national preoccupation with biculturalism that implicitly serves to exclude immigrants. This participant's experience reveals an important gap in current efforts directed at orienting new immigrants to New Zealand society and culture. De Souza (2004) calls attention to this gap, emphasising the need to resource new migrants to become informed of their role in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and helping them to recognise and understand the position occupied by tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Furthering the Discussion

Findings of the study described (Salpitikorala, 2015) indicated that ethnic minorities and indigenous Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand implicitly share many cultural spaces, and each group can contribute meaningfully to the other. Further, as discussed, immigrants who have chosen Aotearoa New Zealand as their new adopted country are inevitably implicated in New Zealand's bicultural discourse, whether or not they feel directly impacted by biculturalism. Exploring their perspectives and experiences can motivate them to become better informed and politically aware, and may empower them to negotiate a more meaningful position for non-indigenous ethnic minorities in an (officially) bicultural society.

The study identified and described some common struggles faced by immigrant (ethnic-minority) psychotherapists in adjusting to the socio-cultural and political context of Aotearoa New Zealand. In doing so, the study contributed to bridging an important gap in the research literature pertaining to cultural diversity in the counselling/psychotherapy profession in a New Zealand context. Evidence suggests that there is merit for considering the experience of being an immigrant or "being not from here" as a separate contextual variable that affects therapists who have made that transition (Karni et al., 2013). As Gedo and Gehrie (2010) pointed out, psychotherapy, being an intimate form of communication, would inevitably need to rely on shared cultural meanings. Hence immigrant psychotherapists, especially those who have been born and socialised in a different cultural context, would face technical challenges of a greater magnitude than non-immigrant psychotherapists (Akhtar, 2006). In the New Zealand context, the increase in ethnic-cultural diversity due to immigration would not only mean an increase in the diversity of the clientele, but also an increase in the cultural diversity of psychotherapy trainees. There is hence an important incentive for future research to be focused in this area.

The dissertation research described here (Salpitikorala, 2015) was the first that gathered first-hand data specifically from non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists about their experiences of residing and practicing in New Zealand and their ensuing understandings and perceptions of biculturalism. A small study, with only four participants, nevertheless, numbers do not constitute criteria for measuring quality or trustworthiness in qualitative research (Englander, 2012; Morrow, 2005). That said, a larger sample would allow for better appreciation of the variation of the phenomenon of interest (Englander, 2012). A more homogenous sample would have added to the depth and complexity of the

findings. For instance, the current study participants were all at different stages in their acculturation process, and also differed in terms of other factors such as ethnicity, age and stage of life at entry, factors that motivated migration and so on, all of which influences adjustment to a new host culture (Karni et al., 2013). Hence their individual accounts, related to immigration and acculturation, were idiosyncratic and complex.

Summary

Very little research exists that considers the perceptions and experiences of non-indigenous ethnic minority psychotherapists residing and practicing in Aotearoa New Zealand, a country whose official status is that of a bicultural nation. In this paper, the voices of four psychotherapists who self-identified as non-Māori ethnic minorities and other literature have been interwoven to reflect on the encounter of biculturalism. Findings indicate that therapists as immigrants and non-indigenous ethnic minorities face a dual struggle; on the one hand, acculturating and finding a sense of fitting in and belonging within the dominant Pākehā culture and, on the other hand, feeling excluded from the dominant discourse and practices of biculturalism, a discourse that will determine the future direction of their new adopted country. Participants' experiences in the dominant cultural setting differed markedly from their experiences within the indigenous Māori cultural setting. The former was characterised by disconnection, otherness and pressures to assimilate, and the latter was characterised overwhelmingly by identification, support, and connection. However, situated in the context of biculturalism, there was a tendency for immigrant and indigenous others to be positioned as "competing others", whereby the focus on biculturalism served to dilute and make invisible the presence of non-Māori ethnic minorities.

In an Australian context Hage (1998) argued that in order for non-indigenous Australians to ethically belong to Australia, they must develop an ethical relationship with Australia's history of colonisation. According to De Souza (2004), for immigrants in white-settler societies, this means recognising their collusive role in colonial capitalism and, consequently, in usurping the indigenous. Developing this sort of historical and political awareness, she says, will enable immigrants to see past their own oppression, and realise that their futures are intertwined with that of the indigenous and their struggle for justice and self-determination.

The current paper has sought to bridge an important gap in the research literature pertaining to cultural diversity in the counselling/psychotherapy profession in a New Zealand context. Immigrants and ethnic minorities in Aotearoa New Zealand can become empowered to have their voices heard and their struggles recognised, by working in collaboration with, rather than in opposition to, indigenous Māori. Such an endeavour provides for ethical and mutually enhancing grounds for negotiation, and has the potential for rebalancing power relationships.

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