New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies

Volume 22 Number 1
June 2020

New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies 22, 1 (June 2020): 43-66

MANA WHENUA: POINTS OF CONVERGENCE IN CHINESE AND MĀORI WORLDVIEWS REGARDING HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract

Relationships binding Aotearoa and China are becoming increasingly complex and diverse, at times characterised by mutual reciprocity, and at other times with prejudice. *Mana whenua*, a significant concept in Māori philosophy, has implications for transnational business operations, recent migrants, and all New Zealanders. This article highlights key aspects of a worldview indigenous to China which appear harmonious with the concept of *mana whenua.* As many commonalities exist across cultures, ancestral notions of *mana whenua* can be used as a guide for fostering harmonious interpersonal and structural relationships. This paper articulates aspects of a Chinese worldview in relation to philosophy, cultural traditions, and painting within a Māori context to represent an approach which enables *tauiwi* (non-Māori) to engage with Te Ao Māori while expressing their unique and evolving, cultural diversity, and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Introduction

Mana whenua (literally translated as "power from the land") is a concept that derives from Māori philosophy and addresses the rights to exercise guardianship over the land. It has implications for many aspects of life in Aotearoa New Zealand, whether it is buying a house, operating a business, collecting seafood, participating in consultation and decision-making processes, or engaging in agricultural work. It is also a broad concept that relates to many social and political issues in the country today, such as environmental sustainability, land rights, and sovereignty over land. *Mana whenua* not only has implications for Māori, but also has wider implications for all people living and working in this country, including new Chinese migrants.

The links that bind China and Aotearoa are real on multiple layers. The relationship is not only based on post-colonial trade and migration, but also pre-colonial connections and ancient, ancestral ties between Māori and China (Anderson, Binney & Harris, 2015; Ip, 2009; Panoho, 2015; Reid, 2008; White, Anderson & Moloughney, 2008). Chinese have however, had a visible presence in Aotearoa since the 1850's,

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with the arrival of Southern Chinese[1] gold miners who were invited by colonial settlers to continue excavating the depleting gold mines[2] (Lam & Lee, 2012; Ng, 1993; Reid, 2008;). These Southern Chinese workers came from coastal and hilly rural villages, were hardworking and frugal, and were looking for ways to bring prosperity to their home villages which were affected by poverty, famine, war, corruption, and cultural upheaval (Hoe, 2013; Mckeown, 1999; Reid, 2008). From the mid-19th century, also known as China's "Century of Humiliation"[3], the whole region was experiencing a series of incredibly tumultuous wars internally and externally, including but not exhaustive: the Opium wars (against Britain to stop the Opium trade), first Sino-Japanese War, the Taiping Revolution (religion oriented anti-*Qing* government upheaval), the Boxer Rebellion (an anti-imperialist, anti-foreign and anti-Christian uprising), and the Red Turban Revolt (*Qing* opposition) (Ng, 1993: Reid, 2008). These wars not only led to a series of "unequal"[4] treaties and the ceding of land to Britain, France, Russia, Germany and Japan, but also disrupted an ancient Chinese worldview and identity, and signified the transition from traditional rural economy and customs towards modern capitalism[5] (Kuik, 2013; Ong, 1993; Reid, 2008;).

From a wider perspective, this 19th "century of humiliation" was a shared global experience, propelling humanity towards an age of globalisation, capitalism, and disruption of customary indigenous culture and practice. Customary indigenous

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1 While most Southern Chinese would refer to their particular clan or province as an identity marker, the term Southern Chinese refers to a range of ethnic groups with different languages from a vast geographical location along the southern coast of China. The ancient ancestors of the Southern Chinese are the *Yue* peoples 粵人who were known for their body tattoos which, based on a statue held at the State Museum of Zhejiang, look remarkably similar to Māori *Tā Moko*. The *Han* Chinese eventually expanded southward and assimilated with the *Yue* peoples (Meacham, 1996). The Southern Chinese have a long history of waves of migration and therefore shared ancestry can be traced in many Asian and Pacific countries (Reid, 2008).

2 Following the abolition of slave labour, Southern Chinese were recruited by Colonial settlers around the globe to help build their new settlements. Initially, Southern Chinese were still at times treated as slaves, or with poor working conditions, and while they often intended to return home after earning some wealth, they normally died overseas from hardship, earned little, and were unable to return home (Reid, 2008).

3 A term used in China to describe the period between 1839-1949 when Western powers, Russia and Japan subjugated the Chinese Empire and the Republic of China (Kaufman, 2010).

4 A term used in China to refer to the treaties signed between the *Qing* dynasty and foreign powers during the 19th and early 20th centuries typically following military defeat. The treaties were unequal, necessitating China to cede land, make payments, establish treaty ports, or grant access or privileges to foreigners (Fravel, 2005).

5 The imperial kingdom (i.e. China), previously viewed as the centre of the world, (sustained by the powers of *tianxia* (天下), which united all under heaven), had just been overthrown, had been made the target of numerous rebellions, was riddled with corruption, inequalities, and injustices, and then was exposed to increasing Western and international relations, signifying the transition from traditional rural economy to modern capitalism, thus threatening the Chinese identity (Kuik, 2013).

notions of and structures for the expression of identity and essential relationships within the universe have thus been challenged globally, and unprecedented opportunities are now emerging for Māori and *tauiwi* including the Chinese and Māori-Chinese, to consciously design new structures which will aspire towards indigenous stewardship, self-determination and governance in a multicultural postcolonial New Zealand.

Notions of Chinese identity and their relationship with New Zealand have been influenced by colonial interests since their arrival in the 19th century. Colonial legislation intentionally controlled and suppressed Southern Chinese population growth in numerous countries through keeping families separated, imposing large fines, denying them citizen rights, and propagating sinophobic literature (Fairburn, 2002; Ng, 1993; Ng, 1999; Reid, 2008; Wai, 2015; Wallace, 2018). In Aotearoa, propaganda targeted and discouraged Māori-Chinese relationships in the past (Ng,1993), and today media portrayals of Chinese and Māori continue to play a significant role in shaping perceptions of identity, and in provoking racial prejudice (Liu, 2009; Lu, 2017). Eurocentric and capitalist postcolonial ideas and immigration regime also impair and widen the gap for meaningful interactions between Māori and Chinese, particularly in urban settings (Ip, 2009; Liu & Lu, 2008; Ng, 1995). Despite a lack of opportunity for meaningful cross-cultural interaction, Māori generally have a feeling of affinity with Chinese and Asian cultures (Ihi Research, 2019; Liu & Lu, 2008). There is an articulated need for a redefining of the nature of immigrant-indigenous relationships and for the creation of spaces for meaningful interaction and conversations to occur (Kukutai & Rata, 2017; Liu & Lu, 2008). Numerous examples of culturally meaningful Chinese-Māori interactions reflect mutually supportive and lasting relationships[6] (Ip, 2008; Ip, 2009; Ng, 1993; Reid, 2008; Wai, 2015; Yoshizawa, 2016). Cordial and collaborative relationships with indigenous peoples were often formed between Southern Chinese workers and indigenous peoples around the globe in early migrations (Chen, 2019; Ip, 2003; Ip, 2008; Ip, 2009; Wai, 2015; Reid, 2008; Yacho, 2018; Yoshizawa, 2016). Particularly as the Southern Chinese began market gardening, indigenous populations often leased out land, and helped in the gardens (Chen, 2019; Ip, 2003; Ip, 2008; Leung & Todd, 2010; Wai, 2015; Yoshizawa, 2016). Many cross-cultural families arose, and their descendants, four or five generations later, share complex identities informed by a rich cultural heritage. For example, numerous Māori, Samoan, South East Asians and other ethnicities share Southern Chinese heritage (Chen, 2019; Hoe, 2013; Ip, 2008; Ip, 2009; Li & Xiao, 2013; Lu, 2017; Reid, 2008; Wai, 2015; Yoshizawa, 2016).

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6 The sinking of the 1902 SS Ventnor ship at the Hokianga in which the *mana whenua* took care of the bones of nearly 100 Southern Chinese sojourners sent to be buried in ancestral homelands led to a lasting friendship across descendants, and the establishment of an historical place of pilgrimage in the Hokianga. Chinese have also donated and supported the building of *marae*, such as Te Hotumanawa *marae* of Rangitāne o Manawatū, which houses Chinese lions and landscape paintings as a token of this friendship. The Chinese group in Wellington learn Māori *waiata* regularly, and there are numerous other initiatives to support the education and connection of Chinese to Māori culture. There are also a number of "Maonese" mixed Chinese-Māori families who embrace and express both sides of their cultures in their daily lives.

Notwithstanding this lasting relationship within New Zealand and Pacific region, the Southern Chinese story is not well understood by the mainstream societies. Southern Chinese descendants, mainly those who look Han Chinese, continue to face unchecked systemic and personal racism, and are often clumped into the "Chinese" category, which actually includes a vast diversity of ethnicities and backgrounds (Chen, 2019; Mckeown, 1999; Ng, 1999). A lack of mainstream acceptance of Chinese has led to a loss of language, cultural practices, and knowledge over the generations, assimilation, and a sense of shame about being Chinese in New Zealand (Ip, 2009; Li & Xiao, 2013; Mckeown, 1999; Ng,1993; Ng, 1999; Reid, 2008; Wong, 2016). Waves of Chinese migrants to New Zealand since the Southern Chinese workers in the 1850's have continued to arrive, with evolving Chinese identities shaped by diverse international and national contexts (Cultural Survival, 1997; Lu, 2017; Reid, 2008; Song, 2019; Wong & Xiao, 2010).

This evolving transnational context presents a rising number of questions related to indigenous rights, and the social and political status of other ethnic minorities in a bicultural country with a multicultural reality which require careful deliberation and discussion. For example, if the concept of *mana whenua* is important to Māori, what does it mean for *tauiwi* such as new Chinese migrants? What should be the nature of the relationship between diverse New Zealanders with Chinese heritage and Māori who claim mana whenua? How can this relationship be fostered upon the arrival of new Chinese migrants? How can diverse ethnic groups live harmoniously with the land if someone else has assumed the right to manage it? This article seeks to enable Chinese and Māori voices to converse together about the concept of *mana whenua*. It does not seek to present the Māori worldview or even the diversity of indigenous Chinese worldviews, but rather to articulate a few key elements of a Chinese worldview in response to the discourse related to the concept of *mana whenua*. To do so, a Chinese perspective of *mana whenua* in cultural values, practices, philosophies, and visual arts is explored. Such an approach enables *tauiwi* to appropriately express their unique cultural diversity in Aotearoa, while also fostering mutual understanding amongst Māori and *tauiwi*. A timely articulation of elements of a worldview indigenous to China (Li & Xiao, 2013) which relate, resonate and respond to a Māori worldview, are offered as insights into the way Chinese New Zealanders can perceive human identity and essential relationships in a Māori context. It is anticipated that this approach would not only highlight key concepts necessary for fostering harmonious relationships in Aotearoa, but would also enable a culturally complex generation of descendants to analyse past, present, and future contexts in light of indigenous worldviews, and informed by such insights, to consciously contribute to the construction of culture, leaving behind outdated aspects, and continuing to build on unique cultural characteristics which will strengthen humanity's passage to maturity.

Mana whenua – Conceptual underpinnings

In Māori philosophy, *mana whenua* is an important concept that has implications for how individuals and communities relate to the natural environment today (Durie, 2011). This concept can be interpreted in various ways. Although the concept appears to be straightforward, it is deeply rooted in cultural, customary, and political understanding and values that link people with the environment (Jackson, 2004). In order to understand

its meaning, one must first consider the concept of *mana*. A brief definition of *mana* has been provided in *Te Aka Dictionary* as "prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma – *mana* is a supernatural force in a person, place or object" (Moorfield, 2011, p.94). When the concept of *mana* is joined with the word *whenua* (meaning land or placenta), it implies a spiritual power associated with people's relationship with the land. *Mana whenua* is defined in *Te Aka Dictionary* as:

> Territorial rights, power from the land – power associated with possession and occupation of tribal land. The tribe's history and legends are based in the lands they have occupied over generations. The land provides sustenance for the people and the resources to provide hospitality (Moorfield, 2011, p.96).

This definition of *mana whenua* has certain implications about what is valued by a group of people. It implies that possessing and occupying tribal land brings power to the tribe. This association with the land sustains the people and empowers them to be able to provide hospitality for others (Kawharu, 2012).

The concept of *mana whenua* is increasingly used in contemporary discourse around Māori development and land rights. The term is often "peppered" in Treaty settlement claims and documents written in English, thereby creating ambiguity around the meaning of the concept as it was used in a precolonial context (Magallanes, 2011). This treatment of the term has caused much controversy over the diverse definitions and understandings of *mana whenua* (Wiri, 2013). There is even debate about the origins of the term and whether it really is an historical Māori concept, or was created in the 19th century after the early British settlers arrived, and used to assist Māori groups with land rights claims (Magallanes, 2011). Several contemporary writers stress the need for clarification of the concept of *mana whenua* (Magallanes, 2011; Tomas, 2004; Wiri, 2013). More politically, the New Zealand Ministry of Justice (2001) describes *mana whenua* as the power associated with possession of land on the one hand, and the power of the land to produce bounties on the other. The Ministry especially emphasises that *mana whenua* is "… the collective's right to exercise guardianship over the land", and a clear distinction is made between this understanding of guardianship and the concept of possessing "ownership" over the land (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 2001, p.49).

Therefore, the term *mana whenua* can be used to describe the people who have the right to exercise guardianship over the land. According to *Te Ara Encyclopedia* (Te Ara, n.d.), those who can claim *mana whenua* can do so because they have either inherited the land generationally *(take tupuna)* and named it after an ancestor *(taunaha),* have won the land through conquest *(take raupatu)*, were gifted the land *(take tuku)*, or were the original discoverers of the land (*whenua kite hou)*. People can claim *mana whenua* rights by proving they have occupied an area continually through the principle of *ahi kā,* which implies that someone has remained to "keep the home fires burning" (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 2001, p.48). Further articulation of the concept of *mana whenua* includes Mutu's (2004) explanation that that *mana whenua* is a god-given responsibility that cannot be removed:

> *Mana whenua* is the *mana* that gods planted within *Papatuanuku*, the mother earth, to give her the power to produce bounties of nature. A person

> or tribe who holds or is *mana whenua* of a particular area has the god-given power and authority to derive a living from the lands and seas and their natural resources and the responsibility to manage, protect and guard them from desecration, pillage and any unwanted attention of outsiders. *Mana whenua* therefore encompasses all of the English notions of ownership… and adds also spiritual aspects of powers and responsibilities…. No Pākeha legislation can ever remove *mana whenua*. It can only either support Māori in the responsibilities we have, or make it extremely difficult for us to carry out our responsibilities as *mana whenua* (Mutu, 2004, p.82).

According to this statement, *mana whenua* is both the god-given *mana* of the land to produce bounties for nature and humanity as well as the god-given *mana* of the people to derive a living from the land and act as her guardians. Those who have *mana whenua* have the duty to protect the land from harmful relationships. It is their uniquely ordained spiritual privilege and responsibility.

Another significant articulation of the concept of *mana whenua* is by Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal. He refers to *mana whenua*, as an individual's "creativity" (Royal, 2006, p.205) in the sense of "what they are capable of bringing into the world" (Royal, 2006, p.205). He also describes two other sources of *mana: mana atua* (from one's "profound commitments") and *mana tupuna* (from "heritage and inheritance"). In this sense, one's *mana* is linked with their capacity to exercise creativity in their environment. It implies that *mana whenua* can be fostered and nurtured within an individual who learns through action to contribute to the harmony and empowerment of their environment (Royal, 2006). Royal also acknowledges the evolving nature of concepts such as *mana,* which change both through conscious shifts and unconscious adaptation along with the evolving values and knowledge of society. Royal explains that where the *mana* of a menacing murderer used to be acknowledged in pre-Christian times, a conscious shift took place later on, in which the *mana* of a peace-keeper, more powerfully capable of harmonizing conflicting interests of different *iwi* (kinship group/tribe), conquered [and changed] the meaning of *mana* previously associated with violence and war (Royal, 2006).

As implied in the definitions offered here, the land provides for humanity and humanity in turn, cares for the land and environment. When people have lived on a particular land for generations, they have a special connection to that area. Their deceased family members are buried in the land, and the new members are born on the land. A family becomes linked to the land in a spiritual and physical way (Mikaere, 2011). Their stories, technology and science that enable their people to advance materially and spiritually are based on that environment (Durie, 2011). This close and enduring relationship with the land brings empowerment to the people (Mikaere, 2011). As Kawharu (2012) states: "Reciprocity enhances the political strength of the kin group by maintaining relations between humans, their ancestors, the spirit world and the natural environment" (Kawharu, 2012, p.353). The concept of *mana whenua* therefore implies a strong reciprocal relationship between the wonderful ability of the land to provide for the people, and humanity's capacity to care for and cultivate the land and environment. This ideal reciprocity within essential relationships within the universe is also an indispensable element of Chinese cosmology and many customary practices.

Reflections of *mana whenua* in Chinese philosophy and culture

Nature of humanity and the universe

A reflection of *mana whenua* in Chinese philosophy and culture can firstly be found in ancient Chinese conceptual understandings of the nature of humanity and the universe. This conceptual understanding of humanity is necessary because it has implications for how human beings relate to the land. According to Māori philosophy, human beings are the children of the Earth and the Sky and are therefore related to the land spiritually and genealogically (Mikaere, 2011). With this philosophical concept comes an understanding that damage to the environment means suffering among humanity, while enrichment of the environment brings well-being and empowerment to the people interacting with it (Kennedy & Jeffries, 2008).

Similarly, there are numerous ancient Chinese narratives and texts that describe the nature of humanity as descendants of the universe itself (Chiu, 1984; Goldin, 1999; Wang, 2008). Two well-known narratives, called *Pan Gu kai tian* (盘古开天) and *Nvwa bu tian* (女娲补天) are among the oldest recorded descriptions about the origin of the universe. The account of *Pan Gu* begins with nothingness, where there is no existence except the formless chaos (Christie, 1973). From the chaos is formed the cosmic egg, and within it comes *yin* (阴, usually presented by earth) and *yang* (阳, usually presented by sky) – two opposite but mutually complementary elements that generate all of the objects in the natural world. *Pan Gu* began to separate the *yin* and *yang* to create the world. He pushed *yin* (namely, the earth) and *yang* (namely, the sky) apart, and when he died, his bodily parts became the various things in the universe such as the sun, mountains and rivers (Chiu, 1984). Another legend speaks of a Goddess *Nvwa* who used the clay of the earth to mould human beings (Birrell, 1993).

Another key example is found in the *Classic of Changes* (*I Ching* 易经) (late 9th century BC), where correlations are made between heaven, earth, and human beings who are all regarded as one cosmic family:

> The Ch'ien trigram symbolizes Heaven; hence should be called Father. K'un symbolizes Earth; hence should be called Mother. Chen has its first (i.e., lowest) line as yang or male, signifying it to be the first son. Sun has its first line as yin or female, signifying it to be the first daughter (as cited in Chiu, 1984, p.160).

In the Daoist (Taoist) classic, the *Tao Te Ching* (道德经) (6th Century BC), all living things including mankind have developed and multiplied organically from one same source (Chan, 1963; Patterson, 2007). This source is referred to as the *Dao* (*Tao* 道).

> The *Tao* produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced All things. All things leave behind them the Obscurity (out of which they have come), and go forward to embrace the Brightness (into which they have emerged), while they are harmonised by the Breath of Vacancy (Tse, 2008, p. 78.)

The *Dao* is described as the "mother of all things", as well as the "universal principle" which "produces oneness" (Chiu, 1984, p.7-11). Mankind is encouraged to exercise guardianship over their mother, or in other words, their environment, and to also strive to learn from the patterns in nature and model themselves after it.

> (The *Tao*) which originated all under the sky is to be considered as the mother of them all. When the mother is found, we know what her children should be. When one knows that he is his mother's child, and proceeds to guard (the qualities of) the mother that belong to him, to the end of his life he will be free from all peril (Tse, 2012, p.48).

A prominent historical text, the *Western Inscription* (1076 AD) by Chang Tsai provides another description of the nature of humanity as descendants of heaven and earth:

> Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I find an intimate place in their midst. Therefore, that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions (as cited in Chan, 1963, p.497).

All of these stories involve a single origin of the universe, as well as the interaction of *yin* and *yang* that result in the production and multiplication of all natural things in the universe. The concept of *yin* and *yang* is also an important aspect of understanding the nature of humanity and the universe, as it is through the constant interaction of these two opposite but complimentary elements that all diverse things live and grow in unity (Patternson, 2007).

Another essential element of these Chinese philosophical understandings about the interrelatedness of all living things in the universe is the concept of *qi* (namely, energy, breath, or life force 气). Chan explains that it is continuously present and flowing in all things, thereby uniting humanity and all of nature (Chan, 1963). He also states that this *qi* flows through nature even as blood and breath exists in the human body.

> [*Ch'i*] [*qi*] moves and flows in all directions and in all manners. Its two elements [yin and yang] unite and give rise to the concrete. Thus the multiplicity of things and human beings is produced. In their ceaseless successions the two elements of yin and yang constitute the great principles of the universe (Chan, 1963, p.505).

The specific narratives mentioned above also have many parallels with Māori narratives, such as in the originating of the universe with *Te Kore* (namely, a state of nothingness), which evolves through various states until the formation and intermarrying of *Papatūānuku* (namely, Earth mother) and *Ranginui* (namely, Sky father), who give birth to a number of *Atua* (divine ancestors) who remain trapped in the darkness in between their parents, until one of the children, *Tāne*, successfully pushes *Ranginui* and

Papatūānuku apart, allowing for the evolution of the universe into the state of *Te Ao Mārama* (the world of light/understanding) (Marsden, 2003; Royal, 2007. According to some traditions, *Tāne* goes on to mould the first woman, *Hineahuone,* from clay, breathing life into her, endowing her with *mauri* (life force)*,* and marrying her, giving birth to humankind from which we descend (Royal, 2005b). It is interesting to note that *mauri*, understood as the "life principle, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle" (Moorfield, 2011, p.106), appears to be equivalent to the concept of *qi,* which is often described as a "vital spirit", "force" or "breath" (Blackburn, 2008).

These historical Chinese and Māori narratives describe humanity as not only a descendant of nature, with an inherent responsibility to exercise guardianship of their environment, but also as an inseparable part of the oneness of nature, sharing the same *qi/mauri* life force and essential make-up. This conceptual view of the role and place of humanity within the universe is key to an understanding of *mana whenua.*

Harmonious and reciprocal relationship between humanity and nature

Prior passages imply an organic and reciprocal relationship between humanity and the universe, and maintaining this harmonious relationship is an ideal state that underlines many Chinese philosophical values and cultural practice (Chan, 1963). This ideal state of harmony between humanity and the universe may be likened to a station of *mana whenua,* not in regard to having authoritative rights to land, but in the sense of enhancing the *mana* of the land and people. Various Chinese schools of thought promote values relevant to striving to maintain harmony with the universe. In some Chinese philosophies, identity of human beings is given purpose when placed in the context of the greater universe, which is to be revered, honoured and admired, not possessed by humans (Fan, 2001). Confucianism encourages the moral cultivation of the individual that they may exercise their inherent duties towards their family and wider environment. This is particularly implied in a Confucian statement from Chung Yung:

> …only those who are absolutely sincere can fully develop their nature. If they can fully develop their nature, they can then fully develop the nature of others. If they can fully develop the nature of others, they can fully develop the nature of things. If they can fully develop the nature of things, they can then assist in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth, they can thus form a trinity with Heaven and Earth (as cited in Tu, 1989, p77).

This image of humanity forming a triad with heaven and earth emphasises the great value placed on humanity's role to maintain harmony in the universe. Confucianism has always been concerned with seeking harmony with nature, and living within the boundaries of nature (Tu, 2001). In Neo-Confucian thought, humanity can achieve this harmony by practicing the principles of creativity, life and growth (Adler, 1998). In Daoist philosophy on the other hand, this harmony is reached by following and accepting nature's rhythms (Chiu, 1984). One of the most vital attributes promoted by Confucianism and essential to maintaining harmony is filial piety. Another prominent Confucianist – Mencius considered filial piety as the basis from which Chinese ethics were generated (Ikezawa, 1994). It is about showing respect and bringing honour to

one's parents and family. Part of filial piety was the observance of rituals, and these traditional family rituals often observed seasonal cycles, thereby fostering reverence towards family and nature (Chang, 2011; Hsu, 1948). Filial piety was claimed to have come from heaven and earth in the *Book of Filial Piety* (*The Hsiâo King* 孝经) as cited in Chiu (1984):

> Filial piety is the first principle of heaven, the ultimate standard of earth, the norm of conduct for the people. The people ought to follow the pattern of heaven and earth, which leads them by the brightness, of the heavens and the benefits of the earth to harmonize all under heaven (as cited in Chiu, 1984, p.348).

The principle of reciprocity is another important value of nature which Confucianism encouraged individuals to adopt in their family dealings (Ikezawa, 1994). This reciprocal relationship that characterises family interactions extends like concentric circles, to the community, the society and to all of nature (Chang, 2011).

Similar value can be found in Māori philosophy, which emphasizes *whakapapa,* identity that stems from connection to the land, to *Atua,* and ultimately to the origins of the universe (Taonui, 2015). In many Māori narratives, humanity emanates from ancestors who are themselves aspects of the natural environment (Royal, 2005b). As children of the natural environment, we trust our ancestors to provide us with the bounties needed for sustenance and we treat the natural environment with respect and reverence (Magallanes, 2015). Customary Māori practices such as returning the first fish to be caught to *Tangaroa* (the God of the Sea), performing *karakia* (incantations) to acknowledge Gods of the natural environment*,* and observing rules and religious restrictions are among a few expressions of this conception of humanity as growing from the land and natural environment (Meredith, 2006).

Honouring ancestors, land value, Feng Shui (风水) and agriculture

Related to the value of filial piety and reciprocity is the traditional Chinese practice of honouring ancestors. The history of honouring ancestors in China goes back 10,000 years to the Neolithic period (Lakos, 2010). Sometimes translated as "ancestral worship", this practice is about honouring the deceased who still play a vital part in the life of the living descendants (Chiu, 1984), and is characterised by a reciprocal relationship where living descendants pay respect to deceased ancestors in return for protection and blessings (Chang, 2011; Hsu, 1948; Poceski, 2009). Chang states that this practice served to maintain unity and fellowship in a community, strengthened loyalty to the family, and reinforced a sense of duty to subsist sacrificially for the future generations (Chang, 2011). Not only did each family, town and village have their communal ancestral shrine, but even cities had communal monuments for the common ancestors (Chiu, 1984).

The traditional practice of honouring ancestors in Chinese culture brings a close connection between families and the land and has a fundamental impact on how Chinese people traditionally perceived land and its value. Deceased family members were often buried on the ancestral land, where the living descendants could frequently

visit the resting places and pay respect. It was believed that the burying of deceased on their own ancestral land would allow their spirits to rest peacefully (Teather, 1998). Not only was the burial of ancestors important, but so was the location of the sacred burial ground that was to be treated with reverence and respect (Lakos, 2010). Lineages were recorded and kept in communal ancestral halls where people who shared the same lineage would come to pray for and pay respect to common ancestors (Kuah, 1999). These practices of honouring ancestors were so highly regarded, that it was important for people to remain to keep the incense burning (Kuah-Pearce, 2006). Being able to honour one's ancestors by burying them on ancestral land and frequenting their resting places is a characteristic of a family that has *mana whenua.* This practice also relates to the principle of maintaining *mana whenua* through *ahi kā* (having family reside continuously on the ancestral land in order to keep the "home fires burning").

This high regard for honouring ancestors can also be found when Chinese exercise their belief of *feng shui*. Family members were often buried near a mountain or river, where there was good *feng shui* (Kuah, 1999). The purpose of *feng shui* is to create balance and harmony with the environment (Wu, 2019). Burying ancestors according to the requirements of *feng shui* allowed the *qi* to flow to the living descendants, bringing good fortune, health and prosperity (Myers, 2014; Teather, 1998). *Qi* not only flows through the land but it also flows through lineage, thereby uniting humanity with the land and the deceased with the living (Bol & Weller, 1998). It was important to determine the location and direction of a home so that the family would live in accordance with the universe (Chiu, 1984).

With such importance placed on filial piety and honouring ancestors, extended families and clans traditionally stayed together, residing in an area over many generations (Kuah-Pearce, 2006). In many lineage villages, descendants of a common ancestor resided on a land for generations, and only the male descendants could claim land rights to that area (Wienclaw, 2009). Ancestral land was often collectively owned and inherited through the male line (Watson, 1977). Land could be rented to outsiders, but they would not be considered native unless they would have lived there for a couple hundred years (Hase, 2013). This traditional land tenure system and the highly-regarded land value in Chinese culture and tradition is closely related to *mana whenua* that is gained through *take tupuna* (namely, inheritance from ancestors) in Aotearoa.

Chinese tradition towards honouring ancestors and land has significant impact on the nature of society and agricultural methods. Ancient China was an agricultural society, and families remained attached to their land through agricultural activities. Lineage families were often rice farmers whose lives were dictated by the land. From living closely with the land for generations, farmers developed sustainable agricultural practices. Traditional Chinese agriculture promoted a harmonious relationship between crops, the human being, Heaven (the climate), and Earth (the soil), and agricultural practices relied heavily on the nature of the seasons (Li, 2009). Li explained that traditional techniques were based on "agriculture organism" and worked to improve the environment and enhance productivity of the land. He also explained that a concept that informs traditional agricultural practices appeared in the *Qing* and *Ming* Dynasties that revolves around three *yi: wuyi* (suitable for biological), *shuyi* (appropriate time), and

duyi (suitable for soil). Both Daoism and Confucianism promoted living frugally, and the limited amount of land for a lineage family promoted this too. Agricultural practice also included rituals to offer thanks and prayers to deities and Gods of the Earth and climate. Even to this day Chinese celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, in which people express their gratitude for the bounties given to humanity by the Earth (chinadaily.com.cn, 2003). Traditional Chinese agricultural practices recovered fertility, and restrictions and frugal usage were employed, thereby ensuring continuous use of the land. This situation coincides with the concept of *mana whenua* which also relates to the ability of people to access the land in order to provide for others. If the people are able to enhance the fertility and *mana* of the *whenua* itself, then this may also be related to *mana whenua.*

The close connection between living descendants and deceased ancestors*,* is also a significant concept in *Te Ao Māori.* The *whare tupuna* (ancestral house) seems to be much like the Chinese ancestral house in the way that it is a place where common descendants can meet and honour their *tupuna* (ancestors)*. Tupuna* are always acknowledged in *karanga* (ceremonial calls) and *whaikōrero* (oratory) and often in *waiata* (songs) and *karakia* (prayer), and the *whare tupuna* itself represents a significant ancestor, with the *heke* (rafters) representing a ribcage, the *tāhuhu* (ridgepole) the spine, and the *poutokomanawa,* (the central post that holds up the house) is the heart (Brown, 2014). There is also a known practice of facing the *whare* towards the East (Brown, 2014), and *whare tupuna* (perhaps not so coincidentally) are often located in places of good *feng shui* next to mountains, rivers or the sea. The family was viewed as sharing the land (whether deceased or unborn), and the present generation *hapū* (subtribe) acted as *kaitiaki* (custodians) of the land, maintaining a reciprocal relationship with the land, taking care of it in order to receive the bounties of nature*,* ensuring that future generations could also receive these benefits and status (Cragg, 2009).

Exploring mana whenua in the art of shan shui hua (山水画) and Māori kōwhaiwhai painting

Shan shui hua – A Chinese arts tradition

The direct translation of *shan shui hua* (山水画) is "painting of mountains and water". Although the landscape was always the source and inspiration for Chinese arts, the art of *shan shui hua* became most distinguished as its own art form in the Tang Dynasty (from 618 AD to 907 AD), and continued to be refined all the way up to the Southern Song dynasty (from 1127 AD to 1279 AD) (Lauer, 2013). The influence of this art form continues to permeate the work of contemporary artists today.

For many centuries, mountains and rivers have been considered as a sacred link between heaven and earth in China. For this reason, they were places of pilgrimage, devotion, and meditation, where reverent acts of gratitude might be received by heaven, and spiritual enlightenment be attained (Hurvitz, 1970; Poceski, 2009; Strassberg, 1994).

Moreover, the earlier forms of the two prominent Chinese religions – Daoism and Buddhism greatly influenced the development of the art form. The teachings of Daoism led to the practice of sages going to live in the mountains as hermits who observe

nature's ways as models for self-cultivation, converse with mountain spirits and prepare life-long elixirs (Shaw, 1988). During the political unrest when the Han Dynasty (from 206 BC to 220 AD) broke into rival clans, there was a heightened appreciation for the countryside among neo-Daoists , and the practice of going to live among the landscape became more widely adopted, not only by sages, but by anyone seeking harmony (Shaw, 1988). The landscape therefore, became intimately linked with cultivating spirituality and social morality.

The Buddhist practice of meditation on an image such as the landscape also influenced the use of landscape paintings. The painting served as a substitute for being in nature when one was far from it, and the viewer could meditate on the image of the landscape in the painting and still perceive the spiritual forces of nature and achieve spiritual enlightenment (Birnbaum, 1981). Tsung Ping (375–444 BC), a Chinese landscape painter, intimated that the act of observing nature, whether in real life or in a painting, could uncover truths, please the eye, uplift the spirit, and even bring one closer to the spirits reflected in the mountains (Hurvitz, 1970). Although the main subjects of *shan shui hua* are images of the landscape, the aim of the painting was to show the energy or life force (*qi*) in all natural things that sustains all the ever changing processes of nature and is the unifying force in the universe (Ci, 2010).

Analysing mana whenua in Māori kōwhaiwhai and Chinese shan shui hua

Māori *kōwhaiwhai* painting from the 1800's (See Figure 1) reflect the forces of nature. Painted rafters adorn the ribcage of the *whare tupuna* (ancestral house) which in its entire structure references the body of an important ancestor. *Kōwhaiwhai* patterns are often named after and associated with various natural forms (Neich, 1993). Many students of Māori art have perceived in *kōwhaiwhai* a sense of energy, continuity and process, which is inherent in nature and in *whakapapa* (namely, genealogical ties) (Kedgley, 2002). *Kōwhaiwhai* has also been described as an expression of the intimate relationship between human life and their natural environment (Skinner, 2010).

A more contemporary example of *kōwhaiwhai* and landscape painting by a well-known Māori-Southern Chinese artist – Buck Nin is provided. His paintings such as the one presented in Figure 2, explore contemporary issues related to *mana whenua*, such as dislocation from ancestral land, Māori empowerment and environmental sustainability. He uses *kōwhaiwhai* patterns and rhythms to show the continuous, dynamic life forces operating in the earth, sky and environment (Parekowhai, n.d.). His use of *kōwhaiwhai* indicates how some of the values and themes of customary Māori painting have carried on and evolved in his contemporary work.

Both *mauri* and *qi* are described as a life force inherent in all natural things and the depiction of this life principle is something that both Māori *kōwhaiwhai* and Chinese landscape painting attempt to depict as a way to enhance the *mana* of a people.

A famous Chinese landscape painting, *Early Spring* (*Zao chun tu* 早春图) (See Figure 3) by Guo Xi (郭熙, from 1020 AD to 1090 AD), fulfils the aim of conveying these mysterious forces of the universe. The presence of *dao*, which is described as the "great void" that "contains everything" and is contained and present in "emptiness", is implied in the vast empty spaces of paintings such as *Early Spring*. These empty spaces

Figure 1: Rukupo, Raharuki. *Kowhaiwhai in Te Hau ki Turanga*. 1842. *A Guide to the Maori Meeting House Te Hau Ki Turanga*. Terence Barrow. Wellington. Dominion Museum. 1965. 28. Photograph.

of silk canvas interact and blend harmoniously with the dark painted ink, as if merging and separating in between form and space, or matter and spirit. This visual convention alludes to the constant interaction between the opposite but mutually complementary forces of *yin* and *yang* – the two components that form the *qi* (Sze, 1963). The vertical shape of the painting emphasises the relationship between heaven and earth, and there is a rhythm in the brushwork that adds to a sense of movement and *qi* inherent and permeating all things (Sze, 1963). A hierarchical scale can also be found in the painting, evinced by the dominant presentation of sky and mountain, and the small-scale depiction of human beings. This is symbolic of the relationship between humanity and the land.

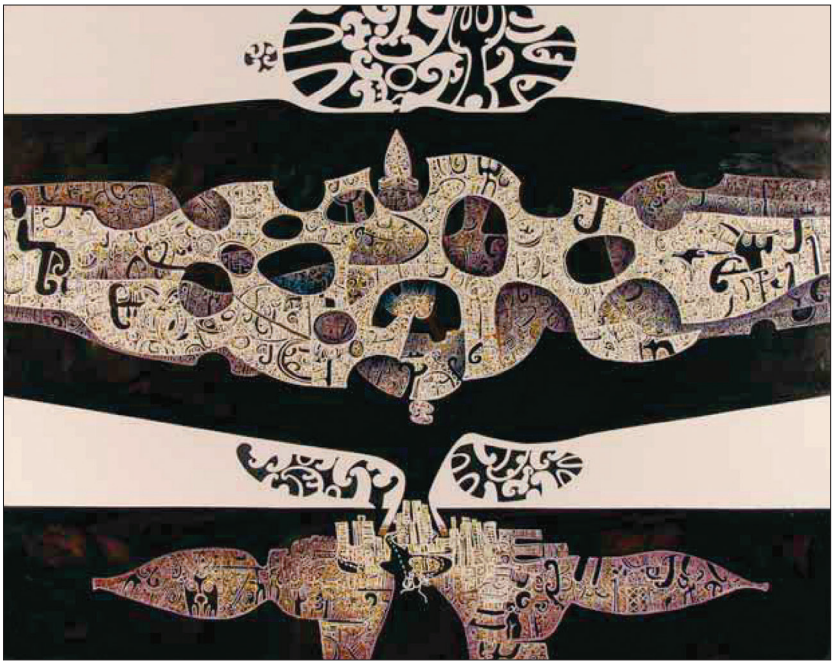

Figure 2: Nin, Buck. *Challenge of the Land*. 1976. Real Art Road Show, The Art Collection. Real Art Show. Web. 02 Feb. 2015. <realartroadshow.co.nz/essays/Nin Buck.pdf>

Taking a contemporary piece of Chinese landscape painting as another illustration, *Blossoms by River Sides* (两岸桃花) was painted by a well-known contemporary Chinese artist named *Chen Zizhuang* (陈子庄 1913-1976) (See Figure 4). A notion of the underlying unity of nature is conveyed through the treatment of various elements of the picture. Pink, the only colour used, is drawing attention to the season as springtime. The combination of vaporous tone and revolving line, dry and wet brush strokes, give the impression of the *qi* force flowing and stirring through the landscape. It also reminds us of the opposing *yin* and *yang* forces, which are constantly interacting and rotating, causing all things to breathe, live, and transform. The subject of the fisherman in his boat and home by the river presents the human existence and its communication with the nature. While the artist employed new perspective and inventive techniques to compose this painting, the overall language of the painting like many early artistic works, conveys a powerfully reverent and harmonious relationship between people and nature, united by the force of *qi,* and the operating principle of *yin* and *yang.*

Overall, the very act of painting or viewing the landscape is seen as creating a link between humanity and the universe. The painting itself can serve as a vehicle for being in nature (Law, 2011). This act of landscape painting was described as an act

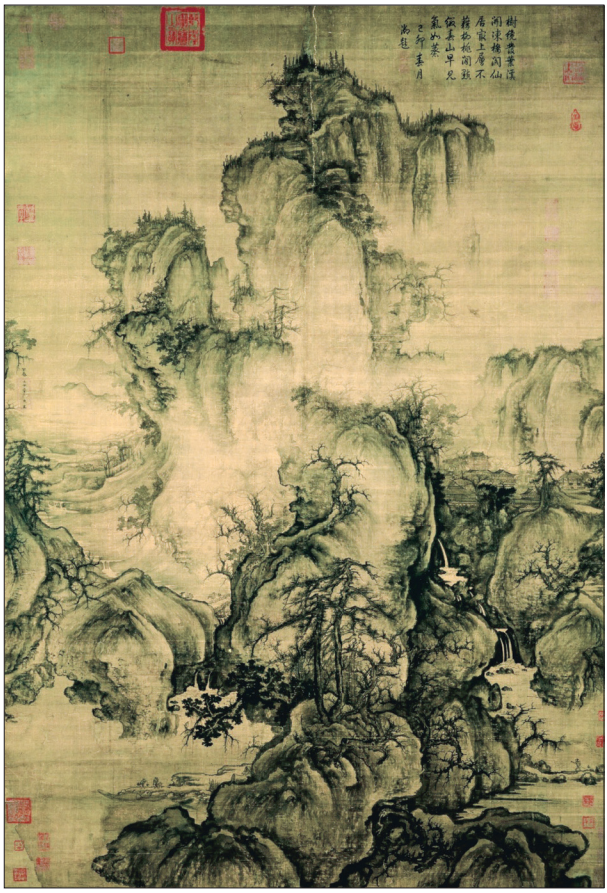

Figure 3: Guo Xi (郭熙). Early Spring (早春图). 1072. *The National Palace Museum. Splendid Treasures: A Hundred Masterpieces of the National Palace 3 Museum on Parade*. <https://www.npm.gov.tw/exh100/treasures/en/img7_1.html>

of reverence and meditation that drew on the powers of Heaven to create beautiful artworks, the process of which enhanced the artist's spiritual power (Sze, 1963). The artist is becoming attuned to the forces of nature, thereby nourishing a part of heaven in oneself (Ci, 2010; Sze, 1963). Through painting the landscape, the Chinese artists are expanding their knowledge of the universe and cultivating their own higher qualities. It may be said then, that the intention and outcome of painting the landscape is to strengthen a sense of *mana whenua* not only for the viewers, but also in the artists themselves. When an artist reaches this station, he can be said to be of the 'divine class', and perhaps this practice could be described as *mana*-enhancing.

Figure 4: Chen Zizhuang (陈子庄). *Blossoms by River Sides* (两岸桃花). 1913-1976. Shi Hu Hua Xuan 石壶画选. Rong Bao Zhai (荣宝斋出版社). 2010, p.51.

Conclusion

This paper has highlighted similarities in Māori and Chinese worldviews regarding the relationship between the land and people, and the implications this relationship has for either enhancing or diminishing of their sense of *mana*. The Chinese worldview places value on fostering harmony between humanity and their environment; and therefore, discusses *mana whenua* in the sense of enhancing the *mana* of people and the land through a harmonious and reciprocal relationship with each other. In this way, *mana whenua* may be summarily described in Chinese as 来自土地的势力/威嚴. Aspects of Chinese philosophy, culture and art have been identified that relate to strengthening this relationship with the land, such as *feng shui*, traditional agricultural practices and honouring ancestors. This research has also examined how the tradition of Māori *kōwhaiwhai* paintings and Chinese landscape paintings emphasise the importance of fostering harmony between humanity and nature. The highly refined and ancient art form has therefore influenced the way that both Māori and Chinese perceive the land and humanity's relationship with it and demonstrates how visual arts can be used to enhance the *mana* of people and the environment.

As the number of new Chinese migrants in Aotearoa increases, approaches are needed for Chinese who have established lives in this country or who are forming business relationships, to interact meaningfully with Māori who have the right of *mana whenua*, to learn how to operate in ways that mutually support Māori aspirations and *tikanga*. These new Chinese migrants and companies in particular, have a need for greater understanding of concepts like *mana whenua*. Learning about the similarities between cultures may also help people overcome racial prejudice and find more *mana* enhancing approaches to their work and cross-cultural interaction. In order for Māori and migrants to develop a relationship of host and hosted, there is a need for Māori to have a sense of *mana whenua,* and for migrants to have the opportunity to connect with

Māori, exchange culture and values, and build relationships. A deeper understanding of time-honoured concepts such as *mana whenua* are beneficial for all people in Aotearoa, regardless of ethnic background, and can inform the analysis of current structures and policies in contemporary society.

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