

UNSETTLING RECOVERY:
NATURAL DISASTER RESPONSE AND THE POLITICS OF CONTEMPORARY
SETTLER COLONIALISM

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STEVEN ANDREW KENSINGER

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DR. DAVID LIPSET, ADVISER

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Abstract

This dissertation is an ethnographic case study of the Christchurch Central City Rebuild. Following a series of severe earthquakes near Christchurch, New Zealand between September 2010 and February 2011, the central government declared a state of emergency and passed the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 (CER Act). This act mandated the creation of a new governing body, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, to oversee the development and implementation of a recovery strategy and plan for the Central City to be developed in cooperation with the Christchurch City Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, the local Māori tribal authority. I analyze the structure of power established by the post-earthquake recovery legislation through the lens of Rebuild discourse, a discursive regime comprised of multiple political projects that each engaged in recovery in particular ways to enact their specific vision of what future Christchurch ought to be. I argue that the passage of the CER Act and the structure of power it created in post-earthquake Christchurch drew on the legacy of New Zealand's settler-colonial history to enable the neoliberal settler state in its efforts to dispossess local Christchurch residents of access to their city while also maintaining the ongoing dispossession of the local indigenous group Ngāi Tahu in order to serve the interests of economic and political elites

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List of Organizational Acronyms, Names and other Abbreviations

This is a list of commonly used institutional and organizational acronyms and names that appear throughout the dissertation.

CCC: Christchurch City Council, local governing body for the Christchurch municipal area

CCDU: Christchurch Central Development Unit, organization created by CERA responsible for overseeing anchor project delivery

CCRP: Christchurch Central Recovery Plan, a recovery plan developed by CERA, TRoNT, and CCC that outlines the 17 anchor projects and precincts that served as the focus of the earthquake recovery

CERA: Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, government body established by the CER Act 2011 that was responsible for overseeing the recovery of Christchurch

CERR Act 2010: Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act 2010, legislation passed by Parliament following the September 2010 earthquake

CER Act 2011: Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011, legislation passed by Parliament following the February 2011 earthquake that repealed the CERR Act 2010 and mandated the creating of CERA

ECAN: Environment Canterbury, regional council for Canterbury

Gapfiller: local volunteer organization formed in the wake of the February 2011 earthquake for the purpose of “activating” vacant space in the Central City

Greening the Rubble: local volunteer organization formed in the wake of the February 2011 earthquake that transforms vacant space in the Central City into green spaces and public parks

LIVS: Life in Vacant Spaces, an organization created to assist Gapfiller, Greening the Rubble and other community organizations in brokering short-term leases for the use of space in the Central City

Te Putahi Centre for Christchurch Architecture and City-Making: local community organization that sponsored events related to Christchurch’s architectural heritage and the practice of urban development and design

TRoNT: Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, the Ngāi Tahu tribal authority

Te Whare Roimata: a bicultural urban marae located in the Inner-City East neighborhood of Christchurch

[A note on Māori language use](#)

The use of Māori words and place names is commonplace amongst both Māori-identified and non-Māori-identified people throughout New Zealand. It is not uncommon for speakers of New Zealand English to make use of Māori words in lieu of their English equivalents, contributing to the unique linguistic heritage of New Zealand. Throughout the text, I have included Māori terms where appropriate in italics, and provided an English equivalent in parentheses following the first appearance of the term within the text. I have also included a Glossary of Māori Terms and Place Names that begins on the next page.

Glossary of Māori terms and place names

This list contains all the Māori language terms and Māori place-names used throughout this dissertation. Definitions have been taken from *Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary* by John C. Moorfield (2000). Māori words are layered in meaning, and change depending upon the context in which they are used, who is using them, and for what purposes they are being used. The definitions I have provided here are not meant to be comprehensive or definitive. Rather they align with the context in which they are used in the text. Each term has the potential to carry additional meanings that are not noted here.

Aotearoa: New Zealand

hapuu: kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe – section of a large kinship group; also, to be pregnant or conceived in the womb

Hine Paaka: Christchurch Bus Interchange; also, a Ngāi Tūāhuriri ancestor and well-known fowling tree

hui: a gathering, meeting, assembly, seminar, or conference

iwi: extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people—often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor

Kaiapoi: important Ngāi Tahu settlement that was sacked by Te Rauparaha in the nineteenth century

kapa haka: Māori performing arts, also refers to a Māori performance group

mana: prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma

manaaki: to support, take care of, give hospitality to, protect, look out for

manaakitanga: hospitality, kindness

mana motuhake: autonomy, *mana* through self-determination and control over one's destiny

mana whenua: 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 the sustenance for the people and the resources to provide hospitality.

manuhiri: visitor, guest

marae: meeting place or community center

matauranga Māori: Māori knowledge – the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori worldview and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices

mihi: greeting, introduction, acknowledgement, tribute

Ngāi Tahu: tribal group of much of the South Island, sometimes called Kāi Tahu

Ngāi Tūāhuriri: subtribe of Ngāi Tahu whose traditional authority extends over the territory occupied by Christchurch.

Ngāti Māmoe: tribal group which was largely replaced by Ngāi Tahu through intermarriage and conquest.

Ngāti Toa: tribal group south of Kāwhia, the Kapiti-Ōtaki area and parts of the northern South Island. A Tainui tribal group, some of whom moved with Te Rauparaha to the Kapiti Coast Area.

Ōtākaro: Avon River

Ōtautahi: Christchurch

pepeha: tribal saying, proverb (especially about a tribe), set form of words, formulaic expression, figure of speech, motto, slogan

pou: post, pole, pillar

te reo Māori: Māori language

rūnanga: council, tribal council, assembly, board, boardroom

tāngata: people, persons, human beings

tāngata whenua: local people, hosts, indigenous people of the land—people born of the placenta and of the land where the people’s ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried

tikanga: custom, lore, meaning, plan, practice, convention, reason, purpose

tino rangatiratanga: self-determination

tūrangawaewae: place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and *whakapapa*

ture-wairua: faith, spirituality, spiritual practice

waka: canoe, also refers to allied kinship groups descended from the crew of a canoe which migrated to New Zealand

takiwā: district, area, territory, vicinity, region

Te Wai Pounamou: The South Island of New Zealand

Tuahiwi: ancestral *marae* for members of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapuu of Ngāi Tahu

Waitaha: Canterbury; also, the name of the tribe that formerly occupied much of the South Island before they were displaced by Ngāti Māmoe, who in turn were later dominated by Ngāi Tahu.

whakamaa: shame or embarrassment

whakapapa: genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent

whakataukī: proverb, saying, cryptic message, aphorism

whānui: general public

whenua: land, country, ground, placenta, afterbirth

whānau: family group, extended family, a familiar term of address to a number of people
– sometimes used to refer to friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members;
also, to be born, give birth

Introduction

Unsettling the settler state

What does it mean to settle on unsettled land?

This dissertation answers this question through an ethnographic analysis of earthquake recovery in Christchurch, New Zealand, a process that was referred to locally as the Christchurch Central City Rebuild. On the 4th of September 2010, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake struck near the town of Darfield, 40 km west of Christchurch, the largest city on New Zealand's South Island and second largest city in the country. The earthquake caused significant damage to buildings and infrastructure in and around Christchurch. Luckily no deaths resulted from this earthquake. However, five months later on 22 February 2011 at 12:51 pm, an aftershock measured 6.3 in what are known as the Port Hills- a ridge that separates the city of Christchurch from the port town of Lyttleton. While the magnitude of this aftershock was less than the previous earthquake, the February tremor resulted in 181 deaths and caused much more severe and widespread destruction than its predecessor. Nearly 60% of buildings in the Central Business District were deemed structurally unsound and slated for demolition (Dalziel and Saunders, 2012). The city center was declared a "Red Zone," and access by the general public was restricted. Large residential swaths of the city were also declared Red Zones and forcibly evacuated, rendering whole neighborhoods condemned for demolition.

In April of 2011, the New Zealand Parliament passed the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act (CER Act 2011) which set the terms for both the political and discursive frameworks within which recovery from the February earthquake would take place. The act mandated the creation of a recovery strategy and plan to be developed in cooperation between the Christchurch City Council (CCC), the local Māori tribal authority known as Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT), and a new government body called the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA). While on paper, these three entities were given equal power to determine the course of the city's recovery, the newly mandated central government organization, CERA, dominated decision making and administrative processes because of its backing by the national government. Furthermore, the creation of

a new cabinet position, Earthquake Minister, further entrenched CERA as the dominant recovery organization.

In this dissertation, I argue that post-earthquake recovery in Christchurch was appropriated by the neoliberal settler state to dispossess local Christchurch residents of access to their city while also maintaining the ongoing dispossession of the local Māori group Ngāi Tahu to serve the interests of economic and political elites. Rather than address deeper structural problems of racism and socio-economic inequality that rendered Christchurch vulnerable to a large-scale disaster, what the Christchurch Rebuild accomplished was the marginalization of the city's most vulnerable residents and a reproduction of colonial-era racial antagonisms that rendered Christchurch a fractured community. I analyze the post-disaster structure of power established by the CER Act and its effects on patterns of interaction between socially differentiated groups—groups whose identities were largely inherited from New Zealand's colonial past. I show how the earthquakes revealed the existence of multiple and overlapping social networks whose power to affect change were limited by the assumptions contained within the CER Act regarding the structural relationship between Māori—the country's indigenous inhabitants—and Pākehā—New Zealanders of European descent.

This dissertation is about how natural disaster reveals human difference as a fiction designed to reinforce state power. A notion of racial difference has been of crucial importance in conceptualizing the history of New Zealand (Werry 2011). When considered in relation to this history, the structure of power established by the CER Act represented a contemporary attempt by the post-colonizing state to discipline recovery actors into subject positions that extended colonial era racial divisions into the present to maintain indigenous dispossession. This was largely accomplished through the discursive positioning of Māori, New Zealand's indigenous inhabitants, and Pākehā, the white settler majority, as inhabiting incommensurate worlds—Te Ao Māori, the Māori world; and te Ao Pākehā, the Pākehā world (Salmond, 1991; 1997).

I show that while there may exist an incommensurable gulf between te Ao Māori and te Ao Pākehā, that gulf does not preclude the possibility of people engaging

simultaneously with the multiplicity of worlds at their disposal. I do this by challenging traditional notions of identity formation within anthropology which have traditionally focused on the construction and maintenance of boundaries for inclusion and exclusion in social groups (Barth, 1969). I focus instead on the overlapping networks of relations that compelled and motivated people to act in the ways they did. In the context of the Christchurch Rebuild, I refer to these networks as Rebuild Projects. These were political projects, defined by networks of institutionalized, formal, and informal relationships focused on the production of urban space in ways that reflected the different value systems held by Christchurch residents.

I understand the concept of identity as an iterative phenomenon, as something that is constantly made and remade through the repeated act(s) of its performance. If identity is formed in the moment of the performance of certain speech acts, then the notion of fixed and stable identities unravels because of the ability of the subject to draw on multiple, overlapping, and often times contradictory discursive frameworks to inform their social performances (Butler 1997). It is this unraveling that challenges the incommensurability of worlds, or at least the assumption that the worlds people inhabit are mutually exclusive (Gordillo, 2014). If as I argue, identity refers to the performance of certain speech acts derived from membership in particular networks, the identity of the social actor will change depending upon the context in which they perform those speech acts. The 2011 Christchurch earthquake highlighted the fact that the networks social actors in Christchurch drew upon to structure their lives were not comprised of entirely human actors but encompassed a range of non-human actors. When considered in light of the colonial history of the South Island of New Zealand, analyzing society from the point of view of an ever-expanding constellation of networks allows for a more nuanced consideration of post-earthquake activity in Christchurch, one that does not lose sight of what Ann Stoler (2016) calls the durability of imperial forms in shaping contemporary experiences.

Conceptualizing the neoliberal settler state

The question of settlement has become increasingly pertinent with the scientific recognition of anthropogenic climate change and the increasingly dire predictions by climate scientists of its irreversible effects (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000). Melting ice caps and rising sea levels, the most obvious consequences of rising global temperatures, are themselves troubling enough. The intensification of the earth's geophysical instability seems to correspond to a parallel process of the intensification of social, political, and economic instability, as can be seen in the growing income gap between the ultra-rich and the very poor, the boom-and-bust cycles of the global economy, and the rise of neo-nationalist and populist political movements throughout many Western democratic nation-states. Yet when considered alongside other "routine" earth processes such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes and typhoons, the volatility of the earth's unbridled energy, intensified by human activity, reaches new heights of sublime awesomeness.

My borrowing of terms from nineteenth century romanticism to describe the power of the earth's energy is intentional, since that period not only gave the modern West the philosophical foundations of its relationship to "nature," it also witnessed the expansion of Western culture into a truly global phenomenon. The consequences of that expansionist energy can be seen writ large in the social, political and economic challenges posed to settler and indigenous communities by recent natural hazard events. Public revelations that the state of North Carolina in the United States explicitly denied climate change science to enable the development of vulnerable (yet highly desirable) coastal areas, the ongoing misinformation campaign about the effects of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico, largely perpetrated by the Trump administration itself, and the legacy of the Bush administration's mishandling of the response and relief effort around Hurricane Katrina all point toward the need to further interrogate the contemporary dilemmas posed by patterns of human settlement that emerged out of the nineteenth century's European expansion. New Zealand is of particular interest in this regard because of its location along the juncture of the Australian and Pacific tectonic plates, rendering it highly

susceptible to geologic disturbances. When the strides made in geological science to monitor these fault lines and make predictions about their future volatility are combined with predictions about rising sea levels due to climate change, the ongoing human habitation of New Zealand can no longer be explained solely by the need for space for settlement, but instead becomes an act of human tenacity in the face of environmental obliteration. In other words, the pertinent question to ask of New Zealand and other places threatened by the effects of climate change is no longer “how do people endure” in the face of these challenges, but rather “why do people endure” when the future of those places is so uncertain.

Yet the stability of New Zealand and other contemporary settler societies is not only compromised by the instability of the earth’s surface. Unsettled questions of state sovereignty, the economic sustainability of global capitalism, and the rights of indigenous peoples to land and resources within their territories challenges the idea that the nineteenth century project of European expansion is a done deal (Wolfe, 1999; Stoler 2016; Simpson 2014; Coulthard 2014). The permanency of the current geopolitical order of independent nation states is thrown into question as transnational flows of capital and people across borders become intensified by increasing political, economic, and environmental instability (Clark, 2014; Dalby, 2007). Furthermore, the emergence of the transnational indigenous peoples’ movement has challenged the moral authority of contemporary states, particularly settler states in which a non-indigenous, ethnically European and racially white population remains in the majority (Niezen, 2003; Povinelli, 2002; Johnson, 2008, Maaka and Fleras, 2005, Engle 2010). Coupled with the increasing de-territorialization of national economies and the rise of transnational agreements and treaty organizations whose authority could (and very often does) supersede the authority of national governments to effectively govern their territories, the future endurance of the nation-state form becomes less certain. Because of New Zealand’s specific history of colonial settlement and indigenous dispossession and the 1984 neoliberal revolution that led to the specific recovery strategy adopted by the state, the Christchurch Central City

Rebuild served as an ideal backdrop against which to analyze the challenges to state authority brought about by globalization.

To address the effects of these changing political and economic conditions on the practice of state power, I discuss what I call the neoliberal settler state. Unlike the settler state of the colonial era whose power depended on the acquisition and control of territory for the exploitation of natural resources and agricultural development, the neoliberal settler state derives its power from its branding as a destination for investment. As Margaret Werry (2011) has discussed, tourism played a central role in the functioning of state power in New Zealand for quite some time, beginning in the colonial era when New Zealand was framed as an exotic playground in which the imperial fantasies of European settlers could be played out for the purpose of consolidating racial solidarity among whites. This sense of racial solidarity was crucial for the functioning of the colonial settler state because it justified the dispossession of indigenous Māori for the benefit of European settlers. It was only through the act of racial othering that the state's policy of alienating Māori land could be ideologically justified.

Under the contemporary neoliberal regime, the settler state was invested in the control and domination of territory, but for different ends than under the colonial regime. Rather than acquire territory for the purpose of settlement as was the case under the colonial settler state, the neoliberal regime required territory for the purpose of capital investment. As Werry noted, the Fifth National Government led by Prime Minister John Key that was in power when the Christchurch earthquakes struck, adopted “foreign direct investment-led, pro-business policies,” that while initially strengthening the economy, ultimately contributed to a decline in economic fortunes in the wake of the 2008 global recession (2016, 193). One result of this policy approach has been the weakening of employee rights and a rise in the power of employers—employers whom Werry points out, are often not based in New Zealand but are drawn there because of the state's willingness to sidestep its own employment laws to attract foreign investment (2016, 194). New Zealand economist Jane Kelsey has referred to the economic drivers under neoliberalism as FIRE—(F)inance, (I)nsurance, and (R)eal (E)state, creating what she

claims is a shallow and inherently unstable economy dependent upon farming, positive net migration, and most importantly, post-earthquake reconstruction (2014, 11). The governing authority of the neoliberal settler state is thus premised on the ability to control territory to attract foreign investment which often requires a weakening of state power in favor of the power of capital.

Furthermore, challenges to state sovereignty did not come only from multinational corporations and transnational trade deals, but also from Māori claims to land and resources. The Waitangi Tribunal, a commission of inquiry that makes recommendations on claims brought by Māori groups relating to breaches of the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi, has played a crucial role in the changing face of national sovereignty in New Zealand. Signed in 1840 by a number of Māori chiefs, the Treaty of Waitangi was long understood as conferring sovereignty over New Zealand to the British Empire. However more recent interpretations, and the one adopted by the Tribunal itself, claim that the Treaty represents a promise of partnership between Māori and the state for looking after the inhabitants of New Zealand. Referred to as the “spirit of the Treaty,” this notion of partnership has been used to legitimize Māori claims to land and resources and to challenge some of the more explicitly neoliberal legislative agendas that sought to privatize resources such as fisheries, forests, and even airwaves. In this context, the state is merely “one actor among many,” to quote Werry (2016, 199). While Werry was speaking of multinational corporations, specifically film production studios, the idea holds true in the context of Māori challenges to state authority. The neoliberal settler state is thus posed with the problem of maintaining its authority to govern in the face of both internal and external challenges to its sovereignty.

Using the Christchurch earthquakes as a vehicle for the declaration of a state of exception in which normal legislative and regulatory processes were suspended in the name of “recovery,” the neoliberal settler state embarked on a project of re-territorialization to address the changing face of sovereignty in the neoliberal era. This was achieved through the state’s declaration of the city center and large swaths of residential neighborhoods as “red zones”—areas deemed too unsafe and unstable for

human habitation. The central city red zone was closed to the general public and access was strictly controlled by the New Zealand Defence Force for 859 days following the February 22 earthquake (Bennett et al., 150). The state acquired these areas by exercising its rights to preemption, very often undercutting individual landowners by offering them well below market rates in the name of “national security.” CERA, the government body responsible for overseeing the city’s recovery, quickly became one of the largest landowners in Christchurch. However, unlike the earlier period of colonization in which the European settler community were the beneficiaries of the state’s control of territory, under the neoliberal settler state, the beneficiaries of state power are the bearers of the FIRE economy—in other words, foreign and multinational corporations, and political and economic elites.

The dichotomies of colonizer/colonized, settler/indigene, and European/Māori that dictated social relations under the colonial settler state no longer capture the complexity of social life as it is practiced under the neoliberal regime. My research highlights that identity in New Zealand is far more dynamic and multivariate than what colonial dichotomies allow. Issues of class, ethnicity, origins, and even location are all at play in socially differentiating the Christchurch community. My analysis accounts for the multiplicity and indeterminacy that characterizes life under the neoliberal settler state, along with ongoing processes of dispossession and marginalization that endure from the formal colonial period. It is the task of this dissertation to elucidate the affects of the re-territorialization of the neoliberal settler state the on the lived experiences of Christchurch residents.

Imagining the Field

Entry

When I first arrived in Christchurch in February of 2015, the scale of the destruction caused by the earthquakes was not immediately apparent. If you were to drive along Memorial Avenue, the main thoroughfare connecting the airport to the city center, you would have passed by the kind of development one usually associates with airports—

hotels, fast food restaurants, rental car companies, long-term car-parks—all looking rather “flash,” a Kiwi slang-term used to describe things that are new, nice, or impressive. Situated on the edge of Christchurch’s northeastern suburbs, the airport acted as a marker for the limits of the city’s urban development. On one side—the Memorial Avenue side—there were the affluent northeastern suburbs of Bishopdale, Ilam, and Fendalton. On the other side, the undeveloped hinterlands of McLeans Island and the Orana Wildlife Park. If you would have moved further into the city, neat little bungalows and rows of apartment flats nearer to the airport would have given way to larger, more impressive homes—walled, fenced, and gated from the prying eyes of passersby on the street. This part of the city was home to Christchurch’s elite—Gerry Brownlee, a prominent politician, “Earthquake minister,” and at one time the MP for the Ilam electorate which encompasses that part of the city, was said to own a home there. Judging by this initial entry, one would be hard pressed to see the scars left by the earthquakes. The roads were smooth, the foot paths were level, and the homes were intact.

It would not have been until you reached the crossroads at Deans Avenue—one of the “Four Aves” locals used to identify the boundaries of the city center—that you could have begun to see some of the lingering effects of the earthquakes. The road became decidedly less smooth. Signs alerting drivers to upcoming traffic detours accompanied by fluorescent orange traffic cones were a ubiquitous sight. The palatial homes and finely manicured yards of Fendalton transitioned into run down motels and other budget accommodation that nearly five years after the earthquake still acted as



Figure 1: Road closed ahead. Photo by the Author, July 2013

“temporary” lodging for those displaced from their homes. Out of the corner of your eye, you might have caught a glimpse of the “flash” new buildings on Victoria Street, an up-and-coming area of the city center that was built back as a shopping and dining destination. If you were to have turned onto Colombo Street and headed straight for what



Figure 2: Steel frame skeletons and dilapidated remains. Photo by the Author, July 2013.

was once the heart of the city—Cathedral Square—you might have seen the tower cranes and steel frame skeletons of future buildings that had come to define Christchurch’s skyline. These outlines of future development were punctuated by the dilapidated remains of pre-earthquake buildings that had either not yet been assessed by insurers or had simply been abandoned by their owners.

If you moved along Colombo Street, delving deeper into the heart of the city, rather than seeing increased building density, as was the case prior to the earthquake, the landscape became decidedly less dense. These inner-city areas were dominated by

government-led “anchor projects” that had yet to move forward nearly 5 years after the earthquakes. The flurry of construction activity you saw on your way in had stopped, and instead you saw empty lots, abandoned buildings, and piles of rubble. The government projects had not moved at the same pace as the private development you saw along



Figure 3: Fenced off from the public. Photo by the Author, July 2013.



Figure 4: Steel supports. Photo by the Author, March 2015

Victoria Street. What should have been the bustling heart of the city was instead a ghost town. The throngs of tourists, souvenir shops, and cafes that were once ubiquitous there were gone. At this point, you would have reached the center, and there in front of you, would be the eponymous Christchurch Cathedral. However, this would not be the same Cathedral you saw stamped on post-cards that could still found in souvenir shops and visitor centers throughout Canterbury. Rather, the Cathedral you saw before you was in ruins, fenced off from the public. The once majestic bell tower had fallen over completely, and the entire front of the church had come down due to a failed attempt at propping it up with steel supports, offering a glimpse of the pigeons who made the now-exposed ceiling rafters their home.

Anthropology in the Red Zone

In February 2015, I moved to Christchurch, New Zealand to study the cultural responses to the Canterbury earthquakes. At the time of my arrival, just shy of the fourth anniversary of the February quake, the city was in the midst of a redevelopment project, referred to colloquially as “the Rebuild.” The “red zone” cordon had been lifted in June

of 2013, but the city center had not yet rebounded to its former self. During those first few months in the field, I came to realize that “the rebuild” was a bit of a misnomer, as little re-building had yet to occur. In fact, of the few remaining structures left in the city center, most were slated for demolition and none of the planned government precinct and anchor project development was yet underway. Aside from a handful of cafes, bars, and shops that had opened in temporary structures—most often made from converted shipping containers—there did not appear to be much “happening” in Christchurch. As my time in the city progressed and I became more involved in the community, I came to realize that the situation was quite the opposite from what I had first assumed. As then-Mayor Lianne Dalziel said during her speech at the Cricket World Cup Opening Ceremony, hosted by the city a few weeks after my arrival, “Christchurch is HAPPENING!” Indeed, Christchurch was happening. You just had to look past the rubble (and in some cases, *into* the rubble) to see it.

For 14 months, I lived within the boundary of the “Four Avenues” in a house built on the site of a “demo,” or demolished house. My landlord’s insurance company decided that the original house was beyond repair and authorized its demolition and construction of the new house. My landlord managed her properties under the name “Urban Rooms”



Figure 5: My house on Gloucester Street in Central Christchurch. Photo by the Author, February 2015

and provided short term accommodation to students, travelers participating in a work visa scheme called a “working holiday” (which is basically a tourist visa that allows you to pursue temporary, casual, employment while in the country), and to workers moving to Christchurch from overseas to work in the construction industry. Indeed,

my house, or “flat” as they say in Kiwilinglish, came to serve as a valuable site for observing the effects the rebuild was having on the local labor market. During my time

spent living in the house, I shared space with a rotating series of flat mates—a group of students from Germany; a structural engineer from the UK; a surveyor from the Czech Republic; an architect from Argentina; a laborer from Canada. In a few instances, a couple moved into the house and each time the male partner worked in the construction industry in some capacity while the woman pursued office work, or service work, either in a salon, or a café. And without fail, every flat mate after a few months’ time moved on to their next destination, whether that be another town in New Zealand, “across the ditch” to Oz (Australia); or in some cases, somewhere a bit more tropical such as Bali or Fiji. Indeed, the job market seemed to be structured for this type of short term, transient labor. My flat mates often expressed ambivalence about their jobs, saying that while the wages were relatively high compared to what they were used to, the working conditions were rather deplorable and there was little expectation by employers that they would stick around longer than a few months.

Due in part to the clientele that she targeted for her rental properties, Robyn Robinson, the owner of “Urban Rooms” expedited the entire rental process, requiring no bond, or security deposit, providing fully furnished accommodation all the way from bed linens to kitchen appliances, and renting on a per-room basis to avoid the hassle of seeking out flat mates. I later learned that the relative ease with which I secured accommodation was not typical for new migrants to the city, nor for long-time residents who required temporary accommodation while they waited for their insurers to assess any damage to their own homes. Robyn was lucky in that she settled with her insurance rather quickly and was able to get residents back into her properties. Those who were not as fortunate and were still waiting for inspections were forced into rental properties, motels, and even backpacker hostels. This triggered massive rent hikes, dislocating people whose flats might have survived the quake but could no longer afford the rent, and contributed to a housing shortage in central Christchurch, particularly of low-income housing. The sluggish pace of the insurance companies in settling claims and the housing crisis it sparked was one of the main factors that caused the Canterbury earthquakes to be labelled as a full-scale disaster. People who had previously been exempt from the vagaries of the

rental market were now subject to exploitation by predatory landlords and motel keepers, while those who were already the most vulnerable—the elderly, low-income single people, and people of color—were forced into what one social worker called “living rough,” which means moving into a family member’s house (or in some cases garage), living out of their car, leaving town altogether, or in the worst-case scenario, living on the streets.

It was against this backdrop of social, economic and physical dislocation caused by the earthquakes that I sought to understand the ways in which Christchurch was “happening.” How was the chaos precipitated by the earthquake subdued to allow people to regain a sense of normalcy in their lives? And more importantly, how was that normalcy maintained in the face of the inevitable reality of more frequent, and possibly more severe, earthquakes in the future? In other words, I was interested in how the experience of disaster, and the threat of future disasters, was incorporated into a discourse of “everyday life.” What narratives did people tell about Christchurch and its relationship to disaster, both past and present, to ease the trauma they had endured? What practices did people engage in to express feelings of normalcy and stability considering their newfound awareness of Christchurch’s rather volatile geophysical instability? And how did social institutions adapt or respond to the needs of communities as they were confronted with the prospect of maintaining social order in the face of unexpected yet imminent destruction?

These questions were made timelier considering historical patterns of social relations in New Zealand, particularly those between the white, Anglo settler community, and the indigenous Māori community. The legacy of British colonialism in New Zealand remains a visible part of the built landscape, particularly in Christchurch, which had a reputation for being the most “English” city in New Zealand, with its finely manicured public parks and gardens, prolific examples of neo-gothic architecture, and public statues and street names that recall some of the more well-known people and places of the bygone Empire. Ngāi Tahu, the local Māori *iwi* (tribe) have long maintained that their history has been absent from both narrative accounts of the history of Christchurch, while

actual social relations between Māori and Pākehā (white New Zealanders descended from European settlers) continue to be modeled on colonial relations in which Māori social institutions and governance structures are subordinated to those of the settler state.

In a highly unprecedented move Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT), the tribal authority for the local Māori group called Ngāi Tahu, was named as a strategic partner in the earthquake recovery legislation passed by Parliament in the wake of both the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes (CERR Act 2010 and CER Act 2011). These legislative acts laid out the institutional framework for managing Christchurch's recovery, with Ngāi Tahu given a seat at the table alongside CERA (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority), the government body created to manage the recovery, and the Christchurch City Council. This represented a radical reversal of the government's historical pattern of working with Māori institutions in that it accorded TRoNT equal status and power to shape the future of Christchurch as both the national and local settler government institutions. Considered in light of this very explicit move to restructure Māori-State relations at the national level, the questions raised above regarding the "everyday-ness" of post-earthquake Christchurch and the institutional transformation catalyzed by the earthquakes take on a new significance. If Christchurch was truly undergoing a period of recovery and regeneration as the dominant narratives claimed, then the relationship between Ngāi Tahu and the State must be foregrounded in any analysis of the Christchurch rebuild. How were these structural transformations reflected in the "new normal" of post-earthquake Christchurch?

Social science analyses of disaster show that disasters often have one of two effects on society; either they act as occasions for the reorganization of social relations to align with broader calls for change that existed prior to the occurrence of the disaster; or they stand to reaffirm existing structures of power and reinforce the status quo. In Christchurch, there was a rather self-conscious realignment of Māori-State relations in terms of both the institutions that arose post-earthquake to manage the recovery and in terms of local governance structures. Given this transformation at the structural level, I was curious about the extent to which that transformation corresponded to any kind of

similar change in social relations at the grassroots level. In other words, how did people at the local level understand and participate in the rebuild given the set of structural conditions laid out in the CER Act?

To answer this question, I took up residence in the central city and got involved in the community. My research could be called “multi-sited” because my fieldwork did not center on one specific project, construction site, or neighborhood in Christchurch. Rather, I sought to understand the different points of view for each of the different stakeholders and actors involved in the Rebuild. My fieldwork took me across the entire city of Christchurch and the Canterbury region, from newly-built, upscale office towers in the CBD, to community centers on the east side of town, to ancestral *marae* in the neighboring Waimakariri district. I became involved in community organizations, attended community board meetings, city council meetings, public hearings, neighborhood events, closed-door meetings with urban design professionals and government leaders, industry conferences, and *hui* (tribal meetings). Many of the activities I participated in were explicitly concerned with the earthquakes, the recovery, or some other element of living in post-disaster Christchurch. Even for those activities that were not explicitly concerned with the rebuild, the earthquakes loomed in the background and at least always made an implicit appearance whether it be the addition of a new safety warning about what to do in the event of an earthquake, some words of condolence for those who could not be with us today, or in the knowing looks between strangers when confronted with some new policy or practice to remind them that they were now living in a “new normal.”

I structured my fieldwork to reflect the power relations I saw shaping the rebuild, organizing my activities in accordance with the structure of power as it was laid out in the CER Act 2011. This legislation mandated the creation of a Recovery Plan for the Christchurch CBD by the Christchurch City Council (CCC) with input from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), Environment Canterbury (ECAN), regional council for Canterbury, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT), the Ngāi Tahu tribal council. The CER Act also required at least 1 public hearing where members of the

public could have their say on whatever plans were being considered and have their voices heard. While from a legislative perspective, it was these institutions—CERA, TRoNT, ECAN, and CCC—that were responsible for the Christchurch recovery, from an ethnographic perspective, there existed an additional network of institutions that were also crucial in shaping the dialogic space of the Rebuild. These included mostly volunteer and community-run organizations that sprung up in the months and years after the February earthquake such as Gapfiller, Greening the Rubble, Life in Vacant Spaces, Te Putahi/Christchurch Centre for Architecture and City Making, and Te Whare Roimata, a bicultural urban *marae* whose existence predated the earthquakes, but whose purpose aligned with other the other organizations mentioned, namely, the recovery of Christchurch’s social infrastructure.

Participant observation served as my primary method, supplemented with formal, scheduled interviews and daily scrutiny of media reports, blog posts, press releases and newsletters. As I participated in volunteer working bees or attended panel discussions on participatory city-making, I saw “the Rebuild” emerge as a discursive object—a vague impression of a future Christchurch that promised salvation from the current drudgeries of daily life in a post-disaster zone. People were constantly criticizing CERA or Council, Ngāi Tahu or any number of other institutions, organizations, or legislative bodies that had some stake in the rebuild. As I participated in the social life of the city, I began to see that the recovery practices I engaged in with my research participants were made meaningful through a dialogue between people’s experiences of living in post-earthquake Christchurch and the discourses that structured the New Zealand national imaginary—“biculturalism,” “ideal race relations,” “No. 8 wire mentality,” “social laboratory.” People were constantly in dialogue with these discourses as they participated in community events, visited cultural institutions, and engaged in organized protests. It was through this dialogue that I was able to see the meaning of recovery—and what was at stake—in Christchurch emerge.

Walking the City: producing attachments to place

Walking was one of my daily research rituals. If one of my tasks was to document the “everyday-ness” of post-earthquake life in Christchurch, I decided the best way to do that was by taking regular walks through the CBD. I would often start my day by walking out my door and going north on Barbadoes Street to grab a cuppa at Beat Street Café, a hip and grungy spot that had become an institution in an otherwise commercial desert. Known as the Inner-City East, my neighborhood lay on the eastern edge of the CBD and had a reputation as poor, unsafe, and struggling to recover from the earthquake, much more so than other more affluent areas of the Central City. There was a small commercial strip on Stanmore Road between Gloucester and Worcester Streets that served as the village center. It consisted of a few dairies (New Zealand’s version of a convenience store), a butcher shop, a couple of fish-n-chips takeaways, a small grocery store, and the Linwood Community Arts Centre. This strip was badly damaged in the earthquakes, with many of the businesses badly damaged and unable (or unwilling) to return.

With a savory scone in one hand and a flat white in the other, I would walk east on Gloucester Street, straight into the heart of the city center. I passed by Latimer Square, one of the “urban breathing spaces” dreamt up by the city’s colonial planners, but which had become known as a rather unsavory place where drug dealers and prostitutes did their business. In the days and weeks following the earthquakes, the square was transformed into a makeshift hospital and emergency relief center. During my stay in Christchurch, you might find a line of homeless people on Sundays waiting for a free meal from the back of a van belonging to a local citizen who took it upon himself to feed the city’s less fortunate residents. Efforts were being made however to change the reputation of this space, either through the staging there of the public art sculpture “Spires” meant to evoke memories of the spires that once graced the Anglican Cathedral in the Square, or by holding city-wide events here such as the annual Christmas celebration “Carols in the Park.” Despite these efforts, this eastern edge of the Central City remained one of the most barren in terms of rebuilding. Entire blocks that had been occupied by office buildings were now green fields, giving the impression that they were an extension of Latimer Square’s “breathing space” but in reality were held in trust by CERA and slated

for eventual development into the “East Frame” residential precinct—a mixed-use urban development consisting of rows of upscale townhouses, public parks and open spaces, and commercial properties such as dairies and cafes.

After walking through Latimer Square, I would cross over Manchester Street, one of the main north-south roads through the city center and begin to see some activity. The



Figure 6: Corner of New Regent Street and Gloucester Street. Notice the contrast between the art-deco style of New Regent Street and the post-modern style of the post-earthquake construction next door. Photo by the Author, 2015.

Rendez-Vous Hotel—the tallest building in use in the CBD—managed to survive the earthquake and was at the time of my fieldwork, one of the few hotels in operation in the city center. Its presence guaranteed a steady stream of tourists—both domestic and international—to support the small cafes, bars, and novelty shops that lined New Regent Street, a pedestrian laneway opposite the hotel that was built in art-deco style in the 1930s to show solidarity with the town of Napier in the North Island, which was the site of a rather significant historic earthquake.

As I approached Cathedral Square I might see a tour group from China or the United States snapping photos of the derelict Cathedral, a far cry from the throngs of

tourists that used to crowd this space. While the occasional special event such as Food Truck Friday held in the summer months might draw people in, the Square no longer held the social importance it once did as a meeting place for friends to congregate before going out to the dining and drinking establishments that once lined the banks of the Avon River. Several informants lamented the state of the Square and the lack of action by either the Anglican Diocese or the Christchurch City Council to take any decisive action

regarding the Cathedral. It seemed this indecisiveness kept investors away from the Square as well, for the hotel towers and office blocks that remained around its perimeter were not slated for demolition or refurbishment, laying idle instead and constituting the Square as a kind of black hole in the middle of the city.

After pausing a moment to look at the remains of the Cathedral, I would head north on Colombo Street towards Victoria Square. On the west side of the street was a vacant lot, future site of the Convention Centre precinct, one of the more controversial of

the government led anchor projects because of its hefty price tag and central location in the CBD. The project experienced several delays because of funding shortfalls and lack of retail investors who were hesitant to commit to any financial investment when so little work had yet to

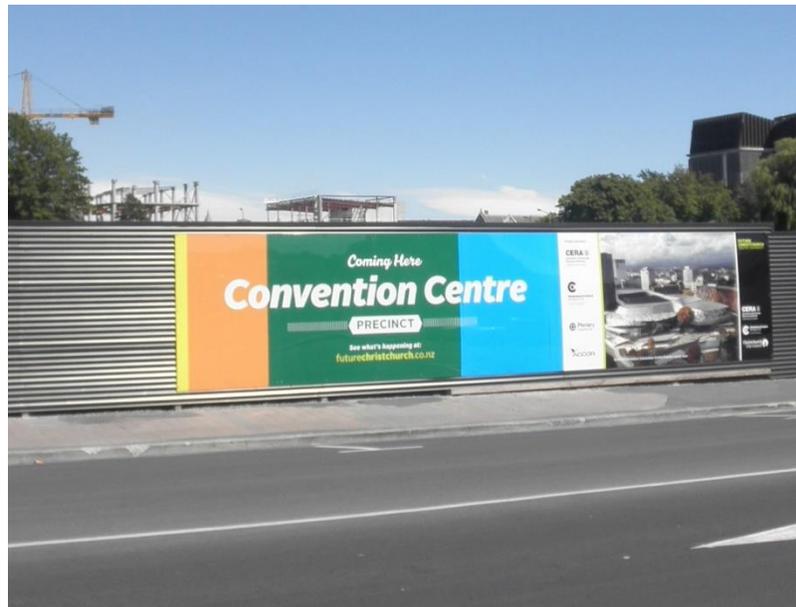


Figure 7: "Coming Here": site of the future Convention Centre Precinct. Photo by the author, February 2015.

begin on the government anchor projects. Throughout my entire time in Christchurch, a chain-link fence surrounded the site plastered with signs reading "Coming Here: Convention Centre Precinct." I can recall two research participants laughing at this sign at one point because of the phrasing "Coming Here." The more typical announcement would say "Coming Soon" which my informants told me is what the sign used to say. However, due to numerous delays and now uncertainty as to whether it would be built at all, CERA decided to issue new signs that said "Coming Here" so as to not provide any false sense of hope that the project would come underway anytime soon.

On the east side of the street, sat another empty lot and site of a proposed government project—the Performing Arts Precinct. Unlike the space across the street



Figure 8: Site of the future Performing Arts Precinct. The ballerina mural painted on the back wall of the Isaac Theatre Royal by Owen Dippie was completed as part of the RISE Street Art Festival that took place in 2014. Photo by the Author, February 2015

however, this was being used by a few of the local arts organizations. “Tree Houses for Swamp Dwellers,” a legacy artwork by Julia Morrison for the SCAPE Public Art Festival in 2013 was located there, as well as the Dance-O-Mat installation by Gapfiller. Morrison’s artwork invited interaction by creating “spaces within itself for reflection and play” (SCAPE website). Consisting of 10 modular structures that resembled both trees and houses, the sculpture was designed to be both looked-at and lived-in. One could observe it from the street or sit on one of the platforms built into the structures. The Dance-O-

Mat was another interactive art installation by a local volunteer organization called Gapfiller. The Dance-O-Mat consisted of an old washing machine that had been retrofitted with an iPod or iPhone cord. When you put some coins in the coin slot of the laundry machine and plugged your phone into the cord, the machine played your music through speakers that hung on poles anchoring each corner of the wooden dance floor and a flood-light illuminated a disco ball that hung above the center of the platform. Across the street was the outdoor reading room—a set of wooden benches designed to look like

couches and covered in green turf placed in front of the future Central Library that was commissioned with funds from the Christchurch City Council Transitional Projects Fund. I would often see tourists taking pictures on the oversized couch covered in green turf. All those artworks were interactive and encouraged people to climb, sit, crawl, and dance. I can vividly remember walking by the Green Couch one evening when I was



Figure 9: Outdoor Reading Room. Photo by the Author, February 2015

asked by a pair of Australian backpackers to take their picture. After a few snapshots, they invited me to take my own. I asked them if they had seen the Dance-O-Mat (which they had not) and we proceeded across the street for an impromptu dance party.

I have other memories of this corner that make it stand out in my mind as well. I remember walking by one day and seeing the demolition of the old Camelot Hotel that opened onto Cathedral Square. This was to be the future site of the Central Library, the only anchor project funded entirely by the Christchurch City Council. I came by right as the excavator was raising its giant steel claw to break apart the floor of the upper levels of the building, taking what appeared to be a giant bite out of concrete structure. I recall not even realizing a demolition was happening as I walked by—they had become so



Figure 10: *Eyes on the City*, February 9 2015. Photo courtesy of Gapfiller.

commonplace that I barely noticed them anymore. But that day I saw a crowd of people standing in front of the fence with their cameras out, so I stopped and looked up to watch some of the excitement. Demolition-gazing was a common activity in post-earthquake Christchurch. So common it inspired Gapfiller in another one of their projects—*Eyes on the City*—which consisted of a movable grandstand (commentator box and all) that they moved around to different locations (usually construction sites) and narrated the activity there in the style of a sports announcer. My fieldnotes are filled with entries about the sounds of drilling or hammering or nailing and the sight of excavators and dump trucks driving around demolition sites appearing to just be moving piles of rubble from one corner of the site to another.

After passing by the construction sites around the square, I might walk towards the corner of Colombo and Armagh Streets, just past the future Performing Arts Precinct

towards the former Forsyth Barr building, one of the few remaining skyscrapers in the CBD. There were plans to renovate this building into a luxury hotel, but at 19 stories, it contained more floors than most Christchurch residents dare to ascend. During the earthquake, the stairwell collapsed here, trapping people inside and forcing them to abseil down the side of the building. It is those kinds of memories that serve as the justification for why most of the new development in Christchurch will not exceed five stories—people are too afraid to go any higher. One of my research participants felt this fear so intensely that it traveled with her to San Francisco, where she requested to change rooms at her downtown hotel there once she found out it was on the 27th floor.

Next, I would cross over Armagh Street and walk through Victoria Square, a small but beloved park in the Central City that had become rather politicized post-earthquake because of proposals to locate the Ngāi Tahu Cultural Center there—one of the first anchor projects to get slashed from the plan because of cost over-runs. Despite its riverfront location, the park was not damaged in the earthquake, leaving some of the more conservative residents hostile to the plans for it contained in the rebuild plan. The park pays homage to Queen Victoria who was ruler of the British Empire at the time the Ngāi Tahu chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi, a moment enshrined as the birth of the New Zealand nation but really indicative of the beginning of New Zealand's colonial period that led to the establishment of the modern state. From a Ngāi Tahu perspective, their ancestor chiefs who signed the Treaty ought to be honored in the square as well since they were equally important in setting the course of history that the square is meant to memorialize. This idea was met with intense criticism from the public during the open comment period. The main complaint was that the Council should focus on fixing what's broken in Christchurch and leave well enough alone. My Ngāi Tahu informants saw it as an instance of veiled racism and yet another instance of settler domination at the hands of white New Zealanders. My own experience of Victoria Square was not nearly so fraught. I recall attending a candlelight vigil here for victims of an earthquake in Nepal. I associate the Square with the solemnity of that occasion and not with the vituperative debate regarding the inclusion of Ngāi Tahu elements.

Other places stand out in my mind as well. Hagley Park, home to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, Cricket Oval, sports lawns and golf course not only served as a recreational area but the location for large events like concerts and music festivals. One of my first experiences of a large-scale community event in Christchurch was the Opening Ceremony of the ICC Cricket World Cup which was hosted in Christchurch during my fieldwork. I remember riding my bike to Hagley Park and being surprised at how many people had turned out for the event, given how deserted Christchurch felt most of the time. A multi-cultural themed festival accompanied the opening ceremony, which featured a performance of the *haka* by the local *hapuu* (subtribe) Ngāi Tūāhuriri to complement the internationalism of the sporting event itself. The Christchurch Botanic Gardens and the Canterbury Museum were also located in Hagley Park. These were two of my favorite spots in the city due to their ability to transport me to other times and places, either through the Victorian-inspired garden beds and finely manicured lawns of the Botanic Gardens or the unapologetic camp of the 19th century Christchurch street recreation and interactive exhibit at the Canterbury Museum.

My attempt here to recreate my walking routine is meant to highlight the process by which I was able to personally transform Christchurch from an unknown space into a meaningful place for me. As I sat down to write this fictional tour of the Christchurch central city, I drew on my memories of the built landscape, the ways I interacted with it and the kinds of relationships it fostered. While Christchurch had the appearance of a war-zone (I heard people remark numerous times that they sometimes felt as though they were living in war-torn Kosovo), my memories are far less nefarious, and tend to focus on the attachments to both people and place that I developed as a result of living and researching in post-earthquake Christchurch. Indeed, my experience of connecting to Christchurch through actively participating in its recovery was one of the primary strategies pursued by rebuild actors in their attempts to rebuild Christchurch on their own terms. It is to these kinds of attachments that I focus my attention on to understand the affective dimensions of recovery in Christchurch.

This approach to understanding space and place and the process of their becoming is reminiscent of Tim Ingold's concept of dwelling (2011). For Ingold, dwelling involves the weaving together of the history, evolution, and social life of particular places, and emphasizes that their mutual entanglement is crucial to how they are experienced by those who inhabit them. Rather than see space and place as something fixed and stable, the outcome of prior-made designs, and consisting solely of *things built*, Ingold's notion of dwelling sees space in terms of humans' movement and engagement with their relational contexts (2011, 10). Ingold's dwelling perspective informed the kind of placemaking pursued by many of the rebuild actors I worked with in Christchurch. Their ideas for how to enact recovery revolved around enabling connections between residents and the city by providing opportunities for coming together and engaging with their surroundings on their own terms.

I also investigate other understandings of the production of space and place, one that is far more sinister than what I have described here. One of the main objectives of Rebuild institutions was to transform the way space is experienced by residents and visitors in central Christchurch through architecture and urban planning. The idea that the production of space is an ideologically motivated act comes from Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991). Lefebvre credits Descartes with defining space as a set of conditions necessary for the experience of reality, rather than as an abstract geometric description of mathematical principles. The privileging of sensory experience as the source of knowledge in the Cartesian *cogito* constituted space as the ultimate or absolute category within which all experience unfolds. Kant's metaphysical critique of Descartes added more complexity to this notion of space by framing space as a relation between subject and object, thereby constituting space as highly relative and variable set of conditions that exist largely in the mind. For Kant, space acts as a kind of ideal that the subject imposes on their sense experience to achieve cognitive synthesis, or understanding (Lefebvre, 1991).

Thus, the question of space as Lefebvre sees it is intimately tied to the metaphysical problem of overcoming the mind/body dualism that has beleaguered

Western philosophy since Descartes famous proclamation “cogito ergo sum.” The problem of space can be described then as a tension between “mental space” and “real space,” or that figurative space which exists in peoples’ minds and provides a mental blueprint for acting in the world, and the physical space the body experiences as it moves in time. However, Lefebvre takes his analysis a step further and critiques the ambivalence of space that emerges in both the Cartesian and Kantian formulations. Drawing on a Marxian theory of society, Lefebvre argues that space is manipulated by the ruling class to maintain their power. Thus, space is not a neutral background upon which human action unfolds. Rather it is the political use of knowledge by the ruling class of the mental, physical and social capacities of human populations. In this formulation, spatial production becomes a form of biopolitics, in which space is designed in such a way to produce certain kinds of subjects and to encourage specific kinds of interactions. Throughout this dissertation, I explore the tensions between these two different modes of placemaking and spatial production as they were practiced by recovery actors in Christchurch.

Building back better: situating research on disaster recovery

From an anthropological perspective, disaster recovery provides an opportunity to critique underlying structures of power, as recovery projects require the cooperation of state and local governments, business owners, social service providers, non-profits and other community groups that all contribute to what disaster researchers Ian Davis and David Alexander call the “functional productivity” of society (2016; xxx). In Christchurch, there was a general sense that the city was moving towards something. That “something” remained unobtained throughout my fieldwork, but there seemed to be a general consensus among city residents and disaster survivors I spoke to that whatever it was, it would be better than what was there before. The recovery process was seen by many as a ticket to a better future for everyone who had a stake in the city’s recovery, regardless of whether the root of their troubles stemmed from the earthquakes or not.

While much consideration has been given to analyzing the social production of disaster, less attention has been given to analyzing post-disaster processes themselves, specifically the process of “recovery.” Where recovery is talked about, it is framed as a transitional time, following the relief period immediately after a disaster but preceding a future time in which the social and physical vulnerabilities that created the disaster are either mitigated or totally circumvented. As Davis and Alexander point out, disaster recovery is premised on the idea that recovery will overcome the problems caused by the disaster and not merely reproduce the status quo (2016). Recovery thus offers a chance to “build back better,” not only in terms of physical infrastructure, but also social infrastructure.

Inherent in this approach to recovery is the idea of progress. As Davis and Alexander note, “recovery is an occasion in which something can be done to help local people achieve a better life than the one they had before the disaster” (2016; 274). Throughout their book, they stress the “window of opportunity” post-disaster scenarios present to address the underlying inequalities that produced the disaster. If managed properly, they argue that disaster reconstruction can generate livelihoods for survivors that will provide a source of stability after the economic “boom” of the recovery period has ended. Thus, stories of disaster recovery are wrapped up with the discourse on modernity, bringing to the fore people’s conceptions of “the good life” and inciting debate about how best to achieve those ends. This involves not just rebuilding structures that provide the physical setting for the emergence of an imagined community but addressing the development of a social infrastructure that will encourage the kinds of interpersonal relationships that create a sense of community and belonging.

Furthermore, implicit in their evocation of “local people” is the existence of a global citizenry who are brought into relation with “local” survivors through the process of recovery. Recovery then is also wrapped up in the humanitarian-capitalist project of international development (Cuny, 1983; Hannigan, 2012). The practice of international development has been widely critiqued by social scientists, primarily for its reification of colonially-derived power relations of dependency and the inequality it creates between

“First” and “Third” world nations (Escobar, 1995; Farmer, 2011). As Antonio Donini (2008) has argued, humanitarian aid acts as a tool for advancing the political or foreign policy objectives of the nations that provide it and has become a crucial element of global governance and integral to the operation of empire. From this point of view, recovery is driven by disaster capitalism—a form of recovery that privileges the desires of neoliberal states, multi-national corporations and the transnational elite over the needs of disaster survivors—and is an explicit attempt to further the spread of a neoliberal world-view.

Christchurch complicates this critique of disaster recovery for several reasons. First, New Zealand’s status as a “developed” First World nation implies that it possessed the resources and infrastructure necessary to respond to a large-scale natural disaster like the Canterbury Earthquakes. Second, its reputation as the “Wild West” of neoliberal economic reform where economic deregulation was adopted early on in the neoliberal frenzy that swept through the developed first world in the 1980s frames New Zealand as part of the core from which neoliberalism was packaged and sold to the rest of the world (See Kelsey 2015; Holmes 2014). In other words, if, as Naomi Klein (2007) has argued, disaster creates new opportunities for the spread of neoliberal economic policies through the creation of new markets, New Zealand seems to have already achieved this without the help of a disaster. How then, can the Christchurch recovery be interpreted within the discourse of disaster capitalism, or even just of disaster recovery as it has been laid out in the literature, when it stands in inverse relation to the power structures that underpin that critique of recovery?

In their research on the 1994 earthquake in the San Fernando Valley of California, Bolin and Stanford (1998) address the problem of “First World” disasters by pointing out that “First world” nations contain numerous “Third Worlds.” They argue that First World disasters are presumed to have less impact because of more elaborate response systems but this assumption does not account for unequal wealth distribution and asymmetries in resource access created by the very conditions of “First World-ism.” As they state, “such asymmetries are becoming more intensified in countries where neoliberal economic policies are enriching the already wealthy” (1998; 45). They point to the experiences of

the Latino community in Ventura County, who had historic ties to the community there but were discriminated against because of widespread attitudes in the United States against Mexican immigrants and the inability of the mainstream majority to distinguish between documented and undocumented immigrants. Because of these attitudes and the structure of the United States immigration system, the Latino community's access to FEMA relief and other government aid remained restricted because of fear of retaliation or misrecognition as an undocumented immigrant, or simply because of ignorance of what was available to them. Ultimately, they remained in a socially and economically vulnerable position.

Probably the most horrific example of the failures of First World disaster response is the United States' response to Hurricane Katrina, which struck the city of New Orleans in August of 2005. Vincanne Adams (2013) has made painstakingly clear how disaster response in the United States is not only raced and classed, but also how a neoliberal approach to recovery can actually create new markets—what she calls the “recovery sector—whose drive for profit is premised on the occurrence of future disasters. Adams describes the Katrina relief and recovery project as a form of “market driven governance” in which relief services are privatized and for-profit transactions became the means to access essential services. The effect of this approach was that it transferred the responsibility for recovery from the state to individuals, and the needy became a site for the production of capital. The tethering of relief and recovery services to market forces meant that recovery for low-income people, who were also primarily people of color, was delayed, thereby creating a second-order disaster that forced homeowners into debt and further entrenched racial and class divisions in the city of New Orleans. Disaster recovery thus became a crucial economic driver in which disasters are required for the reproduction of the economy.

Yet what Adams, and Bolin and Stanford still fail to address is the legacy of the United States' history as a settler society on the production of vulnerability and the connections between colonial formations of power and the contemporary inequalities facing the United States. Similarly, analyses of the Christchurch recovery that situate it

within critiques of disaster capitalism do not discursively address the colonial legacy of structured vulnerability that led to the Canterbury Earthquakes being deemed a disaster. This shortcoming can be addressed by shifting the discursive context within which disaster recovery is framed, from critiques of neoliberalism and international development to engagements with the discourse of decolonization and critiques of contemporary settler modernity. While recovery actors actively adopted the language of human rights discourse, humanitarianism, and the neoliberal language of “opportunity,” to make sense of their experiences, I argue that the problem of identifying the relations of power in the Christchurch recovery was far more complex than what a critique of neoliberalism can offer. While the state project is very explicitly neoliberal in its approach, the historical experience of settler colonialism necessitated an alternative framework that accounts for the heterogeneous desires and subject positions that exceeded what critiques of disaster capitalism were able to offer.

Furthermore, the question of post-disaster change is not only of interest to disaster studies scholars but was of interest to my research participants in the field as well. While both Māori and non-Māori rebuild actors insisted that positive change happened as a direct result of the earthquakes and the recovery period, the question of “changes to what?” remained largely unanswered. Analyses of post-disaster change tend to focus on societal efforts to identify and mitigate the sources of social vulnerability (Doughty, 1999), the introduction of new or changing institutional frameworks for managing human-ecological relations (Dyer, 1999), and the identification of patterns of cultural resurgence in response to the occurrence of destructive natural hazards (Hoffman, 1999). These studies take a cultural ecological approach to disaster and disaster recovery, using the concept of “change” to address the physical needs of the community that arise in response to the disaster.

Critiques of disaster capitalism interpret change from the perspective of state power and highlight the ways that disasters set in motion chains of events that open new markets and render disaster victims as sites for the production and extraction of surplus value (Adams, 2013; Klein 2007; Gunewardena, 2008; Schuller, 2008). In both instances,

these studies take a “top-down” approach to their analysis, interpreting “culture” holistically as a fully integrated social and symbolic system, ignoring the more affective, qualitative, and individualized aspects of change as it is experienced by disaster survivors.

The question of social and cultural change is a difficult one to grasp from the perspective of the social analyst because of the need for pre-and –post disaster assessments of the affected society, as well as some kind of objectively measurable criteria broad enough to account for society-wide changes. Most importantly, an emphasis on “social change” begs the question of a change in what? Indeed, as one of my research participants said when asked if she thought things had changed after the earthquakes, “change is relative.” Identifying “change,” let alone “positive change” runs the risk of being so subjectively determined that any attempt to account for change in post-disaster situations seems futile.

In *Catastrophe and Social Change*, often considered the foundational study of what would become the field of Disaster Studies, Samuel Prince defined social change as “those rapid mutations which accompany sudden interferences with the equilibrium of society, break up the status-quo, dissipate mental inertia and overturn other tendencies resistant to structural modification” (1920, 15). Of the factors contributing to social change, Prince identified two types: intra-social, such as internal processes of adaptation and reproduction, and extra-social, or what he calls “stimuli” factors, such as conquest or intrusion by a foreign element or rapid changes to the environment, such as those caused by a catastrophe like an earthquake (1920, 15). It is these latter types of factors, the extra-social, that lead to what Prince calls “crises.” Prince traces the meaning of “crisis” to its ancient Greek roots and defines it as “a point of culmination and separation, an instant when change one way or another is impending” (1920, 16).

In relation to social systems, crisis constitutes a “disturbance of habit” (Prince, 1920, 16), implying that the catastrophe that precipitates the crisis is a form of disruption, and that social systems are to some extent, characterized by a state of equilibrium, a status quo, or some other kind of settled state that serves as a baseline for assessing types

and degrees of change. For Prince, change can only be assessed against a background of habituated or established order. This view ultimately fails to account for the contestation of power between foreign and indigenous elements that characterize settler colonial contexts, rendering them perpetually unstable and therefore incompatible with Prince's definition of change.

In the intervening decades since the publication of Prince's manuscript, disaster studies developed a sophisticated repertoire of theories and methods for analyzing natural and man-made disasters and their social and cultural consequences. For the purposes of my argument here, the most significant of these conceptual developments is the theory that disasters are not the product of a natural hazard or catastrophe alone, but rather they are the result of socially constructed patterns of human vulnerability (Hoffman and Oliver-Smith, 1999). Oliver-Smith defines vulnerability as "adaptive failure," and argues that this failure is an essential element of a disaster, claiming that this more than anything else, including the disaster agent itself, will affect the social response. The emphasis on vulnerability circumvents the problem of Prince's approach by situating the hazard event within an historically unfolding context of socially constructed inequity rather than as an unexpected interruption of normality.

The idea proposed by Hoffman (1999) that disasters are "revealers" more than "changers" further helps to overcome the problem of identifying post-disaster change by shifting the focus from the hazard event itself to the social and historical context in which the hazard occurs. According to Hoffman, large-scale calamity exposes the "hidden" aspects of society, revealing the fundamental constructs a society uses to manage its population and structure relations between groups. In the case of Christchurch, the disaster revealed that racism and anti-Māori prejudice could not be solely attributed to "individual bias," but rather those beliefs and practices were themselves determined by historically produced structures of inequality that were developed in service to the settler colonial project. In other words, what the social response to the earthquakes revealed was the extent to which the historical racialization of Ngāi Tahu as "Māori" produced deeply

ingrained racial prejudices that ultimately affected popular attitudes about the value of Ngāi Tahu culture, history, and identity in relation to the redevelopment of Christchurch.

Rebuild discourse

From the vantage point of disaster survivors, recovery-as-development becomes evacuated of its active meaning and is transformed into a passive state of expectancy. Recovery emerges as a waiting period in which the past has become severed from the present because of the experience of the natural hazard. For people who experience a disaster, the shock of it reveals the fragility of human communities, and as Ed Simpson has pointed out, causes people to question how they see the world and what its certainties are (2013). Simpson theorized the meaning of this shock at the level of the individual, arguing that one of humans' most basic assumptions about the world is the stability of the ground beneath their feet. That stability, argued Simpson, provides the certainty that enables society to endure. The experience of a disaster, specifically an earthquake, challenges that assumption of stability, thereby throwing any certainty people have about the stability of their social worlds out the window. Post-disaster scenarios thus create the psycho-social conditions for groups of people to reimagine their social worlds.

Furthermore, according to Klein's "shock doctrine," (2008) this moment of intense questioning is the moment at which neoliberal state actors' step in and institute policies that are either already known to be or anticipated as being unpopular with the public. In the case of Christchurch, the CERR Act 2010 and the later CER Act 2011 included provisions that greatly limited the autonomy of the local city council for decision making and management in relation to the recovery which not only served to disenfranchise disaster survivors, but also undermined public confidence in the efficacy of local government. The passage of the CER Act 2010 marked the beginning of the recovery period in Christchurch and established the terms by which recovery would take place. As I mentioned above, the idiom of developmental recovery was adopted as the language of recovery in Christchurch. However, during my fieldwork I found that this discourse did not adequately capture the flurry of activity I witnessed in Christchurch and

did not account for the heterogeneous ways that Christchurch residents became interpellated as recovery actors.

Recovery is not a neutral process and is shot through with power in the same ways as all social phenomena. To understand how power structured and differentiated disaster survivors in Christchurch, I analyze what I call “Rebuild discourse”—the collection of policies, institutions, practices, and narratives that provided the context for social action and structured the relations of power between recovery actors and the social spaces they navigated. My analysis builds on the recovery literature reviewed above by shifting the terms of recovery from those of international development and critiques of global capitalism to the historical backdrop of settler colonialism and the contemporary goals of decolonization. When recovery is framed in this way, it not only changes the quality of the disaster event (from a singular unexpected occurrence to an occasion for manufactured crisis), but it allows for a more comprehensive notion of recovery by taking into account practices, narratives, and desires that may not explicitly be in response to the earthquake but are still significant for understanding contemporary social process in Christchurch. The language of recovery, disaster management, and risk reduction that dominates mainstream discourse about the experience of disaster belies the deeper history of settler colonial desire and indigenous marginalization that characterizes New Zealand’s past and that structures Christchurch’s present.

Rather than address recovery in its monolithic form as disaster studies has tended to do, I instead discuss “rebuild projects.” These were political projects that included institutions, practices, and narratives that structured the experiences of disaster survivors as they participated in recovery. These included the government project, the grass-roots project and the Māori project. Each project was rooted in a specific value-system arising from distinctive social and historical trajectories that structured rebuild relations in such a way that ultimately served the interests of what I have described as neoliberal settlement. The government project continued the historical trajectory of the colonial state by making claims to authority that it believed to have inherited from the British Crown. The grass-roots project spoke to the history and legacy of the settler majority and was indicative of

the ongoing colonization of New Zealand by the white middle class in Christchurch. Finally, the Māori project was anchored in an embattled history of racialization and ethnicization of Māori by the settler state, processes which were extended through the dialogue amongst rebuild projects that constituted the Christchurch Rebuild as a social phenomenon.

As my fieldwork showed, people experienced power in heterogenous ways that critiques of disaster capitalism failed to capture. Approaching the Christchurch recovery from the point of view of political projects in dialogue with one another highlights the complexity of social forces that interpellated rebuild actors as subjects of power and often led them to inhabit what at times appeared to be conflicting and contradictory positions. Analyzing the Christchurch Rebuild from the point of view of power avoids essentializing the identities of recovery actors and instead treats the Rebuild as a context for action in which different political projects were enacted. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of the motivations driving individual rebuild actors, while also accounting for the sometimes conflicting and contradictory directions in which rebuild actors were pulled.

Most importantly for my purposes here, approaching the Christchurch recovery from this point of view expands the temporal horizons of the rebuild to include responses to issues and desires for the future that exceeded the limits imposed by recovery. Rather than foreground the experience of the earthquake, my approach foregrounds the experience of power and allows us to see how natural hazards are discursively appropriated to further political ends. In the remaining sections of this Introduction, I provide a genealogy of each of the rebuild projects with a view towards how they contribute to the production of contemporary settler colonialism and engage with a politics of decolonization.

The government rebuild

The government rebuild was characterized by an imagined future in which Christchurch has been transformed from a “provincial backwater” into a world-class,

cosmopolitan urban metropolis. Adapting Christchurch to meet the needs of the global economy was the primary goal of this project. Drawing on the legacy of Christchurch's settlement, this project was based in the authority of the contemporary settler state, whose own legitimacy and authority derived from the Treaty of Waitangi. The government project contributed to the goals of the neoliberal settler state by seeking to control the population economy of Christchurch to favor a specific type of subject—one that embodied the neoliberal values that characterize the future world imagined by the New Zealand state. Of crucial importance to the government rebuild was the ability to acquire large tracts of land in the city center for large-scale redevelopment. This was achieved by the rights of pre-emption practiced by the state through their purchase of “red zoned” land from private owners. This practice mirrored the colonial state's practice of pre-emption during the colonial era for acquiring Māori land.

Taking its cue from cities like Melbourne and San Francisco, this rebuild project envisioned future Christchurch as an “innovation” hub for New Zealand, fostering a “start-up” culture of social entrepreneurship and technological innovation that will draw a “creative class” of young, educated professionals to populate the newly-condensed city center. The local economy will be driven by tourism, anchored by a re-developed city center catering to large-scale events like professional association conferences, sporting events, and concert tours. In a promotional pamphlet released by the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), describes the vision for central Christchurch in these terms:

Central Christchurch will become the thriving heart of an international city. It will draw on its rich natural and cultural heritage, and the skills and passion of its people, to embrace opportunities for innovation and growth. Redevelopment will acknowledge the past and the events that have shaped the city, while reflecting on the best of the new (Christchurch Central Recovery Plan, 27).

The centerpiece of this new city center will shift from Cathedral Square, home to Christchurch's most iconic structure, the Anglican Cathedral and historically considered the “heart” of the city, to a state-of-the-art Convention Centre Precinct that will include

upscale hotels and high-end apartment flats, retail shops, and bars and restaurants. According to the CCRP, the purpose of the Convention Centre Precinct is to “attract international associations to Christchurch and develop connections with new businesses and markets that will ultimately help grow the economic base of greater Christchurch” (CCRP, 67). Other government construction projects included in the city center’s “blueprint” plan are the Retail Precinct, attractively located on the banks of the Avon River, the Metro Sports Facility, supposedly to be the largest indoor sports facility in the Southern Hemisphere, and the much-maligned Stadium project, whose hefty price-tag and massive scale seem out of proportion with the demand for such a space. These projects, while no doubt impressive for their large-scale and cutting-edge design, were heavily critiqued by local officials and residents alike for being out of proportion with the needs of the community.

The grassroots rebuild

The grassroots rebuild was characterized by a community-driven approach to place-making that exchanged the large-scale development projects associated with the government rebuild for smaller, more intimate spaces that fulfilled particular social needs of the community and fostered a sense of mutual care and ownership amongst residents. It was these feelings of nurturance and ownership that guided the practices associated with the grassroots rebuild, such as gardening, “space activation” (the practice of transforming empty or vacant lots into useful and productive spaces), and street art. This project was legitimated by its commitment to the liberal-progressive values of equality of rights, an aversion to archaic forms of social stratification, and the desire for progress. These values derived their power from their self-proclaimed universalism and inclusivity. Despite these claims, I show how this project ultimately contributed to the ongoing dispossession of Māori because it too was ultimately rooted in a logic of possession and control over land.

The goal of the grassroots project was to mold space in Christchurch into meaningful places that spoke to the identities and experiences of Christchurch residents,

with a view towards fostering a sense of care and empathy for the victims of trauma. While this project, like the government's, was self-consciously responding to trauma caused by the earthquakes, it was this very self-awareness that rendered the grassroots rebuild an extension of the settler colonial project. Just as their colonial counterparts sought out to consciously create their ideal imperial community in a distant locale despite the environmental, social, or political constraints of that locality, the grassroots rebuild similarly sought to build a city detached from the historical and political context that constrained its present reality. The grassroots rebuild imagined a future in which the social divisions between Māori and Pākehā, citizen and immigrant, rich and poor, were rendered inconsequential (by what means remained unarticulated), and where an ethic of care overtook the greed and lack of concern for those less fortunate that was seen as having taken hold in New Zealand since the neoliberalization of the state began in the 1980s.

In seeking to fashion a new community, the grassroots rebuild looked elsewhere for their models of what constituted an “ideal community,” specifically towards Northern Europe and North America. They thus reproduced the center/periphery binary that was crucial to the development of an imperial identity. Just as their colonial forebears aspired towards a metropolitan ideal of nineteenth century bourgeois modernity, the grassroots rebuild drew on that heritage and looked towards contemporary metropolitan centers—Melbourne, San Francisco, Vancouver, Copenhagen—as their inspiration for crafting a post-earthquake self. Despite its self-professed commitment to producing a Christchurch that reflected the desires of the local resident population, the future city imagined by the grassroots project ultimately served the interests of settlement because of its dependence on what grassroots rebuild actors perceived to be vacant or unused space in the city center, reminiscent of colonial settlers' claims to land during the colonial era based on categories of productive use and waste land that justified indigenous dispossession.

The Māori rebuild

The Māori rebuild was characterized by a commitment to the state's Treaty obligations as outlined in the Ngāi Tahu treaty settlement, which interpreted Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the state as "Treaty partners" who are equally responsible for looking after Canterbury and caring for its people. This relationship was embedded into recovery governance by the CER Act 2011 by naming Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as a "strategic partner" to the recovery. From a tribal perspective, this status was guaranteed to them by the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Māori rebuild was concerned with transforming the conditions of Māori-Pākehā relations in Christchurch to better align with the promise of partnership underlying the "spirit" of the Treaty of Waitangi. This project was authorized by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, a statutory body created by the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996. Ngāi Tahu holds the distinction of being the only *iwi* to be recognized as an enduring entity in statute. It is that legislative recognition that created the political conditions for the Māori rebuild to emerge alongside the government and grassroots rebuilds.

The primary manifestation of this project was the incorporation of Ngāi Tahu history and identity into the built landscape. Guided by a sense of tradition and adherence to a set of unique "Ngāi Tahu values," this rebuild project sought to transform the identity of Christchurch from an "English city" into a "Māori city" through architecture, landscape design, and narrative wayfinding. The Māori rebuild aimed to make Christchurch more accessible to Ngāi Tahu people by creating urban spaces that reflected their lifestyles and their history. As one Ngāi Tahu landscape designer who worked on the urban redesign said to me during an interview,

We want a city to be designed so it's familiar and functional for families. And when we say families, we're talking intergenerational—three, four living generations who love to be with each other. It's the way our people are. We want a city built for them. And so, what does that mean? You know, it might mean that in their shared spaces in the city, in the squares and plazas, there are tables. There are places where people can take their own food and enjoy being around cafes and enjoy being around the buzz of inner-city life, but they don't have to you know, shout a coffee for 15 people because there are 15 people there. Or you know, break the bank

because we are at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder in New Zealand. But we want our people to be familiar and to be able to enjoy the city.

This seemingly simple design element—a table large enough for an extended family—simultaneously addresses the structural marginalization of Māori in New Zealand society by providing them access to spaces and experiences that would otherwise be closed off to them because of their low socio-economic status, while affirming their lifestyle by designing space in a way that is accommodating to their forms of family organization. According to this Māori rebuild actor, this was a hard sell to the CERA-appointed design teams with which the Ngāi Tūāhuriri designers worked on the anchor project designs. While this detail creates a welcoming environment for Ngāi Tahu families and provides an opportunity for them to forge a positive relationship with the city, it speaks to a different set of priorities than those held by government and grass-roots rebuild actors.

Ultimately however, the Māori rebuild contributed to the settler colonial project because it did not address the ongoing structural and institutional marginalization of Ngāi Tahu that serves as the legacy of early colonial encounters. Rather, Ngāi Tahu recognition as a “strategic partner” merely served to incorporate Ngāi Tahu into the existing governance structure without having to seriously engage with constitutional change that would elevate Māori governance to a level of substantive equality with the settler state.

Navigating Rebuild discourse

In each of the chapters that follows, I provide a critical portrait of earthquake recovery in Christchurch. Each chapter investigates an issue related to the navigation of rebuild discourse by rebuild actors. In the process, I give further shape to each of the rebuild projects I articulated above as they engage in a dialogue about the future of Christchurch. I show how the Christchurch Rebuild is informed by the durability of imperial forms of social differentiation and stratification, primarily focusing on the

concept of race and how colonial-era racial categories are made and remade in the context of the Rebuild.

Chapter 1 provides a critical investigation of the temporality of disaster by critiquing the very concept of “recovery.” This chapter draws on both my ethnographic experiences as well as the multiple histories that overlay Christchurch and the Canterbury region to argue that the projects that comprise the Christchurch Rebuild were informed by multiple spatiotemporal regimes that challenged the hegemonizing chronogeopolitics of disaster recovery discourse. Interpreting the Christchurch recovery through the lens of rebuild discourse leads me to conclude that the Christchurch Rebuild was not merely a response to the Canterbury earthquakes but rather was implicated in multiple histories of trauma, dispossession, and loss that gave form and meaning to the lived realities of Christchurch residents.

Chapter 2 answers the question of “why rebuild?” through a critical investigation of the “blueprint” recovery plan released by CERA. I argue that this plan acted as a technology of settlement deployed by the state to take back control of space in Christchurch on the behalf of property investors and affluent individuals at the expense of the city’s poorest, most vulnerable residents. I discuss the process through which CERA’s “blueprint” plan was created to show how the plan did not take into consideration the needs of residents, particularly of the Inner-City East neighborhood. I illustrate this point ethnographically through my discussion of a proposal by the Christchurch City Council to redraw the boundaries of the Inner-City East in such a way that would result in its dismemberment and erasure from the political geography of Christchurch, leaving them without a voice in local government.

Chapter 3 analyzes the inclusion of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in the CER Act 2010 as a “strategic partner” from the perspective of the Māori rebuild project. I argue that while rebuild discourse provided an opportunity for Ngāi Tahu to reverse the historical trend of their erasure from Christchurch’s built environment—an opportunity that has resulted in really positive outcomes—their recognition had the adverse effect of challenging the authority of the local subtribe, Ngāi Tūāhuriri, who argued that the CER

Act misrecognized the larger tribe, Ngāi Tahu, as the local authority when in fact, it was within their specific subtribe's traditional territory and therefore the government ought to have recognized them as a strategic partner. I show how the subtribe was successful at reclaiming control, yet their efforts to reclaim *mana* (power, authority) on par with that of the neoliberal settler state were frustrated because of structural inequities that subordinated Ngāi Tahu authority to that of the neoliberal settler state.

Chapter 4 focuses on what I have called the grass-roots rebuild project and situates this project within the context of New Zealand's changing relationship with the modern world system of nation states. I argue that the practices and goals of grassroots rebuild actors reflect broader societal anxieties about the introduction of neoliberal values into New Zealand by political and economic elites, as well as apprehensions about New Zealand's status as a First World country because of changing economic conditions for non-elite New Zealanders. I show how the existence of the grassroots rebuild depended upon the ability to occupy land in the Central City, land over which the authority to govern was contested by Ngāi Tahu. I argue that ultimately the grassroots rebuild was complicit in maintaining the ongoing dispossession of Ngāi Tahu because of their need for land in the Central City.

Chapter 5 returns to a discussion of the Māori rebuild project to analyze what rebuild actors believed was the source of Christchurch's social vulnerability. Drawing on the testimony of Māori rebuild actors reflecting on their experience of working with government officials and urban design professionals, I argue that the persistence of racial antagonism was what was believed to have made Christchurch vulnerable to a large-scale disaster such as the earthquakes. I discuss the controversy around proposed changes to the Victoria Square park in Central Christchurch to highlight the extent to which racial thinking continued to inform Christchurch residents' understanding of the nature of social difference in New Zealand.

Chapter 1

Recovering Christchurch: Beyond the temporality of natural disaster

Feeling the shock

It was a bright sunny afternoon, typical of late summer in Christchurch. The scorching mid-day heat that characterizes antipodal summer months was beginning to wane as summer transitioned to autumn. A cool breeze, accompanied by the faint salty scent of the not-far-off sea, could be felt wafting through the city amid the ubiquitous buzzing and whirring sounds of the construction happening across the city. Nearly five years after the 6.8 magnitude earthquake that had set off this flurry of activity, Christchurch was poised to enter what *The Press*, the local newspaper, had recently dubbed “peak Rebuild”- a projected period of intensified reconstruction that hopefully would assuage the skepticism that had taken hold of many Christchurch residents regarding the future of their city. While a sense of optimism still held true among public officials about the potential that lay ahead to build back a better Christchurch following the devastation of the earthquake, delayed delivery dates and political infighting regarding the fate of much of the city’s built landscape did not give people much confidence in their leaders to deliver on their promises for recovery.

Despite this pervasive skepticism, people had by this time, at least come to accept their post-earthquake reality. Art had found a new place in Christchurch, both serious and satirical. A few public art/community-building organizations had sprung up with the goal of helping people connect with the rubble through art. The idea seemed to be that if the idealized city promised by local and national government seemed a far-off fantasy, people might as well try and make the best of this extended period of recovery by taking matters into their own hands and building back better on a smaller scale. While the projects these organizations created could not compete with the scale of the convention centers and retail districts outlined in the government’s rebuild plans, they could offer a much more intimate, and personalized conception of what it means to “build back better” after a disaster, and that was something Christchurch residents could and did get behind as evidenced by the continuing popularity of groups like Gapfiller and Greening the

Rubble who spearheaded this alternative rebuild. If nothing else, this alternative recovery movement premised itself on the idea that the ground had stopped shaking long enough for people to at least regain the trust of gravity and could therefore go about carrying on their lives amidst the constant flux that seemed to imbue every other aspect of their city.

And then it happened again.

On 14 February 2016, at 1:13pm a 5.8 magnitude earthquake struck 15 kilometers off the coast of New Brighton, a coastal suburb of Christchurch. While the city's social and physical infrastructure was better equipped to deal with the aftermath of a high magnitude earthquake this time around, the lack of physical destruction caused by this Valentine's Day earthquake did little to assuage the emotional and mental toll such quakes have on the people of Christchurch. In the days and weeks that followed, The Press reported headlines such as "Quake a severe blow to morale," "Mental health 'costlier than rebuild'", and "Valentine's Day quake a reminder of what really matters." Based on the news reports, the consensus seemed to be that despite the better preparedness measures in place this time around, this Valentine's Day earthquake delivered a severe blow to the morale of the city. It reminded them that despite their best efforts to move beyond their collective trauma, the inherent shakiness of their city will not stop.

I remember what I was doing when it hit. I was at Blax Café on Victoria Street, the up-and-coming high-end retail and dining destination of the "new" Christchurch. In the twelve-and-a-half months I had spent in Christchurch up that point, Blax became a kind of "home away from home." Clinton, Lucy, Ryoko, and Rupert, the café staff, became fantastic interlocutors and dear friends, answering questions and providing support for how to deal with the daily drudgeries of life in post-disaster Christchurch. On that day, I was typing up my fieldnotes from the previous day. There had been a few small shakes in the previous weeks, mostly at night. I remember waking up one morning and noticing that the glass of water I had placed on my nightstand had fallen over. When I told my flat mate, Sue, about it, she said "oh, didn't you feel it? Shook me right in my bed and woke me up." Indeed, I had become used to the slight swaying of buildings or

the low rumblings deep within the earth that are the indications of an earthquake. These small aftershocks, I learned, were a common occurrence. Most of the people I met said they didn't even feel them anymore.

But on this day, the event did not end with the slight swaying I had experienced many times before. First there was a low rumbling, as though a train was approaching from far off in the distance. Then the light fixtures in the café began swaying back and forth. I saw a few of the café patrons anxiously run outside. At that point I still had not quite realized what was going on. That's when the first jolt hit.

Bu-bump.

Up and down. Not side to side. No gentle swaying. Violent thrusts.

Bu-bump, another one. This one made the tables jump off the ground.

Then the clapping started. It sounded like the walls of the building were being smacked with wooden planks.

Clap-clap-clap.

I saw another woman in the café crawl underneath her table. Up to that point I still hadn't realized what was happening. I couldn't make sense of it. None of it made sense. It was at that moment—when I saw the fear on her face as she held her legs against her torso underneath the table that I realized this was an earthquake. I froze. I didn't know what to do. I looked around and couldn't see anyone else. Still the clapping. Another jolt, up and down. I quickly scrambled off my chair and crawled underneath my table. But by that point it had stopped.

Rupert, one of the café baristas and a close friend, came over to my table and bent over. "Are you ok?" he asked. He helped me up and suggested we go outside for some fresh air. He put his arm around my shoulder as we stood in the street and looked around.

"Are you ok?" I asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine" he replied. "Was that your first big one?"

"Yes." I replied.

We stood there for a moment, he with his arm around me still. We didn't say anything. Just looked around. There was silence. No cars were on the road. The noise from nearby construction sites had ceased. Everything was still for a moment.

And then, after just a few moments of silence, I could hear the faint whirring sound of a drill off in the distance as construction sites came back to life. No time could be wasted. We were in the midst of a recovery after all.

Unsettling recovery

In this chapter, I critique the narrative framing of the Canterbury Earthquakes as a “disaster.” I argue that the passage of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 (hereafter referred to as the CER Act) served as a temporal marker announcing Christchurch's entry into a recovery phase or period, locating Christchurch within a particular discursive space—that of “recovery.” In Christchurch, this discourse of recovery was structured by the simultaneous looking-back-while-looking-ahead that characterizes most post-disaster recovery periods. Typically, recovery is understood as following on the heels of a state of traumatic shock stemming from the experience of a natural hazard and its aftermath, while a utopian future is imagined as providing an escape from the disruptions of survivors lived present (Davis and Alexander, 2016, Simpson, 2013).

Naomi Klein (2007) argued that it is this moment of post-hazard shock that creates the conditions for what she called the *shock doctrine*—the imposition by states and governments of often unpopular neoliberal economic reforms that are not so much a response to the post-hazard conditions, but rather are part of larger political and economic strategies that are too unpopular to be implemented in un-extraordinary times. This form of recovery is often referred to as “disaster capitalism”—defined by anthropologist Mark Schuller as “national and transnational governmental institutions' instrumental use of catastrophe (both so-called natural and human-mediated disasters, including post-conflict situations) to promote and empower a range of private, neoliberal capitalist interests” (Schuller 2008: 20).

However, in the case of Christchurch, it is my claim that there were far more complex relations of power at play in the Christchurch Rebuild than can be addressed by the disaster capitalism critique of recovery. In this chapter, I argue that the Christchurch Central City Rebuild acted as a temporal nexus, opening a window onto the multiple spatio-temporal regimes operating in Christchurch that served as the backdrop for the diverse forms of engagement with post-earthquake Christchurch by rebuild actors that I have called “Rebuild discourse” (See *Introduction*). I show how the present structured by disaster recovery discourse erased the past beyond the 2011 earthquake, rendering the natural hazard the source of all social problems the city experienced in its recovery present. It is my claim that this erasure rendered the longer history of colonial domination and capitalist expansion that characterized Christchurch’s past as inconsequential to the social vulnerability experienced by Christchurch residents, creating a misrecognition of the causal links between the deeper structural issues that contributed to Christchurch’s social vulnerability.

In the remaining sections of this chapter, I follow Mark Rifkin (2017) in his attempt to pluralize temporality to challenge the chronogeopolitics of “disaster recovery.” By chronogeopolitics, Rifkin referred to the normative processes by which perceptions of time are mapped onto space to create the illusion that all social actors inhabit the same present. While Rifkin is mostly concerned with how to carve out a space for a politics of decolonization that does not foreground what he calls “settler time,” or the spatiotemporal experience associated with the process of settler domination, I expand the application of chronogeopolitics to challenge the hegemony of “post-disaster recovery” as the only motivating factor in the transformation of post-earthquake Christchurch. To do this, I explore four different spatiotemporal regimes that overlay post-earthquake Christchurch to show that the Christchurch Rebuild was not merely a reaction to the earthquakes, but rather was implicated in multiple and different temporal regimes, each responding to a different set of historical circumstances that added to the complexity of the lived experiences of residents in post-earthquake Christchurch.

Recovery Time: establishing a “new normal”

In this section, I provide an overview of the spatiotemporal regime that I call “recovery time.” The temporal origins of the present produced by “recovery time” were the Canterbury earthquakes. I show how the series of events following the February 22 earthquake were interpreted as a disruption to the everyday-ness of life in Christchurch and then illustrate ethnographically how this experience of time reduced the causes of social vulnerability in Christchurch to the hazard occurrence and defined the recovery present as a process focused on establishing a “new normal.”

On 22 February 2011, at 12:51 pm a 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck 10 kilometers southeast of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand. Coming hot off the heels of a 7.1 earthquake just 5 months earlier in September of 2010 (“the Darfield earthquake), the shock of the 22 February earthquake was compounded by the temporal proximity to the previous shake. When the February 2011 earthquake struck five months after the September quake, earthquake survivors were already accustomed to interpreting their experience through an idiom of “disaster recovery,”—a particular way of interpreting recovery that blamed the earthquakes for the collective traumas Christchurch residents experienced post-earthquake.

While no deaths had occurred because of the September earthquake, the same could not be said of the February one. When the dust finally cleared, and emergency responders announced they could not save anymore lives, 185 people were declared dead as a direct result of the earthquake. Most of those who lost their lives were trapped inside of the CTV Building on the corner of Madras and Cashel Streets, right in the heart of Christchurch’s Central Business District (CBD). In addition to housing the Canterbury Television studio, the building was also home to an English language school, a nursing school, and a health clinic. In the moments after the earthquake struck, the building collapsed through a pancake effect, in which the bottom levels gave out and the remaining levels fell on one another, trapping most of those inside.

Despite the recognition of the 22 February earthquake as the “big one,” it was just one in a series of earthquakes that extended before this specific quake and long after it.

This was just an aftershock, and there would be many thousands more to follow. What then, was so extraordinary about this particular earthquake that led to its identification as a disaster? While the magnitude of 22 February earthquake was less than the September jolt, its epicenter was located just 10 kilometers away from the city center in the Port Hills at a depth of 5 kilometers (teara.govt.nz). This means that the intensity of the shaking—its experiential quality—was much more severe than the September quake. Furthermore, it occurred in the afternoon, around lunch time when most people were awake and going about their daily routines. The Darfield quake was in the middle of the night when most people were asleep, so it was not as legible as the February earthquake. This is not to say that the Darfield quake, nor the subsequent aftershocks, were less of an event, or hazard. Rather, the 22 February earthquake acted metonymically to encompass all the earthquakes and aftershocks that are far too numerous and frequent to be individually narrated as disasters. Indeed, the people I spoke with in Christchurch about their experiences of earthquakes tended to conflate the September and February earthquakes into a single event in their memories.



Figure 11 The Port Hills as seen from the beach at New Brighton. Photo by the author, February 2015.



Figure 12: Christchurch as seen from the Port Hills. Photo by the author, February 2015.

This conflation of individual earthquake hazards into a single occurrence is significant because it highlights the imaginative work that goes into producing a disaster. While it is nothing new to say that disasters are social constructions, much of the emphasis in Critical Disaster Studies is on the historical production of social vulnerability and prescriptions for how to mitigate the effects of that vulnerability considering the potential for additional hazards. Less attention has been paid to the imaginative work that goes into creating a disaster. As my fieldwork showed, much of this work happens retrospectively, as most disasters (particularly earthquakes), are unpredictable and their effects often linger for quite some time after the seismic event has ended.

I experienced the impact of “disaster thinking” on how people understood and interpreted their experience of the world in March 2016 when I attended a conference called *Seismics and the City: Shaping Canterbury’s Future Now*. The conference was

held at the Rydges Latimer Hotel and Conference Centre in Central Christchurch, across the street from Latimer Square which had served as a makeshift hospital and relief services hub during those early, tense moments immediately following the 2011 earthquake. Bringing together representatives from government, NGOs, and the private sector, this was the fifth conference in a series that, according to the program, provided “an opportunity to look back and reflect on the lessons of the last five years and to look forward and be part of the early engagement with the new post-quake entities Regenerate Christchurch and Otakaro Limited.” The conference proceedings presumed Christchurch was in the midst of a transitional period, bridging the pre-earthquake past with an imagined future in which the trauma associated with the disaster has been overcome through a process of recovery. The conference was intended to assess that recovery period as they now stood on the threshold of yet another post-disaster transition—that of regeneration.

Organized into sections with headings like *Regeneration*, *Shaping Christchurch and Canterbury*, and *Innovation*, the conference was an exercise in looking-back-while-looking-ahead. As one conference presenter put it, “Christchurch is now moving rapidly from the recovery phase into a regeneration stage,” and the presentation topics reflected this temporal trafficking between the past of “lessons learned” and the imagined future that structures the present state of “recovery.” Indeed, many of the presentations very explicitly carved out a temporal space for the recovery whose beginning was marked by the earthquake and whose end was foretold by the anticipated transformation of some recovery institutions. The “beginning-of-time” seemed to be unanimously understood by conference participants as the February 2011 earthquake, while the disbanding of CERA the following month in April of 2016 was seen as the definitive end of the recovery period. After that, Christchurch would be in the “regeneration” phase which had less to do with addressing vulnerability and more to do with seizing the “opportunity” offered by the disaster. Recovery was thus framed in terms of progress through pre-determined stages: relief, recovery, regeneration.

One presentation stood out called “Social Dimensions of Regeneration.” The presenter, Dr. David Johnston, Senior Scientist from GNS Science, a Crown Research Institute devoted to geophysical research, stated that one of the challenges of a post-disaster situation is to put measures in place that judge how well people are recovering. He pointed to the high rates of mental illness and the housing crisis which were two issues being heavily reported by the news media in Christchurch at that time and said that while it was important to address these issues, it was important to distinguish what was new about them from what was old, as new things happen in post-disaster situations that didn’t happen before. When taking a question from the audience about how to address pre-existing inequalities that might have been exacerbated by the disaster, Johnston again emphasized that what needs to be addressed are the “new vulnerable” – those who have been made vulnerable in the time since the earthquake. Thus, the recovery present was marked by a certain kind of discursive amnesia in which the cause all current social and physical vulnerability was ascribed to the earthquake.

This was the fifth occurrence of this conference, and its annual repetition alone suggests that “recovery” had by that time emerged as a legible social phenomenon in need of analysis. The conference presenters were all considered experts in their fields which lent credence to the kinds of evaluative statements they made about life in the rebuild zone. The technocratic approach of this conference was replicated in the everyday conversations I had with disaster survivors. The technical language of disaster risk reduction used by experts in the field of emergency management had become the dominant idiom by which people in Christchurch expressed their experiences of trauma and recovery. If the topic of my research came up in casual conversation (which it always did), someone would inevitably say “everyone became a seismologist after the earthquake.”

The transformation of governance structures for responding to disaster contributed to the pervasiveness of disaster recovery discourse in structuring how people experienced post-earthquake Christchurch. As has been pointed out by disaster researchers, governments often do not have the capacity to deal with a large-scale disaster

such as the Christchurch earthquake and will either transform existing institutions or create new ones to meet the immediate needs of relief and recovery (Johnson and Mamula, 2014). Indeed, this was the case in New Zealand, where the decentralized system of disaster management adopted in the 1980s as part of the devolution of national government departments to local and regional authorities had not been tested against a disaster of such large proportions prior to the September 4th, 2010 earthquake. In fact, New Zealand had not experienced a disaster on the scale of the Canterbury earthquakes in nearly 45 years. When the first of earthquake occurred in the early morning hours on September 4th, 2010, there was a lack of coordination between local, regional and national authorities in the delivery of relief services and resources. This has been credited to the inexperience of emergency response institutions in dealing with a natural hazard of that scale (Johnson and Mamula 2014: 580). The uncoordinated response hampered local authorities' access to the resources offered by the national government and ultimately slowed the pace of recovery following the earthquake (Johnson and Mamula 2014: 581).

In light of the perceived failure of the response to the September 4 earthquake, the national government decided to reverse the trend of decentralization and created a new cabinet position—Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery—to oversee all recovery-related activities. Gerry Brownlee, then Minister of Economic Development and Member of Parliament from a Christchurch suburb called Ilam, was hand-picked by Prime Minister John Key to serve as the new minister. The Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act 2010 (CERR Act 2010) mandated the creation of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Commission (CERC)—a statutory body composed of regional and territorial leaders that would report to Minister Brownlee. In the time between the September 4 and February 22 earthquakes, local leaders and municipal personnel complained of a lack of local and regional capacity during implementation of the response and recovery act, including the almost total retreat of the Christchurch City Council from participation in the recovery. When the aftershock on February 22, 2011 happened—not even six months after the initial Darfield quake—the government institutions that emerged in the wake of the September quake were still in the process of

evolving. Given the dissatisfaction with the 2010 recovery act, new legislation was passed that dissolved CERC and created the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) in its place. The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 (CER Act 2011) further disempowered local leaders and provided Minister Brownlee with executive decision-making power and the ability to expedite or entirely bypass normal legislative processes while subordinating local emergency management agencies to an advisory role.

The Canterbury earthquakes thus came at a time in which emergency institutions and governance structures were evolving away from the trend of decentralization that occurred in many government departments in the 1980s. The centralization of authority in the wake of the Canterbury earthquakes was in line with a broader trend of the current national government to strengthen the role of the central government in regional and local affairs, streamline policies, shorten decision making processes, and reduce bureaucracy (Johnson and Mamula, 2014, 598). This trend of centralizing power in the National government is a hallmark of New Zealand's unique brand of contemporary neoliberalism (Kelsey, 2014). However, as the city transitioned from disaster response to disaster recovery, the centralization of authority that in the immediate response phase had proven to be beneficial, turned into a liability.

Furthermore, Christchurch was in the midst of mayoral and council elections at the time of the earthquakes, adding an additional layer of volatility to an already unstable political situation. The earthquakes exposed the inexperience of the central government in dealing with a disaster of that magnitude and brought to the fore the fact that state institutions were in transition and untested in a real-time disaster scenario. Thus, when the earthquake struck, government institutions were vulnerable because of their inexperience in dealing with such a large-scale disaster. The lack of coordination at the governmental level translated in a delay in the delivery of relief services and resources at a crucial period immediately following the disaster. The mishandling of the situation at the early stages of emergency response created the conditions for a second order disaster in which local residents came to resent government leaders at both the national and regional level for the lackluster response.

The present structured by “recovery time” was characterized by a kind of historical amnesia in which all of Christchurch’s social problems were interpreted as arising from the earthquakes. An idiom of “disaster recovery” had come to shape the way people narrated their experiences of post-earthquake Christchurch. The restructuring of the country’s disaster response infrastructure intensified the social impacts of the earthquakes, causing a second-order disaster that further entrenched in people’s minds the notion that they were inhabiting a “new normal.” This mentality carried over into how people interpreted and understood other issues, such as the causes of social vulnerability. The idea of the “new vulnerable” expressed at the industry conference further attests to the idea that people interpreted the earthquakes as a “breaking point” in which the present was severed from the past before the earthquake.

Settler Time: progress and domination

In this section, I situate the Christchurch Rebuild in relation to the temporality of “settler time.” This spatiotemporal regime positioned the Christchurch Rebuild as yet another phase in the domination of Christchurch by foreign powers. The temporal origin of the present produced by this spatiotemporal regime was the establishment of the Wakefieldian settlement of Christchurch in the 1840s by the Canterbury Association. I show how the Christchurch Rebuild served as a means by political and economic elites to regain control of Christchurch that had been given up to more democratic processes in the decades between the settlement’s founding and the occurrence of the earthquakes. The present under this temporal frame was characterized by a desire for capitalist expansion and developmental progress.

The early planners of Christchurch planned their city in a such a way as to create spaces they believed would foster their conception of an ideal English lifestyle that was deemed impossible to achieve in their home country because of extreme poverty, poor urban planning, and an unstable economic and political climate. Settler colonialism provided a means for elite Europeans to re-make their worlds into their ideal forms, leaving behind the undesirable elements of the home country for the infinite possibilities

that awaited them in the far-off lands their countrymen had been exploring for several hundred years.

Christchurch historian W. David McIntyre (2000) emphasized Christchurch's origins as a planned colonial settlement, first imagined in the 1840s and brought to fruition beginning with the purchase of a tract of land from Ngāi Tahu, the local Māori group in 1848. The brainchild of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley, the origins of the Christchurch settlement are found in Wakefield's own aspirations to create a British colony that would transplant English class society to the "new world" (Temple, 2002: 422). Wakefield had, by the time he began work on the Canterbury Association, grown increasingly disillusioned with the policies of the British Colonial Office which he believed did not allow enough self-administration of settler colonial territories. Wakefield was of the firm belief that the purpose of colonies was purely economic—they were to buttress the wealth of the home country. In Wakefield's eye, Christchurch was to be cut from a different cloth—an ecclesiastical cloth to be exact—than previous colonial projects he had worked on. It was to be a model of colonial self-government, dominated by an ecclesiastical elite who would create an ideal society based on their Anglican values of piety and industriousness.

The ideological beliefs underlying the Christchurch settlement can be found outlined in a book published by Wakefield right around the time the Canterbury Association was making plans to send its first group of settlers across the ocean to land in what came to be known as Pegasus Bay. In *A View to the Art of Colonization*, published in 1849, Wakefield argued that the purpose of colonization should be to encourage emigration to lands that have yet to be transformed through the human capacity for labor. Wakefield believed colonization to be necessary for the political and economic stability of Great Britain because there was an insufficient amount of land and capital for people to maintain "a comfortable subsistence according to the respective standards of living established amongst the classes" (Wakefield, 1849: 65). This led to a state of "excessive competition" that he believed was the source of political and economic instability plaguing the country. Wakefield's solution to the problem of the boom-and-bust economy

brought about by a reliance on credit was settler colonialism. It was through settler colonialism that the problems of land scarcity and competition for making a living could be mitigated. Because he imagined colonial territories essentially as food baskets for the home country, the success of Wakefield's colonial theory depended on an unlimited supply of empty land.

In practice, Wakefield's plan differed from what he saw taking place in Britain's already-established colonies, mostly in terms of the type of settlers emigrating to colonial territories, and the sale and distribution of "waste lands." For a colony to properly function and fulfill its role as an economic buttress of the home country, Wakefield believed in the need for emigrants from all social classes. This idea differed from colonial practice at the time, which did not necessarily encourage land sales to the middle classes and instead provided land to wealthy elites who then imported either slave labor or indentured servants, creating a society composed entirely of those at the very top of the socio-economic ladder, and those at the very bottom. Importing English culture was another crucial element of Wakefield's plan, which he believed was best achieved through the establishment of an Episcopacy, or church-dominated government. The church, believed Wakefield, was the only body capable of maintaining the morals and values of the home-country amongst the middle classes. James Edward Fitzgerald, who served as an early administrator of the colony (and the first editor of the settlement's first newspaper) was hand-picked by Wakefield as the "ideal colonist" because he was well-educated, considered intelligent by his peers, and most importantly for Wakefield, came from the right social group (Temple, 441). Ultimately, the goal of Wakefield and Godley was to finance the settlement of a truly Anglican new world colony whose elite class would not be dominated by government officials and company men, but rather, by an ecclesiastical elite comprised of clergy men and their families. Godley and Wakefield believed that only the clergy can promote the kinds of public institutions such as the university, the museum, and voluntary associations, that they deemed necessary for the success of a middle class.

The grid pattern that serves as the template for Christchurch's streets, particularly in the city center, was a hallmark of nineteenth century colonial development. The Canterbury Association was inspired in their planning of the city by "classical models" from Ancient Rome, Greece, and Egypt where, it was believed, cities were built based on grid plans for their perceived ritual, health, and military benefits, in addition to the ease of social and economic control that a standardized street plan offered (McIntyre 2000). Wakefield's own enthusiasm for this style of urban development no doubt stemmed from the "rationality" of the grid pattern street layout which not only appealed to colonialists' desire to create order out of the perceived chaos of colonial environments, but it also allowed for the easy speculation of an area of land that Wakefield and his associates had never actually laid eyes on. The regularity of the grid plan made it easy to sell standardized plots of land to would-be settlers—the quarter acre sections that would later become the basis of the "Kiwi dream" lifestyle (which has become increasingly out of reach for most New Zealanders).



Figure 13: Map of Christchurch's street grid prepared by Edward Jollie in 1850. Image courtesy of CERA.

Ultimately, Wakefield's plan for Christchurch interpreted space as something to be controlled and manipulated. The success of Wakefield's vision depended on the availability of unoccupied land—a "blank slate" upon which to create a utopian society, and a strict adherence to the manners and morals of the English middle-classes. Over time, the social, political, and economic exclusivity that Wakefield and his contemporaries envisioned for Christchurch (and upon which they pegged its future success) was eroded in favor of a more socially egalitarian ideology, committed to ideas of fairness and equality, and economic progressivism. By the time of the earthquakes, a new ideology had taken hold of many economic and political elites—that of neoliberalism—which was mobilized to restore control of the city to the elite classes.

More specifically, from the perspective of settler time, the Christchurch Rebuild served as an attempt by economic and political elites to take back control of space in Christchurch. When the first CERR Act was passed in September 2010, it called for, among other things, the ability of "any relevant minister" to petition the Governor General to issue an Order in Council for the purposes of bypassing any and all provisions of certain parliamentary acts for the purposes of facilitating the government's response to the earthquake. Included in the list of acts to which exemptions might apply included the Local Government Acts of 1974 and 2002.

Until 1974, local authorities such as community, district, and city councils, could only perform functions they were specifically authorized to do through statutory amendments to the Municipal Corporations Act 1954. The Local Government Act 1974 attempted to consolidate the legislative "hodge-podge" from which local government derived its authority, while also standardizing territorial units and councils. This act was largely amended in 2002 with the passage of the Local Government Act, whose purpose was to "provide a framework and powers for local authorities to decide which activities they undertake and the manner in which they will undertake them," as well as authorizing "local authorities to play a broad role in meeting the current and future needs of their communities for good-quality, local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions." These acts served as the source of local governmental authority

and provided significant latitude in terms of what they were able to do. Most importantly though, these acts established the local expectation of government accountability by institutionalizing public review sessions and comment periods that served as the primary ways in which Kiwis experienced democracy.

Thus, when the CERR Act called for the ability of individual ministers to omit any statutory provisions that might “divert resources away from the effort to efficiently respond to the damage caused by the Canterbury earthquake,” and protected those ministers from any liability related to those omissions, Christchurch residents felt as though they were being disenfranchised. These feelings were reinforced seven months later with the passage of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 (CER Act). This act repealed the CERR Act 2010 and greatly expanded the discretionary powers of the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery to include (among others): recommending a Recovery Strategy, directing the development of, and matters to be covered by the Recovery Plan, the power to give directions to city or regional councils, and most significantly, the ability to compulsorily acquire land. While both the CERR Act 2010 and the CER Act 2011 made provisions for community forums and public comment periods regarding both the recovery strategy and any recovery plans, the Minister was in no way bound by the recommendations of the public.

By vesting the Earthquake Minister, Gerry Brownlee (who was hand-picked by then Prime Minister John Key) with wide executive powers and revoking certain powers of the Christchurch City Council, the CERR Act 2010 and CER Act 2011 reversed the trend of decentralized, regional and local management of land use, development, and emergency management that had characterized New Zealand governance since the 1980s. As I discussed earlier this political vulnerability was not a response to the earthquakes but was rather part of a larger transformation within New Zealand governance structures that aimed to strengthen central government’s role, streamline policies, curb bureaucracy, and shorten decision making processes (Johnson and Mamula, 598). The recovery legislation passed in the wake of the Canterbury earthquakes thus continued this trend of re-centralizing land and infrastructure management with central government.

This process of re-centralization emerged around the same time as neoliberal economic theory began to take hold among government elites in New Zealand. As Jane Kelsey has argued, the New Zealand economy underwent a drastic transformation beginning in 1984 when Roger Douglas was appointed Minister of Finance and instituted several economic reforms that have since been labeled “Rogernomics,” which consisted primarily of selling off state-owned assets and enterprises to private companies and individuals, specifically public banks, which were sold off to foreign firms in Australia and Europe. The frenzied adoption of neoliberal economic theory by government actors in the 1980s embedded neoliberalism into the workings of the state, locking future governments into a regime that serves the power of de-territorialized finance capital and depoliticizes forces that attempt to challenge those gains. As Kelsey argued “neoliberal practices are not about institutional retreat, but about constraining new mechanisms for control” (2014, 129). In other words, neoliberalism in New Zealand seeks to limit the potential of the public sector to reclaim power—both economic and political—that has been handed over to the capitalist elite.

The composition of this elite class resembles what Leslie Sklair (1998) called the “transnational capitalist class”- a group of elite capitalists who are characterized by their outward-oriented perspective on economic, political, and cultural issues and whose interests are globally, rather than locally or even nationally, connected. There was a close intimacy between government and private elites in the 1980s, the legacy of which can be found embodied in former New Zealand Prime Minister, John Key, who presided over a National Party government during my fieldwork and is a former investment banker and Merrill Lynch executive with close ties to the United States (he owns property in Malibu, California and claims to have “attended” management courses at Harvard). In the context of New Zealand, Kelsey (2014) described this transnational capitalist class as a “shadow elite”—a group of non-democratically elected private individuals to whom political power has been transferred from the state to form a “consultocracy” or “shadow state” whose loyalties are focused on global financial centers such as New York, London, and Tokyo, rather than on New Zealand itself.

As I have shown, New Zealand neoliberalism is characterized by a contempt for electoral democracy, and the disenfranchising of local councils found in the CER Act 2010 and CERR Act 2011 support this characterization. The hand-picking of the Earthquake Minister by the Prime Minister and the wide executive powers granted to the minister by the CERR Act gesture towards the existence of a shadow elite whose interests in the recovery were determined by their loyalties to transnational financial institutions and multinational corporations. The regulatory features of the recovery legislation support the responsabilization of the citizenry, holding individuals accountable for their own recovery rather than vesting that responsibility collectively with the state. From the perspective of settler time then, the Christchurch Rebuild served as a mechanism for the reinstatement of elite control over the city. Rather than act as a turning point for creating structural change and addressing some of the issues that created the conditions of social vulnerability that led to the disaster, the Christchurch Rebuild was appropriated by economic and political elites a way to reclaim power.

Māori Time: histories of displacement and dispossession

In this section, I explore what I call “Māori time,” – a spatiotemporal regime that sought to incorporate the earthquakes into the narrative of Ngāi Tahu ’s history of displacement and dispossession by both Māori and European outsiders. The origin of this temporal regime was the migration of descendants of Tahu Potiki into the South Island sometime in the sixteenth century. I show how the development of Christchurch from a planned colonial settlement into a modern city served as an extension of the displacement and dispossession that Ngāi Tahu began experiencing in the 1830s with the raids of North Island chief Te Rauparaha. The present structured by Māori time was characterized by feelings of loss and resentment at those who aided in Ngāi Tahu dispossession. The Christchurch Rebuild thus served as yet another instance of outsiders claiming authority over Ngāi Tahu *takiwā*, or territory that must brought under Ngāi Tahu ’s *mana*.

Known as *Ōtautahi* by Ngāi Tahu, the Canterbury region, and Christchurch specifically, was an important *mahinga kai*, or food gathering place for the semi-nomadic

communities who inhabited the region at the time of European settlement. As historian Te Maire Tau (2000) has discussed, Ngāi Tahu's relationship to land was premised on the belief that places are made meaningful through various relationships that people are seen to enter with the land. The land thus becomes an active agent in the creation of place, and oftentimes gets mythologized and institutionalized to preserve those relationships over time (46-54). Thus, despite the belief held by colonial officials that land could be alienated from indigenous peoples for exclusive use by settlers by entering into treaties with them or by formal purchase agreements as was the case with Ngāi Tahu, Māori conceptions of land precluded the possibility of such an easy transfer because of the deep-rooted relationships between Ngāi Tahu and the space they occupied. In other words, for the Canterbury Association to acquire the "blank slate" they needed to build their colony, a deed of sale was not enough. So long as Ngāi Tahu continued to inhabit the region, those relationships would persist, regardless of whether the settler community recognized them or not.

By 1849 when Wakefield and his colleagues were developing plans for the settlement of what they had decided to call the Canterbury Plains, Ngāi Tahu had already established their *mana whenua* (territorial authority), over Ōtautahi. For Ngāi Tahu, the production of place is informed by *whakapapa*, or genealogy. In *te Ao Māori*, or the Māori world, genealogical connection is the source of all knowledge. The implication of this principle of *matauranga Māori*, (Māori knowledge), is that people can see their ancestors in the landscape. This creates long-lasting and enduring ties between people and land. For Ngāi Tahu, it is not just geologic and ecological features such as rivers, mountains and forests from which they trace their ancestry, but also wind and sea currents. Thus, according to Te Maire Tau, "Ngāi Tahu's relationship with the Canterbury landscape starts with Raki's first wife, Pokoharua Te Pō, the sources of all winds, incantations and tapu" (2000: 42). Places for Māori are made through long-term engagement between a group of people and a specific landscape. The people cannot exist without the land, and the land cannot exist without the people. Contending with the Ngāi

Tahu presence in Christchurch has served as one of the main themes driving Christchurch's history since the founding of the settlement.

The history of Ngāi Tahu habitation in the South Island can be traced to earlier migrations south of North Island tribes, specifically Ngāti Māmoē and Ngāti Kahungunu, that began around the sixteenth century (Anderson, 1998). As these northern tribes moved south into what was for them new territory, they encountered groups such as Hawea, Rapuwai, and Waitaha, remnants from what is referred to as the moa hunter period of Māori pre-history. The more modern tribes from the north such as Ngāti Māmoē, intermarried with these moa hunter groups and eventually replaced their traditions and place-names with their own. Descendants of Tahu Potiki were part of those early migrations. Tahu Potiki was said to be a relative of the founder of Ngāti Porou, a prominent *iwi* of the east coast of the North Island. Over time, it was those descendants who intermarried with the remaining pockets of Waitaha, as well as with the more organized waves of Ngāti Māmoē and Ngāti Kahungunu migrants in the south that laid the foundations for Ngāi Tahu ascendancy in the nineteenth century. By the 1830s, distinctions between Ngāti Māmoē, Ngāti Kahungunu and remnants of the moa hunter groups were no longer easily recognizable, and people began identifying as Ngāi Tahu—or people of Tahu (Anderson, 1998). Thus, Ngāi Tahu's expansion was not a systematic invasion, but rather happened over the course of several hundred years as North Island *iwi* moved south and developed new traditions and new relational networks that rendered them a distinct descent group.

The nineteenth century saw New Zealand embroiled in what have come to be known as the Musket Wars, a series of struggles between Māori tribes largely instigated by European colonial officers who pitted competing tribes against one another for their own benefit (Evison, 1997). Ngāi Tahu by this time had established its ascendancy in Te Wai Pounamou—or the South Island, and Te Rauparaha, leader of North Island tribe Ngāti Toa, began moving south to conquer the South Island *iwi*. In 1832, Te Rauparaha sacked Kaiapoi, an important settlement to Ngāi Tahu located about thirty kilometers north of the modern city of Christchurch. European land speculators closely followed the

pursuits of conquerors like Te Rauparaha in the hopes of brokering land purchase deals with them as they conquered other tribes and acquired more territory. Several of these kinds of purchases were made following Te Rauparaha's raids in Te Wai Pounamou, however their legality was challenged by Ngāi Tahu leaders because of Māori customs regarding land rights, namely, the fact that it took three generations for customary land rights to be extinguished. From this point of view, Te Rauparaha's conquest of Kaiapoi in 1832 would take several generations to be deemed completed, rendering whatever sales were made to European land speculators invalid (Evison, 1997).

It was these kinds of land purchase deals that compelled the British Crown to even contemplate declaring British sovereignty over New Zealand because they were largely being brokered by private individuals rather than through the British Colonial Office. These purchase deals undercut the ability of the British government to purchase land cheaply and violated their rights of pre-emption. In fact, it was upon hearing of the land sales entered by Te Rauparaha that led Governor Hobson to bring the Treaty of Waitangi south and declare British sovereignty over the South Island in addition to the North Island (Evison, 1997). Ngāi Tahu thus welcomed British intervention because of their experiences with Ngāti Toa. The spirit of the treaty—partnership, cooperation and most importantly, protection by the British Crown—further solidified Ngāi Tahu's support for the agreement in light of their defeat by Te Rauparaha.

Once the threat of Te Rauparaha was removed, Ngāi Tahu willfully entered into several purchase agreements with European colonial officials, always with the expectation that the terms of the agreements would be honored and that adequate provisions would be made to ensure the protection of Ngāi Tahu's interests (Evison, 2006). One of the most significant land deals of the early colonial period, known as "Kemp's Purchase" in 1848 included a provision for the allocation of reserve lands for Ngāi Tahu. Colonial administrators took it upon themselves to decide where (and how large) these reserves would be. Ngāi Tahu historian Te Maire Tau said that "traditional" Ngāi Tahu occupation in Christchurch came to an official end in 1868 with the decision of the Native Land Court that refused applications for Māori reserves to be located within

Christchurch and were instead given lands around the perimeter of the city (2000:223-225). Thus, Ngāi Tahu were intentionally excluded from the city and their presence was not recognized in any meaningful way in its built environment.

In typical colonial fashion, Māori place names were replaced with European ones, while the streets were given names plucked from the mother country such as Worcester Boulevard, Manchester and Gloucester Streets. As the settler population became more established and they developed a sense of local identity, they decorated the city with statues of important figures in their history like Queen Victoria and Capt. James Cook. Signs of Ngāi Tahu's presence and history were largely erased from the landscape. Coupled with their segregation from the city, these factors contributed further to the narrative of Christchurch as a predominantly white, English city.

Over time and as the city grew, planners and local government officials had to manipulate the space in and around Christchurch to maintain the colonially inspired organization of space. McIntyre said that while it took several decades for the population to boom, by the 1880s, the Christchurch urban area had a population of roughly 50,000 (89). As time progressed and the settler population of Christchurch grew, the city's limits pushed out towards the Port Hills to the south, and east into the marshy wetlands that extended all the way to the coast. This eastern portion of Christchurch, known as the Eastern suburbs, is the most geologically unstable area of the city, the most socio-economically depressed, and most likely to be home to Māori and Pasifika people, who are statistically the most economically marginalized groups in New Zealand. Built up in the 1940s following a post-war economic boom, the eastern suburbs became home to many Māori, both Ngāi Tahu and from the North Island, as increasing urbanization took place throughout New Zealand.

Growing trades and industries in town, as well as diminishing space on reserve lands, led many Ngāi Tahu to relocate to the city. By this time, Christchurch's reputation as a bastion of Pākehā (white) New Zealand society was well entrenched and Māori were outsiders. Te Maire Tau, Ngāi Tahu historian and local *rangatira* (chief), recalled at a talk I attended during my fieldwork that in the 1980s a high-profile murder happened at a

pub near Cathedral Square. The perpetrator was Māori and the event sparked a debate in the media about the Māori presence in Christchurch, framing them as a “problem” that needed to be dealt with. Te Maire said that from his point of view, the debate seemed absurd and incredibly racist since it presumed that Māori were recent arrivals to Christchurch when in fact they had been living there long before Christchurch was even established.

Maintaining the urban/rural distinction that acts as the underlying principle governing urban development has been particularly challenging for local government. As the population of the city expanded throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to ultimately reach its pre-earthquake level of around 350,000, the city expanded far beyond the limits of the original grid plan. Various regional and district councils have been created in the surrounding districts only to later be subsumed by the Christchurch City Council, rendering the city’s boundaries fluid and constantly changing (See Perry, 2000). Maintaining the distinction between urban core and rural periphery has therefore been one of the main challenges of local government in Canterbury since the inception of the colony and the passing of zoning regulations and ordinances that dictate the type of development appropriate for specific locations continues to be the primary mechanism for organizing space in Christchurch.

The urban/rural distinction also acts as one of the ways that Ngāi Tahu continue to be dispossessed of their lands. Because of zoning restrictions passed by the local district council in the 1960s that were intended to maintain the “rural character” of the district in which Ngāi Tahu reserve lands are located, tribal members are not allowed to build on their lands. As Te Maire Tau explained,

“the local council said they [Ngāi Tahu] couldn’t build on their reserves anymore even though they were forced to live there in the first place. They were only allowed to build one house for every 10 acres. Imagine being a parent in the 1970s with 10-12 children. None of your children can build on your land, so the first thing the children did when they came of age was to move to the city, particularly the east side of Christchurch. Ten years later, the elders are living alone in the village, so they sell their land and move to the city to be closer to their children. The capital value of the land went down because it cannot be subdivided, so it is of no value to the

property developers, so they sold it for cheap to farmers. The city in those days was not very friendly to Māori.”

This narrative of Ngāi Tahu urbanization highlights the ways in which space in the Canterbury region has been manipulated by those in power to suit their political, economic and social agendas. In the early years of settlement, Ngāi Tahu were given the least desirable parcels of land on the perimeter of the city. However, as the economy grew and the demand for labor increased, Māori were forced back into the city because of zoning regulations that prevented them from building on their own land. As a result, they were pushed into the least desirable areas of the city—the eastern suburbs—where the former wetlands had been drained and converted into low-income neighborhoods. As Te Maire put it, “no one was supposed to live out there. Pākehā’s used the East for holiday homes. They knew it was unstable.”

The post-earthquake present structured by Māori time was thus informed by this history of dispossession and displacement that began long before the earthquakes. Rather than act as a turning point or moment of separation from the past, the earthquakes and the Christchurch Rebuild were part of this timeline of affronts to Ngāi Tahu’s *mana*. Rather than serve as the focus of Ngāi Tahu’s political and economic aspirations, the Christchurch Rebuild acted as leverage for the assertion of *mana* by Ngāi Tahu to aid in the development of a neotribal society centered on the redevelopment of their ancestral village at Tuahiwi.

Geologic Time: New Zealand’s imaginative geography of threat

In this section, I draw on a final temporal frame that I identified as structuring Christchurch’s post-earthquake present that I call “geologic time.” The origin of this spatiotemporal regime is less defined but is located somewhere in earth’s primordial past. This spatiotemporal regime wrote the Canterbury earthquakes into what I refer to as New Zealand’s imaginary geography of threat. The present under this regime was characterized by an ambivalent desire for the “big one”—a mythical Armageddon-like earthquake that New Zealanders believe will strike their country at some undetermined

time in the future. Yet because life continues to go on after each earthquake hazard (and there have been many), the arrival of “the big one” remains elusive, rendering the present an anxiety-laden waiting period between hazard events.

In August 2016, I attended a panel called “Imaginary Cities,” part of a series called “Shifting Points of View” that were part of the biannual Christchurch Arts Festival. The abstract for the panel described it thus:

Taking the Christchurch blueprint as a starting point, the panel looks at ways we imagine cities; either in fiction, in history, or in contemporary life, whether as utopias or dystopias...cities imagined or reimagined.

One of the panelists was a New Zealand novelist named Hamish Clayton whose novel *The Pale North* was set in an imaginary post-earthquake Wellington, New Zealand’s capital city. At one point during the discussion, the moderator asked Hamish what the relationship was between the fictional Wellington of his novel, and the earthquake that transformed it into a post-apocalyptic dystopia, and the Christchurch earthquake. Hamish said the Christchurch earthquake was “deeply disquieting” for him because he had begun writing his novel before the earthquake happened. He went on to say that this idea of a “big one” is part of the psychology driving the novel. It is always in the back of his characters’ minds.

This idea that the possibility of a “big one” is always looming in people’s minds was not confined to fictional representations. Many of the people I spoke with held this idea as well. People most often expressed these anxieties after a small aftershock. I can remember one instance of a small quake—just a slight swaying back and forth, barely noticeable. Later that day during dinner with some friends, Jonny and Clinton, I asked if they had felt it and Clinton replied he didn’t even feel them anymore. He said he wished “the big one” would just hit already, he was tired of waiting. “We all know it’s coming. Just get it over with so we can move on.” This upset Jonny who asked Clinton not to say things like that as it seemed to brush aside the trauma people associated with larger earthquakes and dismissed.

Clinton's impatient waiting for "the big one" is interesting to consider since he had experienced several "big ones"—September 2010, February 2011, June 2011—collectively known as the "Canterbury earthquakes" and were all magnitude 6.0 or higher. Indeed, there have been several "big ones" since—the Valentine's Day earthquake on February 14, 2016, and the Kaikoura earthquake in November 2016. Despite the repetition of intense earthquakes, in Clinton's mind, "the big one" remains elusive. Indeed, for him, just like the inhabitants of Clayton's fictional Wellington, the idea of a "big one" looms in the back of his mind, even though earthquakes—events that might signal the end of this waiting period—continue to occur. And Clinton is certainly not alone in his impatient desiring for a big event. After the Valentine's Day earthquake in 2016, which was the first major event since the June 2011 earthquake, *The Press* reported that geologists were anticipating another "big one" very soon. The confirmation of this belief in a perpetually elusive "big one" by geologic experts further contributes to the idea that there is always a bigger one that has yet to occur.

The idea that New Zealand is prone to natural disasters has long been part of the country's national story. James Belich, a prominent New Zealand historian, began the second volume of his national history, *Paradise Reforged* by describing the volcanic eruption of Mt. Tarawera in the central North Island, and subsequent destruction of the Pink and White Terraces—one of New Zealand's earliest tourist attractions and important economic driver for the region. Indeed, the connection between environment and economic activity is a major trope in New Zealand history, and speaks to the myth of the enterprising "frontier spirit" of the English settler community. This narrative is one of continual attempts by human society to reign in, control, and gain mastery over a harsh, extreme environment that experiences periodic setbacks, as is evidenced by the prominence given to displays and exhibits at all the country's major museums about humans' relationship to nature. At Te Papa Tongarewa, the National Museum in Wellington, there is an entire exhibit on the type of geophysical phenomenon that occur or have the potential to occur in New Zealand such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis, as well as historical examples of natural hazards that had significant social

impacts, whether that be the destruction of a major tourist attraction, as was the case with the Pink and White Terraces, or the impacts of earthquakes and fires on the country's economic drivers—natural resources.

It is no coincidence that the epicenter of New Zealand's imaginative geography of threat is Wellington, the nation's capital city. While Wellington is certainly prone to earthquakes, so is the entire country. The Hawke's Bay earthquake, considered the worst in the country's history up until the Christchurch earthquake, was on the east coast of the North Island. Even Christchurch experienced several rather severe historic earthquakes prior to February 2011. Despite the ubiquity of threat throughout the entire country, Wellington stood out as the most volatile. The city sits on an extremely active fault line between the Indo-Australian and Pacific plates. As the capital city, Wellington is also associated with political volatility. Thus, it makes sense to imaginatively locate the epicenter of the country's instability in Wellington because it represents instability in all its forms- geophysical, political, economic.

Therefore, when the Canterbury earthquakes were narrated as a disaster, there was much more at stake than just the shaking of the ground. When "the big one" hit Christchurch, it disrupted New Zealander's understanding of their social geography, in which Wellington was both the source and the victim of its own volatility. The tragedy of Christchurch was not so much the physical destruction or loss of life it caused, although that certainly was very significant and tragic; but rather, the Christchurch earthquake exposed the fallacy that power over life and death were concentrated in the state, represented by Wellington. The earthquakes revealed that the primordial rhythms of the earth's interior have more power to shape the destiny of human civilization than do the affects of human made systems.

Whence recovery?

As I have described in this chapter, the complexities of the Christchurch Rebuild exceeded the limits of understanding allowed by a discourse of "disaster recovery." Rather than act as a moment or point of separation from the normality of everyday life in

Christchurch that inaugurated a new present structured by the temporal sequence of disaster—relief—recovery, the Canterbury earthquakes revealed the multiple and overlapping temporalities that gave shape to the experience of Christchurch as a place. Each of the spatiotemporal regimes I have identified in this chapter existed simultaneously and shaped the experiences of rebuild actors as they participated in rebuild practices. My concept of Rebuild discourse that I discussed in the *Introduction* addresses the spatiotemporal multiplicity that I have outlined in this chapter. Rather than accept that singular meaning of the Christchurch Rebuild as a form of disaster recovery, Rebuild discourse incorporates the multiple forms of oppression and agency that do not fall within the discourse of “disaster recovery” but were still represented through rebuild practices and narratives that circulated in post-earthquake Christchurch.

What crises and disasters offer to disaster survivors is an opportunity to reconsider the conditions under which normality is produced. If the earthquakes in Christchurch served as a break or point of separation, this begs the question of separation from what? By adopting the language of recovery, the Crown attempted to write the earthquake into what Rifkin called the chronogeopolitics of settlement (2017: 38). The earthquake was interpreted as a setback to the pursuit of settler modernity, which in the case of New Zealand is a reference to the country’s self-identity as a social laboratory, and “god’s own country.” The developmentalist narrative of disaster is that disasters are followed by a period of recovery in which the social instability caused by the trauma of the hazard event is restored to a form of stability. In settler societies such as New Zealand, this narrative of disaster process is complicated by the fact that the desired “stability” by states and recovery organizations is settler stability. When Māori temporal frames of reference are considered, the developmentalist narrative of recovery emerges as a technology of settler domination, to recreate the conditions of settlement in the present for the purposes of maintaining territorial domination. The relativizing of recovery time does not occur only when confronted with Māori temporalities, but also with the temporality of neoliberalization. This explains how socially differentiated recovery actors

all can be working on ‘recovery’ but have radically divergent practices, narratives, and future imaginaries that accompany their engagements with “recovery.”

In the following chapters, I show how Rebuild discourse established a context for action that further highlighted the limitations of “recovery as development.” As I show in each chapter, it was the agency of individual rebuild actors to selectively draw on the political projects that comprise Rebuild discourse as they practiced recovery that ultimately allowed them to challenge the narrative of “disaster recovery.” In the remaining chapters, I investigate each of these rebuild projects in more detail to shed light on the ways in which rebuild actors navigated the multiple, sometimes conflicting demands imposed upon them by the post-earthquake structure of power.

Specifically, in the next chapter I explore what I have called the government rebuild project which sought to remake space in Christchurch to align with the neoliberal desires of political and economic elites at the expense of the city’s most vulnerable and most marginalized residents. I argue that the government rebuild project pushed out the city’s most vulnerable residents by enabling the gentrification of the Inner-City East neighborhood to make way for a new, affluent, non-local resident population who were ultimately the beneficiaries of the government rebuild project’s plan for Central Christchurch.

Chapter 2

Rebranding Christchurch: Producing space in post-earthquake Christchurch

Showcasing Christchurch

It was a beautiful sunny day, typical of late summer in Christchurch. The intensity of the afternoon sun was cut by a cool sea breeze that had not yet turned into the harsh easterly sea winds of autumn. I was in my second week of fieldwork, still adjusting to life in the Rebuild zone. One of the difficulties I had encountered early on was wayfinding. The familiar landmarks—a well-known building, or a statue of a less well-known colonial-era politician—that people used to use to find their way around town had all but disappeared. The monotony of the rubble made it difficult for people who had lived in Christchurch all their lives to explain where things were (let alone whether it even still existed considering 80% of the CBD had been slated for demolition and people were often unaware if their butcher or barber were even still in business). Because of this, I had taken to aimless wandering to familiarize myself with the local geography.

On this day, I had wandered into the Re:Start Cashel Street Mall, a post-earthquake retail shopping precinct that had gained a bit of fame for its innovative use of shipping containers to build a temporary shopping mall. As I wandered through the maze of shops and food stalls, I came upon a large tent—the kind you might find at a fair or expo—with a large sign that read “Future Christchurch Showcase.” Inside there was a large interactive map, displaying a bird’s eye view of the government’s “blueprint” plan for central Christchurch. I remember thinking there was something uncanny about this map. While I recognized the “Four Aves” that serve as the city center’s boundaries, the grid-pattern formed by the streets, and the meandering River Avon that cuts through the city center, any other distinguishable feature of the built environment had been replaced with indiscriminate gray rectangles. Instead of identifying familiar sites (i.e. pre-earthquake landmarks, buildings, neighborhoods etc.) around the city, the map highlighted each one of the 17 anchor projects and future precincts—places that had yet to be built but which were presented on the map, color-coded and labeled. There was a mouse plugged into the screen, so visitors could virtually explore the new city. As you

scrolled across the map, a short narrative describing the project or precinct popped up in its future location along with an artist’s rendition of what it might look like when the construction has ceased, and the city center is again populated by people. A professionally produced film played in one corner, narrating the story of the blueprint and



Figure 14: CERA's Blueprint for Central Christchurch. Source: Christchurch Central Recovery Plan, March 2014.

providing a 3-D “fly-over” of the city that wound through the alleys and laneways that will characterize the new built environment, providing the viewer the opportunity to experience the new city before it had even been built.

The Future Christchurch Showcase is not the first time the city has put itself on display. In 1906 the city hosted the New Zealand International Exhibition, part of that great nineteenth

century tradition of World’s Fairs that were meant to showcase the unique contributions of the world’s nations to the “progress” of human civilization. The purpose of this specific exhibition was to showcase what was possible through the careful planning and management required in the administration of settler colonies. Since its earliest days as a settler colony, promoted by the likes of colonial financiers and planners like Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley—the nineteenth century equivalents of the Kushners and Trumps who dominate contemporary property development—New Zealand marketed itself as a social laboratory, a place unencumbered by the social and political baggage of Europe, (Farrell, 2015:273-277). Visitors to the 1906 exhibition had the opportunity to see a bird’s eye view of Christchurch, in this case, by climbing to the top of the Palace of Arts. From the perch at the top of the tower—then the largest building

ever constructed in the country—visitors could see the realization of the city’s planners in its well-manicured, orderly streets, green “breathing spaces” and European influenced neo-gothic architecture.

Visitors to the 1906 exhibition would have interpreted this scene as a pure expression of the “English-ness” that they believed so profoundly shaped the settlement and was a crucial factor in attaining the modernity that New Zealand seemed to possess. The view in 2015 was quite different. The observation deck in the Palace of Arts had been replaced with a virtual image. Rather than taking the electric elevator to the top of the tower and being able to experience first-hand the legacy of empire, visitors to the Future Christchurch Showcase were on the verge of experiencing a new empire, “the empire of business” as Farrell calls it. Rather than highlight the flourishing of a transplanted English culture in this far-removed corner of the world as the 1906 exhibition had done, this new exhibition presented a city that could presumably be located anywhere in the world. The virtual map stripped the city of its fine grain, the details that gave the city its charm and its character. Instead the viewer was presented with color-coded rectangles and boxes, placeholders for what would come later. This city is not an English city. It is a city designed to perform functions, to organize people and their social relations in the most efficient way possible. It is a city that, like its previous incarnation, appeals to the interests of those who live far away, and may not even know it exists, but would still be recognizable if they were to visit one day. They could look and easily identify a shopping precinct, an arts district, a convention center etc. Whereas English Christchurch was built in service to the Queen and her Empire, this new Christchurch was planned in service to the power of neoliberal capitalism.

Christchurch: a city on the edge

In this chapter, I explore the Christchurch Rebuild from the perspective of the government rebuild project and the “blueprint” plan for Central Christchurch that serves as the centerpiece of the Christchurch Rebuild. This plan was released in July 2012 and served as the focus of recovery related activity in post-earthquake Christchurch. I show

that in addition to re-branding Christchurch as a 21st century city, the blueprint attempted to address the city's perceived pre-earthquake "decline" by pushing out the city's most vulnerable residents. I argue that the displacement of these residents to make the area more attractive to investors and property developers represents the same logic of displacement and dispossession that characterized the initial settlement of Christchurch. However rather than displacing the region's indigenous inhabitants, as was the case in the colonial era, this new form of neoliberal settlement seeks to displace those on the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder to make room for a new resident population.

If one of the primary goals of nineteenth century European colonialism was the control and management of populations, the manipulation of space to facilitate the subjugation of indigenous peoples for the benefit of European settlement supported that goal. As Indigenous Studies scholars have pointed out, the organization of space was one of the primary technologies used by colonial powers to subjugate and dominate indigenous populations. The alienation of indigenous lands and the segregation of those populations onto reserves or in urban ghettos created the conditions needed for the realization of colonial aspirations. In Christchurch, the dispossession and displacement of the region's Māori inhabitants, known as Ngāi Tahu, to less-desirable areas were the main way in which space was created for settler development.

However, over time as the New Zealand state adopted a policy of "biculturalism" to appease Māori resistance to their ongoing colonization, the structure of the settler-state changed to incorporate accommodations for Māori. Furthermore, to keep pace with changing geo-political relationships, particularly the severing of the direct economic link New Zealand had enjoyed with Great Britain upon their entry into the European Economic Community, new population management techniques were needed to develop a new urban geography of discipline and control that was not based around the colonial dichotomy of colonizer/colonized.

In the context of the Christchurch Rebuild, the government blueprint plans made use of new logics of social differentiation that targeted the most vulnerable Christchurch residents, largely low-income single people suffering from mental illness and drug

addiction that historically resided in an area of the city known as the Inner-City East. When government rebuild actors talked about their motivations for redeveloping the city center, they referenced the idea that the Central City was in decline when the earthquakes struck. The CBD was languishing. The retail sector in the central city was all but dead, rendered obsolete by suburban shopping malls, of which Christchurch has no less than four serving a population of around 300,000 people. As one CERA official put it, “you know things are bad when the pawn shops start moving into the central city.”

I distinctly remember when the Mongrel Mob, a prominent street gang in Christchurch were rumored to have moved into the flats down the street from my house. My flat mate at the time and I had noticed a van parked across the street that never seemed to leave. We thought maybe they were there to provide security to the primary school that was located across the street, but we soon discarded that theory when we remembered that the van stayed put even when school was not in session. It was not until I got to know the social workers at the community center next door that we were able to uncover the true motives of the mystery van. It turned out that the van was undercover police surveillance keeping an eye on the gang-occupied flats down the road. I don't know whether there were gang members living in the flats down the road. I never experienced any violence or crime. But it was the circulation of stories such as this that contributed to the bad reputation of the area.

The cause of the Central City's decline was not confined to the presence of gangs however. If it wasn't gangs, it was sex workers on Manchester Street, drug dealers in Latimer Square, or beggars on Stanmore Rd. The public parks and urban “breathing spaces” developed by Christchurch's colonial planners and that lent the city its image as a “Garden City” were a liability, offering safe-havens for undesirable types of people to engage in illicit activities. As for the CBD itself, it was too large and had too much office space that sat vacant because there was no demand for it, while the public areas such as Cathedral Square were overrun with cheap souvenir stalls and tacky tourist attractions. In other words, the CBD was not seen as functional from a planning perspective or from the

perspective of city residents at large. There was a sense that prior to the earthquakes, people avoided the Central City because they thought there was nothing there for them.

It was this reputation that government rebuild actors hoped to turn around through the government rebuild project. However, to attract affluent, cosmopolitan class of urban professionals who were the imagined beneficiaries of the government rebuild project's recovery plan, government rebuild actors needed to do more than just address the Central City's local reputation. If the government rebuild project hoped to achieve its goal of making Christchurch a world-class international city, it would have to overcome Christchurch's quaint English identity and historically rural character that lent the city an image of being backward, conservative, and a wee-bit "stuffy."

Christchurch, the "English" city

In this section I discuss Christchurch's reputation as New Zealand's most "English" city to provide some context for the government "blueprint" plan and the transformation of identity that was promised by that plan. From its inception, Christchurch was imagined as a very specific type of place for a specific group of people, namely, elite, English, and Anglican. As John Cookson notes, "Englishness has mostly defined the city as a place, and that sense of place [...] has been the main way in which they city has been imagined" (2000: 13). This section illustrates how Christchurch's identity became wrapped up in the concept of "Englishness" through the construction of Christchurch's built environment to promote a sense of Anglo identity. I also discuss Canterbury's rural character in relation to Christchurch's "English-ness" as

Prior to the earthquakes, Christchurch possessed New Zealand’s largest collection of neo-gothic architecture in the country. Compared to the modern high rises of Auckland, Christchurch was positively quaint, with its neighborhoods dominated by



Figure 15: Canterbury Museum, Photo by the Author, July 2013

classic Victorian-style bungalows and the impressive stone masonry of the neo-gothic Christchurch Cathedral, Canterbury Museum, and the original campus of Canterbury University (which now houses the Christchurch Arts Centre). According to John Cookson, the “English appearances” of Christchurch’s built environment

are what gave the city its image as the “Garden City.” Until very recently, Ngāi Tahu and Māori influences were largely absent from Christchurch’s built environment.

Yet it was not just Christchurch’s built landscape that contributed to its image as a bastion of British imperial culture in the South Pacific. The social landscape seemed to be similarly stuck in the past. When I explained my research interests to people around town and mentioned my interest in Ngāi Tahu, I was often told that it would be difficult as Christchurch is New Zealand’s “whitest” city, and Ngāi Tahu are the “white Māoris” and that if I were interested in Māori issues I would be better off going somewhere in the North Island. Elvin Hatch investigated social hierarchies in New Zealand’s

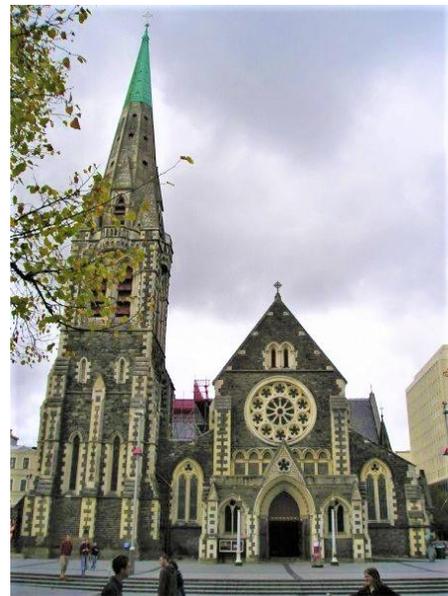


Figure 16: Christchurch Cathedral as it appeared in 2007. Photo by the Author, March 2007.

rural South Island in his book *Respectable Lives: Social Standing in rural New Zealand* and argued that despite a national preoccupation with equality and an aversion to rigidly defined class boundaries, things were quite different in Canterbury where sharp distinctions were maintained between rural wealthy farming families who dominated the region's social hierarchy and the city-and-town-dwelling workers who labored on the farms. Māori and Ngāi Tahu figured only marginally into Hatch's account, which could be interpreted as a reflection of the broader cultural and societal marginalization experienced by Ngāi Tahu .

It was this rural, English identity that Christchurch's political and economic elites, as well as many residents themselves, felt was holding Christchurch back from achieving



Figure 17: Canterbury A&P Show, an annual celebration of the region's rural heritage. Photo by the author, 2015.

whatever potential it might possess to become a 21st century world-class city. The earthquakes and the subsequent government-mandated recovery period created an opportunity to transform Christchurch into the place that residents and government leaders desired it to become.

The blueprint

The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) released their plan for the rebuilding of Christchurch in March 2014 after several years of consultation with urban designers, local and regional councils, and the public. This plan introduced the 17 anchor projects that served as the focus of the government rebuild. The “blueprint” as it was referred to colloquially, provided a bird’s eye view of the city center, neatly bounded by the “Four Aves”— four broad avenues that serve as the boundaries of the central city and mark the edges of the blueprint map. In this specific imagining of Christchurch, the city seemed to consist solely of its center. The neighborhoods, office parks, and retail centers that existed beyond the Four Aves have momentarily disappeared. The projects and precincts that made up the government’s plan were superimposed over Christchurch’s colonial-era street grid. In her book *The Villa at the Edge of the Empire*, author Fiona Farrell critiques the blueprint map, describing it as a “flyover of hope.” “We fly above it all,” she proclaims. “It’s so easy [...] Weightless, effortless. The city lies beneath us in its shining geometry” (Farrell, 13). The government’s blueprint plan for Christchurch attempted to create an all-encompassing view of Christchurch for the viewer. Not dissimilar from colonial-era maps that were drawn by cartographers and developers in London who had never visited the places they were mapping, the blueprint was cobbled together by a diverse mix of Christchurch “insiders” and foreign “outsiders” who served on the design teams severs the city center from its suburban outer-ring, erasing anything beyond the four avenues.

Maps were a colonial technique for controlling knowledge that were utilized by Christchurch’s planners to carve out a mental space for Christchurch that could be easily shared with settlers to provide them with the sense of ownership they needed to form an attachment to it so that they could then build it into the place the maps told them it ought to become. By creating a visualization of the space from a “bird’s eye view” perspective, the map created a sense of ownership and mastery over the space. Seeing a place not just in totality but in miniature as well gave settlers the impression that they could know Christchurch prior to it even coming into being. This process is indicative of the

naturalization of domination necessary for the perpetuity of the settler state. Similarly, the central city “blueprint” of the Christchurch Rebuild served as a visual representation of the “new” Christchurch. Imposed over the street grid of the old city, this representation was vacated of identifying characteristics and populated by grey rectangles, punctuated only by the color-coded anchor projects and precincts that will comprise the new city. These easily digestible visual aids held little meaning for residents. Rather, the blueprint maps were designed with non-locals in mind, intended to sell Christchurch to prospective residents who had little or no familiarity with the local geography but who could, after reviewing the blueprint plans, get a sense of what it might be like and buy into its future.

Prior to the earthquakes, the Central City was home to around 7,000 people (CCRP, 13). The new Christchurch Central City is designed for a target population of nearly 20,000. Such a dramatic increase in scale not only required a massive expansion of infrastructure, but also a wholly new resident population. Even if the 7,000 people who resided in the Central City returned following its redevelopment, the Central City would still require nearly 13,000 new residents to achieve the desired population. This move by CERA to focus primarily on the city center effectively denied the existence of the outer suburbs, particularly those lying to the east of the Central City—Linwood, Aranui, Phillipstown, New Brighton—which happened to be the most socioeconomically depressed areas of Christchurch (both pre-and post-earthquake) as well as home to most of the city’s Māori and Pacific Islander residents. The decision to focus their efforts on rebuilding the Central City came at the expense of focusing institutional energy (and resources) on those hard-hit eastern suburbs whose populations remained stable for the most part following the earthquakes because their residents were on the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder and could not leave for Auckland or Wellington, or in some cases, Sydney and Melbourne the way some of their more well-off fellow residents could. A desire for something entirely new overshadowed the government’s responsibility to its most vulnerable citizens.

Christchurch Central: Anchor Projects and Precincts

12 July 2014

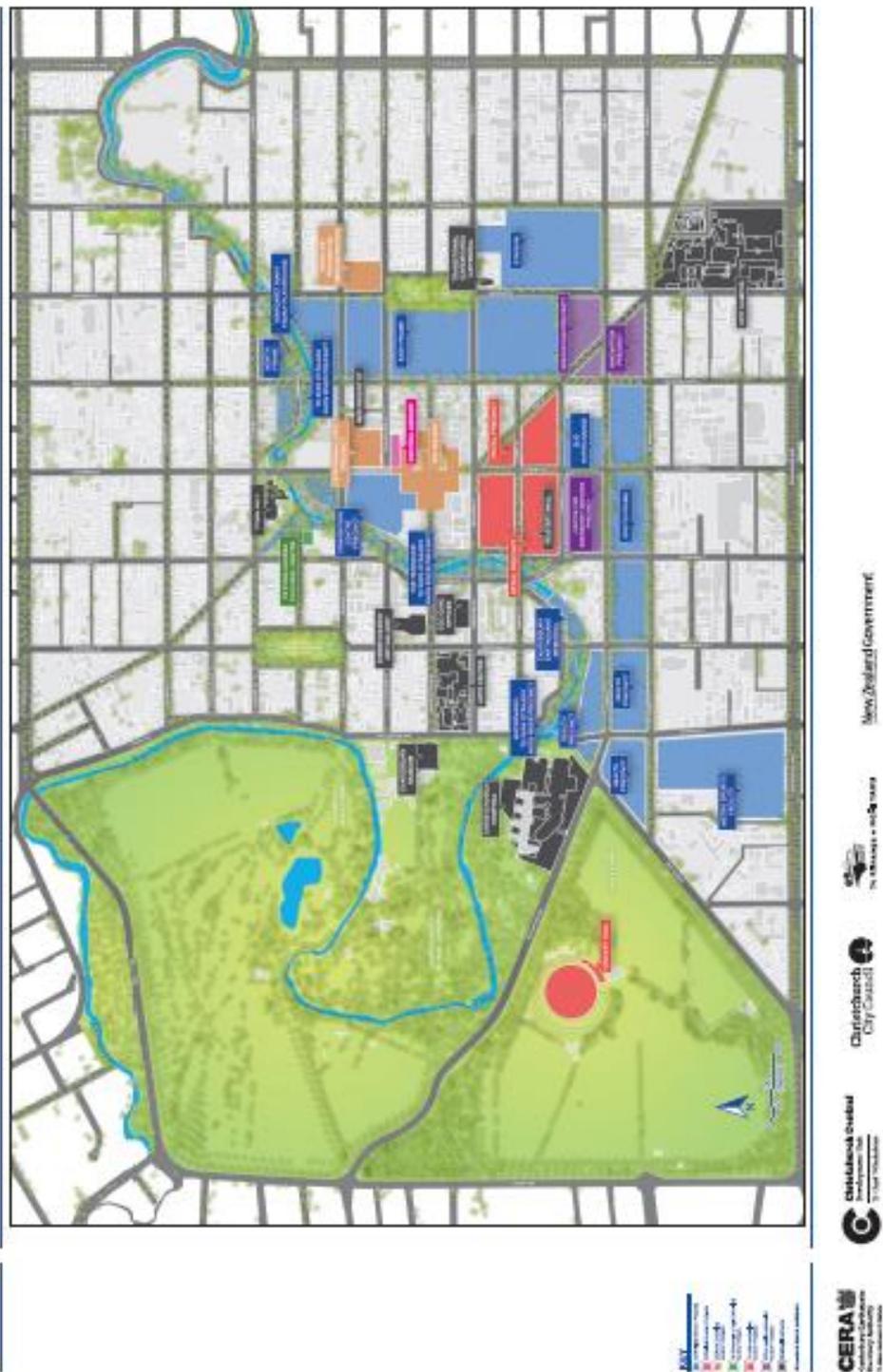


Figure 18: Christchurch Central Anchor Projects and Precincts. Image Courtesy of CERA.

Presented in glossy brochures, professionally designed websites, and a touring trailer called the “Visionarium,” the blueprint was packaged and sold to the people of Christchurch as representing the cutting-edge of urban design, and also as the city’s ticket to a long-needed re-branding from a provincial back-water, ruled by “old money” interests, and lacking in racial and ethnic diversity to a modern, cosmopolitan metropolis, more akin to Melbourne and San Francisco than the old world European cities to which it had previously been



Figure 19: Future Christchurch Visionarium, Cathedral Square. Photo by the Author, February 2015.

compared. The blueprint was Christchurch’s chance to modernize and develop into a twenty-first century urban destination, both nationally and internationally. The city will be divided into “precincts”, dominated by government-funded “anchor projects,” and populated by a diverse community that reflects New Zealand’s 21st century identity, in contrast to the Anglo-Imperial identity that had previously characterized the city.

Blueprint planners maintained that the plan they developed was a more developed version of the plan created by Christchurch City Council that was submitted to CERA, however, most of the people involved in the creation of that plan claim the CERA plan is not a true reflection of what they produced. That plan emerged out of the Christchurch City Council’s “Share an Idea Expo” where they solicited ideas from business owners, community groups, design firms, and private residents about what kind of place they wanted Christchurch to be. Council received over 100,000 submissions that Council staff

collected and organized around key themes that presumably would guide the city's rebuild. These themes represented future Christchurch as a Green City, a Distinctive City, and as Market City. As a Green City, the Council plan emphasized a desire for "green open space for socializing [sic], leisure, recreation, entertainment and aesthetic appeal." Suggested means for achieving this included the creation of "small intimate pocket parks through to bigger spaces with lots of seating, picnic tables, playgrounds, sculptures, street art and amphitheatres [sic]" (Technical Appendices: 6). As a "Distinctive City," the plan recommends "well-designed, eco-friendly, sustainable low-rise buildings of two to six storeys that meet earthquake building codes and less concrete tilt slab design" (Technical Appendices: 6). Finally, as a "Market City," the plan suggests limiting "suburban style shopping malls" in favor of "boutique, unique, specialist and higher quality retail" that appeals to locals and tourists alike (Technical Appendices: 6). Overall, the city that emerged from the Council plan was one that put the needs and desires of residents first with the aim of improving the livability of the city for them. While appealing to tourists and visitors was also a priority, the plan emphasized established residents as the primary beneficiaries of the plan. It was based on their submissions and developed with their needs in mind.

That plan was ultimately rejected by Gerry Brownlee, who preferred to bring together urban design experts to develop an alternative plan. Don Miskell, Deputy Director of the Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU), is also the former Director of Boffa Miskell Limited, the environmental planning and design firm behind the plan that was ultimately adopted by Minister Brownlee as the blueprint. According to Miskell, who I interviewed in August 2015 about his participation in the rebuild:

Council did a plan [...] they met the deadlines, they had Share an Idea—great process. Came up with a plan, two volumes, performed on time [...] the Minister of Earthquake Recovery [Gerry Brownlee] looked at the two volumes and thought the regulations were not enabling enough and didn't believe they would deliver on the aspirations central government had for the rebuild. So, Brownlee said right, we'll have a 100-day plan to develop a new strategy, and that is how we got this blueprint.

In this excerpt, Miskell explained that the reason the Council plan was rejected was because it was not enabling enough for property developers and business owners and would not attract the type of investment that central government hoped to see come to Christchurch. While the CER Act 2011 stipulated that the Christchurch City Council must deliver a central city rebuild plan to the Earthquake Minister within nine months of the passage of the act, it did not say the Minister was obligated to adopt that plan and as Miskell described, Brownlee was not afraid of exercising his right to reject Council's plan.

Rather, Brownlee chose to open the process to free-market competition and launched his "100-day plan" to solicit proposals for a Rebuild plan. At that time, Miskell was still working at Boffa Miskell Limited and had already been at work on a Rebuild plan. Miskell described the process of coming up with his firm's plan in this way:

After the earthquakes, before I came to work on the blueprint, one of my first ever clients rang me and said Don, what are we going to do about this city, its wrecked. So, I started working with him around our kitchen table because our office used to be just over there [pointing out the window and across the street]. And we came up with some plans. Slowly, more people started turning up to our kitchen table, mainly business people, so there were people who I'd never ever met and wondered what they were doing there. I know them now, but at that time I didn't. And they were people who proved to be instrumental in the Rebuild, investing hundreds of millions of dollars of their own money. And so, it grew out of there. And then we made a submission to the Council about what we should do for the central city and showed them our plan.

Miskell's narrative highlights the fact that he and his partners knew the earthquakes presented a business opportunity for their firm, thus their late night round-table meetings in Miskell's kitchen. When the Council plan was shelved, and the Earthquake Minister sent out a call for proposals, Miskell and his partners were already prepared because of the submission they had made to Council during Share an Idea. However, unlike the Share an Idea process that collected and collated submissions from all different sectors and even the public, Brownlee's 100 Day challenge offered the job to whichever expert firm submitted the best plan from the Minister's perspective. Of this process, Miskell said

“we got our submissions in along with a lot of others on a Friday. CCDU reviewed them on a Saturday, rang us on a Sunday and said come in on an interview, this is on a Monday. They said come back on the Tuesday” at which time they were formally offered the job.

In July 2012, CERA released the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (CCRP) based on Boffa Miskell Limited’s submission. Unlike the Council plan that was developed out of a democratic process that included submissions from a diverse set of contributors and stakeholders, this plan was made around Miskell’s kitchen table with input from economic elites who Miskell said were investing hundreds of millions of dollars of their own money into the rebuild. On its surface, this plan was similar to Council’s plan. It claims in its introductory narrative that it is based off submissions from Share an Idea and that it has incorporated many of the same themes that emerged out of that process. Yet on closer inspection, the CERA plan is quite different and speaks to a whole different set of interests than the Council plan.

Organized around four core themes—a green city, a prosperous city, a vibrant city, and an accessible city—the 17 anchor projects and precincts each contribute to what the blueprint designers and planners considered to be the key elements of a “21st Century City.” According to the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan document released by CERA in March 2014, the “green city” theme will build on Christchurch’s Garden City identity (CCRP, 52). In addition to developing Christchurch as a greener and more attractive city by creating more green spaces, this theme also considers how to “future-proof development through good building design and ‘green’ technologies” (CCRP, 52). The Avon River Precinct and The Square serve as the main contributors to this theme. The “prosperous city” theme seeks to develop “a strong, vibrant centre [sic] that combines retail businesses, professional services, tourism and hospitality” (CCRP, 64). The Convention Centre Precinct, Health Precinct, Justice and Emergency Services Precinct, and Innovation Precinct are the primary anchor projects contributing to this theme. The “vibrant city” theme positions Christchurch as a world-class city, a place of “culture, entertainment, and discovery” that will make Christchurch “a great place to enjoy day

and night” (CCRP, 76). The Performing Arts Precinct, Central Library, East Frame residential developments, Metro Sports Facility, Stadium, and Cricket Oval drive this theme. Finally, the “accessible city” theme refers to the “opportunity to improve access for people of all ages and abilities to central Christchurch and the buildings and spaces within it” (CCRP, 90). The Bus Interchange is the main anchor project driving this theme.

Whereas the Council plan was decidedly people-focused, emphasizing the development of small, intimate spaces and places within the city that appealed to the desires of current and former residents, CERA’s plan was broader in scope, and took the position that the Rebuild was a chance for Christchurch to make a name for itself on the international stage. Comparisons to American and Australian cities were commonplace. I recall at the Future Christchurch Showcase I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the CERA employee managing the booth said that the idea for Christchurch’s (re)built urban environment was to make it more like Melbourne, with its popular laneways and courtyards. In their Vision statement for the Rebuild, CERA says that “Central Christchurch will become the thriving heart of an international city” (CCRP: v). The plan references Christchurch’s location on strategic transportation nodes that make it a prime candidate to become a hub for international trade and tourism into New Zealand (CCRP: 3).

As for the city center itself, the plan had a very specific vision of what it was meant to do:

A well-formed and vibrant city centre [sic] produces economic and social benefits by bringing people together for business, cultural or social activities. The result is greater productivity, connectedness, development of human capital, sharing of ideas and a shared identity.

The city centre [sic] is also an expression of our heritage—a reflection of where we have come from, and a vision of what we want to become. Greater Christchurch deserves an exciting and sustainable central city that attracts permanent residents to live, work and play in an environment that is safe, accessible to everyone and responsive to future changes.

If greater Christchurch is to achieve this vision, businesses need to be able to operate effectively and confidently. Investors need certainty that their investments will be worthwhile and located in the right place to get the best possible results.
(CCRP: 3)

The people of Christchurch no longer sat at the center of this plan. Rather, business owners and investors are of primary concern. Productivity and the development of human capital are the aims of the rebuild, rather than creating intimate spaces for people to reform attachments to the city centre and once again bring it to life. As Fiona Farrell writes in her critique of the government rebuild, while the blueprint plan, like colonial maps, invites people to be a part of the vision, she doubts that the subject of the plans was her, or “anyone like me. That ‘you’ was not simply someone who lived here, but a developer, a business owner, an international investor” (2015: 105).

Ultimately, the government rebuild of central Christchurch was not designed for the people of Christchurch. It was for business. It was for investors. It was meant to enrich the pockets of the Minister and other CERA executives who all seemed to have a personal financial stake in the plan. There is no mention of improving the lives of central city residents who have been reduced to squatting in derelict buildings or living in their cars because of a lack of affordable housing. Rather, developers foresaw a population of young urban professionals, “nurses, doctors, police officers and court staff” who were to be the beneficiaries of this new city. The intimate green spaces locally-inspired architectural designs, and references to the city’s past were traded in for Melbourne-inspired laneways and courtyards connecting “glass and steel frame to glass and steel frame” (Farrell, 2015:110). Community facilities such as pools, parks and playgrounds were exchanged for “attractions” like the Stadium, Convention Centre, and Metro Sports Facility (framed as the largest indoor sports facility in the Southern hemisphere).

Gentrification and the erasure the Inner-City East

The true intent of CERA’s blueprint plan, and its potential consequences on Christchurch’s most vulnerable residents, was put on full display in October 2016 during

a public hearing on the Christchurch City Council’s Representational Review for the 2016 Local Authority Election. The purpose of this hearing was to receive feedback on the Council’s plans to redraw the boundaries of their representational districts. The most controversial element of this redistricting plan was the proposal to create a new Central City district that would encompass areas of the Central City that had previously been part of other districts. The plan essentially erased the Inner-City East neighborhood from the map, making it very clear to those who lived and worked in the neighborhood that their needs were not a priority to the council or to the central government.

More specifically, at issue was a proposal that would have removed the Inner-City East from the Linwood District and make it part of the new Central City District. In addition to being the neighborhood where I lived during my fieldwork, this area of the Central City had a history of being economically depressed and home to the city’s most vulnerable residents—single people and people who were suffering from mental illness and drug addiction. The argument against the council’s proposal made by community organizers and social workers who worked in the Inner-City East was that the needs of this area would be overshadowed by the influx of new, more affluent residents to the Central City.

I came to know the people who lived and worked in this area and the unique challenges they faced by working with Te Whare Roimata, a bicultural urban *marae* begun in the 1980s as a partnership with the Christchurch City Mission located just one block away on Worcester Street. According to Jenny Smith, social worker and Director of Te Whare Roimata, the Inner-City East was historically the poorest neighborhood in Christchurch because of a high density of low-income single adults. Prior to the earthquakes, this area was full of boarding houses that people would rent out by the room. Many of the houses were old workers cottages and while some remained post-earthquake, many were demolished and sold to property investors whose plan was to develop them into high-end flats and townhouses. Smith said many of the people who had been living in the neighborhood were now “living rough,” meaning that people were squatting in boarded up houses, living under bridges or living in their cars. Many of the

people who used to live in the neighborhood worked in the CBD before the earthquakes in either hospitality or as shop assistants but have had trouble finding work now because of the lack of retail in the CBD and their inability to get to places in the suburbs because of poor public transit or lack of a car. Meanwhile, new housing was being built in the neighborhood to replace the earthquake damaged properties, but it was not geared towards low-income single adults but rather was more expensive and meant to change the socio-economic makeup of the neighborhood.

Te Whare Roimata itself was a bicultural urban *marae* that provided community development services to the local community. One of the primary functions of Te Whare was Māori cultural development for de-tribalized Māori who lost touch with their ancestral *maraes* and *iwi* and to build a non-*iwi*-based Māori community in the Central City. The organization provided several services including community gardens, educational development courses with an emphasis on health, a community arts center and a weekly hot lunch at 468 Worcester Street. When I first met Jenny and she invited me to come have lunch sometime, she informed me that the corner where the lunch building sits was quite “infamous” for being the location of a rather disreputable “massage parlor” and was known for being a popular spot for sex workers to bring their clients. Many of the people they served came from rural areas and had little knowledge of what life in a big city was like. They were already disadvantaged before the earthquakes and now face whole host of new problems, specifically, lack of adequate housing and lack of access to employment opportunities.

My involvement with Te Whare revolved around the development of a community café and garden that would eventually be called Kua Hua Ake Te Ao Community Café and Garden. My role took the form of clearing a vacant site along a small commercial strip on Stanmore Road that served as a mini-village for the neighborhood. I assisted with clearing away the brush that had overgrown the site, laying



Figure 20: Future site of the Kua Hua Ake Te Ao Community Garden and Cafe before work was begun on clearing the site. Photo by the author, July 2013.



Figure 21: Creating community bonds by activating vacant space. Photo by the author, May 2015.



Figure 22: In progress: Linwood Community Cafe and Garden. Photo by the author, June 2015.



Figure 23: Te Whare Roimata kaumatua (elders) and tamariki (children) performing a karakia (blessing) over the garden area on opening day. Photo by the author, July 2015.



Figure 24: Kua Hua Ake Te Ao Community Cafe and Garden opening day hui. Photo by the author, July 2015.

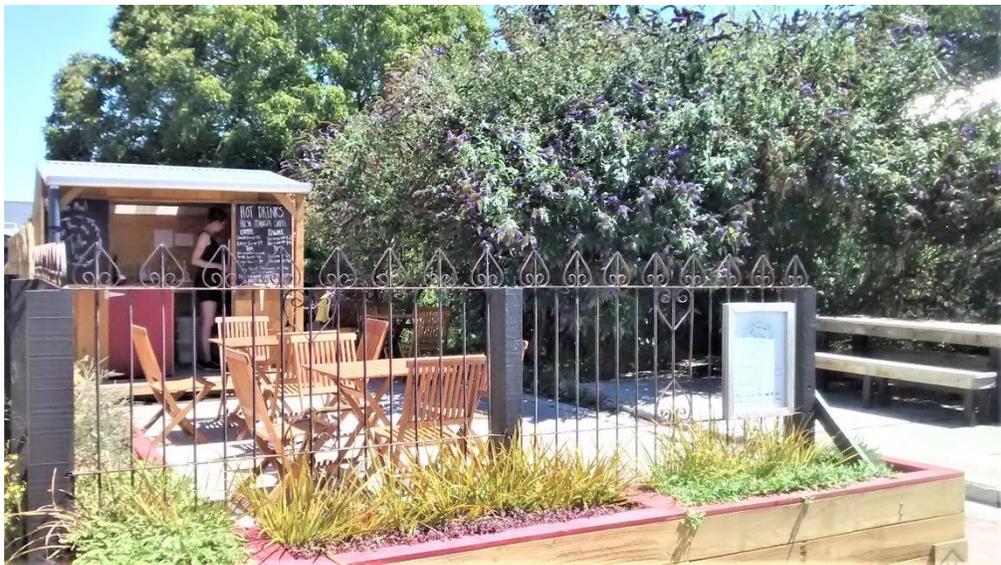


Figure 25: Kua Hua Ake Te Ao Community Cafe and Garden as it appeared in February 2016.

down a gravel path in a koru (fern branch) design, and planting flowers. Greening the Rubble donated a hand-made picnic table and a shed to act as the café. It took about 4 weeks to clear the site and two months for the whole operation to get up and running. Once it opened I worked at the café several days a week, making plunger coffees for people who often couldn't pay but it didn't matter since we operated on the principle of *koha* (donation)—give what you could but if all you had was a story to share that was just fine too.

Under the proposed changes to the representational districts, this neighborhood would essentially be erased off the map, replaced by an arbitrarily imposed boundary that would incorporate part of the neighborhood as part of the new Central District, while the remaining portion would be lumped together with the eastern and coastal suburbs. This new boundary bore little relationship to how residents of the area understood the local geography and split the community in two. As Jenny Smith stated, testifying on behalf of Te Whare Roimata *whanau* during the Council's public comment period on the proposed changes, the Inner-City East was the poorest area of the city, and differed markedly from the suburbs that it was being lumped in with. It needed to be kept as one community area and not split across two community boards as the new plan proposed. Splitting the neighborhood across two districts would make it very difficult to meet the specific needs of the area. If it were split in two, the neighborhood would need to relate to two separate community boards that will each have different priorities. According to Smith, this would inevitably lead to marginalizing this area further because it was the poorest in the city and the residents there were least able to have their voices heard. As Smith stated to the Council,

The central city will dominate the community board and it will make the Inner City East invisible. The marginalization and hardship experienced by the people who live in these areas will be buried in the more affluent areas of Papanui and St. Albans. But that inclusion of the east into those areas completely ignores the fact that the east is its own area with its own needs. When the Philipstown School was closed, they resettled the children in Christchurch East School. Even the name of the school—Christchurch East—is called that because they look east. Furthermore, if the east gets split up and some sections included with the Eastern Suburbs,

the hardship of Linwood will be overshadowed by the issues around coastal flooding. The East Frame development will spill out into this area and change it. They are planning things in such a way that this neighborhood will look to the city but that has not been where people have looked in the past. Council has no way of knowing anything about the neighborhood because they never come here.

As this testimony by Smith illustrates, the plans developed by Council to split the neighborhood between two community areas would render the Inner-City East politically invisible. As I've discussed, the plans for the Central City include a new crop of neoliberal settlers who will displace the neighborhood's traditional residents, while those areas that are lumped in with the eastern and coastal suburbs will be subordinated to the more pressing matters of coastal flooding and wetland reclamation that are the primary issues affecting those areas.

When I asked Smith what her vision for the neighborhood was, she replied that she would like some commitment by CERA and Council to the neighborhood's "traditional residents," meaning low-income, semi-homeless and homeless people, and those battling with addiction and mental illness. She said she would like to see an investment in local networks and community development to allow the area to grow, rather than the kind of gentrification she saw happening because of CERA's focus on building up the Central City and attracting a whole new population to reside there. As she stated in her testimony, CERA and council never visit that area and they just don't care about the people in that neighborhood. They were disposable and contributors to the pre-earthquake reputation of the Central City as a hotbed of illicit activity and undesirable types of people. The new Central City lifestyle promised in the pages of the CCRP and other promotional documents released by CERA and Council was ultimately not designed to lift current residents, but rather was intended to push them out. Where they were supposed to go was not a part of the plan.

Conclusion: Re-settling Christchurch

In this chapter, I argued that from the perspective of the government rebuild project, Christchurch required a process of “resettlement” if it were to live up to its potential as a 21st century city. This process of resettlement required a “rebranding” of Christchurch’s identity away from its rural English roots towards a more cosmopolitan identity that would attract international investors and tourists to the city. As I have shown, in the process of rebuilding the Central City to align with this rebranding, the government’s “blueprint” plan called for increasing the resident population of the Central City by almost 15,000 people. The infrastructure and housing that was planned to support this new population was geared towards a more affluent demographic than that which resided there post-earthquake. It was through my experience of working with Te Whare Roimata, a bicultural urban *marae* that supported residents of the Inner-City East, that I was able to see the true effects of the government rebuild project’s plan, namely, to erase the Inner-City East from the map of Central Christchurch and displace the traditional residents of that area through a process of gentrification.

In the next chapter, I extend this critical eye to an analysis of the Māori rebuild project. As I discussed in the Introduction, the CER Act 2011 called for the inclusion of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu , the Ngāi Tahu tribal authority, as a “strategic partner” on recovery related matters. While on the surface, this recognition was interpreted as a transformation in Māori-State relations and an opportunity for Ngāi Tahu to assert their presence and have their contributions to Christchurch recognized by incorporating their cultural narrative into the built landscape, my analysis reveals that rather than creating a situation of substantive equality between the Ngāi Tahu tribal authority and settler government institutions, the CER Act recognition actually contributed to the ongoing dispossession of Ngāi Tūāhuriri , the local subtribe who claimed to possess traditional authority over Christchurch, first by compelling Ngāi Tahu to participate in the recovery, while also misrecognizing Ngāi Tahu as possessing traditional authority over Christchurch when in fact, that privilege lay with Ngāi Tūāhuriri , a Ngāi Tahu sub-tribe.

Chapter 3

Reclaiming Christchurch: Ngāi Tahu recognition and the post-disaster politics of indigenous alterity

Earthquake recovery and indigenous (mis)recognition

I was sitting with Eruera Tarena, Chief Executive of Te Tapuae o Rehua, a program that partners with Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology to create Māori-centered curricula aimed at increasing Māori participation in tertiary education. We first met at a post-graduate student conference hosted by the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre at the University of Canterbury a few years earlier where Tarena presented his doctoral research on the indigenous corporation. Tarena is representative of a new Ngāi Tahu elite that emerged in Christchurch in the past several decades. Having the proper “bloodlines,” or lines of descent from a Ngāi Tahu member living at the time of the first land purchase between Ngāi Tahu and European settlers, Tarena is a beneficiary of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT), the Ngāi Tahu *iwi* authority. Having grown up in the city, Tarena’s early life would have been influenced by the consumer-oriented culture and capitalist economy characteristic of *te ao Pākehā*, or mainstream New Zealand culture. Increased access to tertiary education and the institutionalization of Māori Studies departments within the university system heightened the awareness of the urban, educated elite such as Tarena to the systemic marginalization of Māori from mainstream society, which would have simultaneously instilled in him a desire to connect with the Māori side of his identity while operating within a Pākehā—white, European—context.

When I reached out to Tarena for a meeting, he suggested I come to the tribal headquarters building located in a newly built office park in Addington, a Christchurch suburb that had experienced rapid growth in the past five years because of its adjacency to the city center. When central Christchurch was “Red Zoned” and no one was allowed within the four avenues, Addington emerged as the successor for those firms whose offices were displaced from the central city. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was one of those firms and had only just moved into their new home a few weeks before my visit there on this day. If the “flash” new headquarters were any indication of how Ngāi Tahu were

faring as a tribe under the post-earthquake regime, it seemed as though the “opportunity” government leaders had promised when they unveiled their plans to first demolish and then rebuild the city center was playing out as planned.

As I explained my research to Tarena—to document Ngāi Tahu’s participation in



Figure 26: Te Wai Pounamou, Te Rūnanga o Ngai Tahu headquarters. Photo by the author, March 2015.

the Christchurch Rebuild—he said that the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011(CER Act) really changed the power relations between the government and TRoNT in that rather than being “dictated to” as they had been in the past, Ngāi Tahu were instead given a seat at the table to determine the conceptual and strategic trajectory of the rebuild. This had never happened before, he said, so there was a lot of energy in the early days after the passage of the CER Act at TRoNT to try and turn Christchurch into an indigenous city. Tarena explained that in the early days after the earthquake when the tribal council was working closely with the government to develop a recovery strategy a

narrative began circulating within the organization that this was a tremendous opportunity for Ngāi Tahu to step in and reclaim Christchurch for Māori and incorporate Māori values and design principles into the redevelopment of the city.

This invitation to participate then, was seen by tribal leadership as an opportunity to really change things and, as Tarena phrased it, “to push peoples’ imaginations to see what was really possible if they took the directive seriously to rebuild Christchurch as a Māori city.” It wasn’t just a matter of building *maraes* in place of parks or squares or having some Māori sculptures and motifs on the outsides of buildings but changing the way Christchurch uses space to align with Māori values and not just “use” Māori culture, but to implement it.

Yet because of years of political infighting both between CERA and TRoNT and within TRoNT itself, many people who had been involved at the design stage got pushed out and things were languishing. Tarena credited this turn to the fact that the tribe was never clear or explicit about what it wanted to accomplish with the rebuild, and a lack of consensus about who was responsible for managing the burden of the CER recognition. Tarena said there was a lack of vision and that people eventually looked at each other and said, “why are we doing this.” He referenced the fact that many people were still at that time struggling with their homes; there were Māori schools that were being threatened with closure; so, people just moved on and things had come to a standstill.

As this story highlights, the inclusion of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as a strategic partner in the recovery was initially met with excitement that later fizzled out as the strategy and design phase ended and the implementation phase began. How are we to account for this change? How might we theorize the acceptance and later rejection by Ngāi Tahu of the state’s invitation to participate in the recovery of the city? More specifically, what promise did Ngāi Tahu believe this form of participation held for them? What caused them to ultimately dismiss the Rebuild as the potential source for a new age of Māori-State cooperation? And finally, what does it mean that the Māori Rebuild ultimately went forward despite these objections by the *iwi*’s membership?

In this chapter, I argue that the Ngāi Tahu recognition found in the CER Act was not a neutral recognition of the right of Māori to sit at the table. Rather, it was an instance of what Povinelli (2002) has called the “cunning” of indigenous recognition because it framed the state’s invitation to participate in the rebuild as a positive performance of “treaty partnership” – a model for Māori-State relations that foregrounds the partnership established between Māori leadership and the British Crown with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. It is my argument that this recognition compelled Ngāi Tahu to participate in the recovery, so the state could live up to its bicultural ideal without engaging with Māori calls for structural change. By staking their position on the principle of partnership, the state was essentially calling on Ngāi Tahu to positively perform their commitment to developing a partnership with them. The state’s duplicity belies the deeper significance of the CER Act recognition for the erosion of Ngāi Tahu’s *mana* and the entanglement of multiple sovereigns that characterizes the contemporary settler state in New Zealand.

Critics of the kind of indigenous legal recognition found in the CER Act argue that it does more to ease the moral anxieties of settler majorities by justifying their ongoing occupation of indigenous lands than it does to further the claims of sovereignty and self-determination of indigenous peoples. Povinelli (2002) has shown how the legal recognition of indigenous alterity can act as a “formal *méconnaissance* of a subaltern group’s *being* and of its *being worthy* of national recognition” while simultaneously serving as a “formal moment of being inspected, examined, and investigated” (39). It is this simultaneous act of (mis)recognition and inspection that compels Povinelli to describe it as “cunning.” By accepting their right to exist and persist within the framework of the settler state, indigenous groups also become subject to the scrutiny of non-indigenous publics who are ultimately the beneficiaries of settler occupation and act as the arbiters of allowable difference. Povinelli calls this a “misrecognition” (*méconnaissance*) because the criteria by which indigenous peoples are judged as being worthy of recognition are not self-determined. Rather, indigenous peoples are often held

up to colonial-era representations of who they ought to be, representations that were themselves developed with the specific purpose of justifying settler expansion.

In the case of the CER Act, it is my contention that the recognition of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as a strategic partner was doubly cunning. First, because the current paradigm for the expression of Māori-State relations emphasizes the idea of “treaty partnership,” the CER Act tethered Ngāi Tahu’s *mana* to the future success of the central city rebuild. Since Ngāi Tahu had already accepted recognition through the outcome of their treaty settlement—an affirmation of their existence as a group—their *mana* as an *iwi* depended on their fulfillment of the partnership they claimed sat at the center of the Treaty. Refusing to participate in the recovery would thus be a refusal of the terms of their settlement, terms on which their *mana* was staked. It is for this reason that the CER Act compelled Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to align their desires for the future on the Christchurch Rebuild despite a lack of consensus amongst the *iwi*’s membership regarding the *iwi*’s role in the city’s future.

Second, the object of recognition—TRoNT—is a hybrid ethno-corporation whose contemporary form owes more to the history of Māori-State relations and the experience of colonization than to an adherence to any kind of “pure” Māori tradition. The CER Act conflated Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu—the corporation—with Ngāi Tahu—the descent group—even though conceptually they are two distinct entities. As a corporation, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu manages an asset portfolio worth over NZD\$3 billion presumably for the benefit of the descent group (although the extent to which the corporation was perceived as acting in the best interests of its members was highly contested). As a descent group, Ngāi Tahu stand in a hierarchical relation to other Māori descent groups who possess *mana* that contributes to their own sense of identity *as* Ngāi Tahu, and in this instance, acted as an expression of their sovereignty (*tino rangatiratanga*). However, in the settler legal context of the New Zealand state, the conflation of the corporation’s aims of capital accumulation with the descent group’s desire to preserve their *mana* misrecognized the complexity of social forms Ngāi Tahu use to define their own identities and through which they articulate their desires. The (mis)recognition of TRoNT

then was neither an affirmation of Ngāi Tahu's *tino rangatiratanga* nor was it a "true" recognition of Ngāi Tahu *people*. The exasperation that Tarena evoked during our conversation highlights the frustration of both TRoNT leaders and Ngāi Tahu members regarding their post-disaster predicament.

In this chapter I investigate the politics of recognition as they were practiced in relation to the Christchurch recovery. I show how Ngāi Tahu engagement with the Māori Rebuild contributed to the production of settler modernity through the inclusion of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu into rebuild discourse. I focus on the discursive positioning of Ngāi Tahu as possessor of *mana whenua* and the implications of this status on the *iwi*'s involvement in the rebuild. Then I move to a discussion of the specific form that the CER recognition took by analyzing the formation and practices of the Matapopore Charitable Trust, an organization created by TRoNT after Ngāi Tūāhuriri, a *hapuu* pressured TRoNT into transferring responsibility for the rebuild to them by asserting their own claims to *mana whenua*. Finally, I discuss one of the government anchor projects, the Hine Paaka Bus Interchange, as an instance of the failure of "treaty partnership" to positively affirm Ngāi Tahu's sovereignty.

Ngāi Tahu, treaty partnership, and the politics of *mana whenua*

The Māori rebuild project emerged out of the CER Act, which implicated Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT) in the recovery of the city by requiring their inclusion in developing a recovery strategy, defined in that legislation as "an overarching, long-term strategy for the reconstruction, rebuilding, and recovery of greater Christchurch" (CER Act 2011, 3.11.3). The act also stipulated that TRoNT be involved in the development of the Central City Recovery Plan. According to Sascha McMeeking, General Manager for Strategy and Influence at TRoNT at the time of the earthquakes, and one of the principal architects of the recovery legislation, the principle of "treaty partnership" stood at the center of discussions about how to craft recovery legislation that would incorporate the "spirit" of the principles enshrined in the Treaty of Waitangi. Moreover, whatever legislation was written needed to accommodate the terms of the Ngāi Tahu Settlement

Act 1998, specifically Section 8 of the Apology by the Crown to Ngāi Tahu that compelled the state to “begin the process of healing and to enter a new age of co-operation with Ngāi Tahu” (Settlement Act 1998, 1.6.8).

At the time of our meeting, McMeeking had just been offered a post as the Head of Māori Studies at the University of Canterbury, where she had also been a student and graduated with a Master in Laws in 2006. McMeeking described her relationship to her Māori identity in fraught terms. Her mother was a Pākehā woman of Scottish descent and her father was Ngāi Tahu. According to McMeeking, her mother “fell for the charming Māori boy who subsequently broke her heart,” which she says, caused her mother to shield her from te ao Māori, because it represented the “domain of the heartbreaker.” It was only when she enrolled in university and was out of her mother’s control that she was able to explore that aspect of her identity. McMeeking therefore tended to approach her Māori identity, and Māori issues more generally, from an academic perspective.

McMeeking left her post at TRoNT shortly after the passage of the CER Act and went to the United States on a Fulbright Harkness fellowship to study indigenous business and social entrepreneurship. As McMeeking explained, “Ngāi Tahu has a really bad history of our commercial operations, doing things that are just shit according to traditional values. They misbehave wildly.” So, she did research in the United States on how indigenous corporations in North America manage the tension between capitalist goals and indigenous values. It was this experience that inspired her to co-found the Ministry of Awesome, a non-profit consulting firm that assists local start-up firms and entrepreneurs in developing their businesses with an eye towards developing socially responsible and environmentally sustainable business practices. This organization has been crucial in attracting the class of young urban professionals to the city that the government rebuild imagines as the beneficiaries of the new Christchurch. It also promotes the vision of the grassroots rebuild by empowering a community of local entrepreneurs to develop Christchurch into the place they want it to be through social entrepreneurship.

However, at the time of the earthquakes, McMeeking was working as the General Manager for Strategy and Influence at TRoNT, a role she held for about three and half years before the earthquake that consisted of managing the evolving relationship between the *iwi* and the state. In that capacity, McMeeking said she had pushed the limits of what the treaty partnership should and could look like, and the *iwi* by this time was starting to move beyond the myopic, introspective mode that had characterized their development in the decade since the treaty settlement. As McMeeking put it,

the way we started redefining the Treaty Partnership was that *iwi* Māori have responsibilities to our people, but we also have responsibilities to the national interest. Part of living in an age of cooperation and collaboration with the Crown is about partnering and *iwi* Māori contributing.

Thus, when the February 2011 earthquake hit hot on the heels of the September 2010 quake, McMeeking was still in her role as GM for Strategy and Influence and played a pivotal role in designing the CER Act, specifically the “statutory partner” status included for Ngāi Tahu because of her specific understanding of the evolving relationship between the *iwi* and the state at that moment in time.

As McMeeking explained, throughout most of the twentieth century, “treaty partnership” was framed as *iwi*-Māori saying to the Government, “you suck, you have bashed us through a process of colonization which has been atrocious, and we want you to recognize our rights.” McMeeking referred to this as “grievance mode” – a term she used to describe how Māori related to their identity *as* Māori. This notion of “grievance mode” was reiterated to me again by Sir Tipene O’Regan, one of the main figures involved in the Ngāi Tahu treaty claim, and respected *kaumatua*, or elder. O’Regan explained that Ngāi Tahu had been in grievance mode since 1849, pursuing various legal avenues for the resolution of their grievances against the Crown for over a century by the time the claim was brought to the Tribunal. When it was finally settled in 1998, O’Regan said the *iwi* had to work out what they were going to do now that the goal that had motivated them for over a century had finally been achieved.

The idea of being “grievance collectivized” refers to the idea that the resolution of Ngāi Tahu’s historical grievances against the state had served as their *modus operandi*

throughout much of their recent past, and that the *iwi* largely defined itself through their antagonism with the state. As O'Regan claimed,

all along we had dreamed of settlement, but we never bothered to imagine what we would become after it. There came a time post-settlement where we were starting to articulate concepts like sovereignty and crown honor—concepts that could help guide our actions now that the settlement was over.

Here, O'Regan is saying that post-settlement, Ngāi Tahu embarked on an introspective period in which they sought out forms of self-determination that were not dependent upon their status as the bearers of grievance.

Having come of age during the time O'Regan spoke of, McMeeking described this post-settlement but prior-to-earthquake period as a decade in which Ngāi Tahu were able to redefine themselves. By the time the earthquake came, McMeeking said Ngāi Tahu had 17 years of being “post-settlement” during which time they were able to ask themselves “What do you do? You’ve got all of this amazing resource to do good stuff, to feed into intergenerational aspirations. What do you do? Took us quite some time to work that out.” One of the ways that Ngāi Tahu attempted to work out their new identity was by redefining their relationship with the state. The language of “treaty partnership” gradually replaced that of “collective grievance,” and framed Ngāi Tahu as having responsibilities to their own people as well as to the national interest. As McMeeking put it, “part of living in an age of cooperation and collaboration with the Crown is about partnering and *iwi* Māori contributing.” This echoes the point O'Regan made that the resolution of their treaty claims necessitated a reimagining of Ngāi Tahu subjectivity. Thus, when the earthquake struck in February 2011, McMeeking and others at TRoNT recognized the disaster recovery as an opportunity to express their newfound identity in a tangible, material way.

McMeeking interpreted the emphasis on “partnership” as stemming from the Māori concept of *manaakitanga* (hospitality). The importance of this concept to how Ngāi Tahu theorized their participation was a recurring theme among most of the Ngāi Tahu rebuild actors I interviewed. In his book *Tikanga Whakaaro*, Cleve Barlow (1991)

described *manaaki* as the expression of love and hospitality towards people. He offers this *whakatauki* (proverb) to illustrate *manaaki*:

Your contribution
And my contribution
Will provide sufficient for all.

To *manaaki* then is not just to care for each other, but to work together and cooperate to provide for everyone. Unlike the Western concept of hospitality where the visitor is the passive recipient of the host's generosity, *manaaki* implies an active state for both host and guest. Furthermore, there is the assumption of a *kaupapa*, or pre-established reason or common goal for their coming together as they work towards providing not just for themselves, but for everyone.

Implicit in this proverb is a specific relation between the self and the other, a relation defined by cooperation and care. In *te Ao Māori*, the relationship between self and other is expressed through the concepts *tāngata whenua* (hosts) and *manuhiri* (guests or visitors). The literal translation of *tāngata whenua* is “people of the land” (*tāngata* being people and *whenua* being land) and attests to the importance of land in Māori conceptualizations of the self. Furthermore, the dual meaning of *whenua* as both “land” and “placenta” indicates a corporeal connection between *tāngata* and *whenua*. According to Barlow, the *whenua* is a living entity that provides nourishment to the fetus while it grows in the mother's womb (1991: 62). It is for this reason that the *whenua* is customarily buried in the ground after childbirth. It is believed that the placenta continues to grow and that the abundance of the earth is mirrored in the growth of the child. Thus, the *tāngata whenua* are very literally “people of the land” in that part of their bodily substance has been returned to the land after they are born. Therefore, when people identify as *tāngata whenua*, they are making a claim about the relationship of their own body to the actual composition of the land from which they come.

These bodily connections to land provide the underlying logics for *pepeha* and *mihi*; formulaic linguistic structures people use to introduce themselves to strangers which provide further insight into the importance of land for Māori conceptions of self.

Mihi refers to the general practice of greeting, while the *pepeha* is a linguistic structure that forms one part of the *mihi* and acts as a formal introduction. The *pepeha* generally takes the following structure:

Ko _____ te maunga
(_____ is the mountain)
Ko _____ te awa
(_____ is the river)
Ko _____ te iwi
(_____ is the tribe)
Ko _____ te hapuu
(_____ is the sub-tribe)
Ko _____ te marae
(_____ is the gathering place)
No _____ ahau
(I am _____)

This structure is meant to mimic the flows of the natural ecosystem; the mountain feeds the river that feeds the people and so on, so that the structure of one's identity is a reflection of the ecosystem.¹ As one of my *te reo* instructors explained it, "this way, people become embedded in the land rather than external to it. They are of the land, rather than possessors or masters of the land." Note that the speaker introduces himself at the end of the greeting, implying that he plays only a bit part in the larger socio-ecological matrix he invokes when situating himself. Ultimately, the land to which he belongs serves as the main indicator of his identity.

Yet when McMeeking and others alluded to the conceptual basis of their statutory recognition in the CER Act, they framed it not in terms of identity or their status as

¹ During a Kia Kūrapa hui (language immersion camp) I attended at Awarua *marae* in Bluff, the language instructor became confused while assisting me with my *pepeha*. Having grown up in Buffalo, NY on the shores of Lake Erie, I do not associate with a mountain. Rather, Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and the famous Niagara Falls are the most prominent natural landmarks in the region. "But" my instructor insisted, "there has to be a mountain that feeds the river that feeds the lake." I remember being struck by this encounter because it was for me a rather different way of experiencing my foreign-ness. She was questioning my understanding of the local geography where I came from because it did not conform to the linguistic structure that she used to understand how people are socially and spatially situated. In other words, because I come from a place with different eco-systemic patterns than those that prevail in New Zealand, I could not fashion a self that was legible to her in her terms.

tāngata whenua, but rather in terms of the power, or *mana* they derive from their status as *tāngata whenua*. Known as *mana whenua*, Barlow describes this concept as the power, authority, and prestige associated with the possession of land. More specifically, *mana whenua* is derived from the power associated with the procreative powers of the earth (1991:61). Because of the associations between land and the corporeality of the body, the *mana* that stems from the generative aspects of the land are transferred to the possessor of the land. As Barlow notes, “a person who possesses land has the power to produce a livelihood for family and tribe, and every effort is made to protect these rights” (1991: 62). Thus, to possess *mana whenua* is not only to wield the power derived from the land, but also to bear the responsibility of creating the conditions for the growth and development of one’s family and tribe.

McMeeking explained the relationship between *manaakitanga* and the responsibility associated with the possession of *mana whenua* in these terms:

If you have authority in your tribal territory, with it goes a responsibility to *manaaki* the people that are in your territory. And *manaaki* often gets translated to “hospitality” but it’s got much deeper meanings than that. So, one of the ways it’s explained is if you break down *manaaki*, its *mana-ā-ki*, meaning to fill with *mana*. So, to *manaaki* someone is to fill them with *mana*. And if you want to claim that you have *mana*, that you have *mana whenua* status, you’re going to claim to have that authority, you have to exercise *manaaki* as well.

Here McMeeking expressed the idea that from the perspective of the *iwi*, retaining their status as *mana whenua* was dependent upon taking responsibility for the public and not just their own people. Since Ngāi Tahu claim to possess *mana whenua* over most of the South Island, but particularly in Christchurch, they have a responsibility to look after everyone, not just their own people. If, as McMeeking says, to *manaaki* is to “fill with *mana*,” then to preserve their own *mana*, they must also fill their *manuhiri*, (in this case, the majority European settler population) with *mana* as well.

Complicating this logic is of course the question of land ownership. As was discussed in earlier chapters, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Ngāi Tahu were systematically dispossessed of their lands, either through predatory purchase

agreements brokered by agents of the settler state, or by regional and municipal zoning regulations that infringed on people's ability to act autonomously on their land. McMeeking's evocation of *mana whenua* then, does not reflect a Western-legal concept of possession or ownership. Rather, it indicates a Māori oriented understanding of the relationship between the land and those who inhabit it that is authorized through *whakapapa*, or genealogical descent. Despite their lack of legal ownership (as defined by settler law), Ngāi Tahu ultimately possess *mana whenua* because of the bloodlines that comprise the *iwi*'s membership, bloodlines that connect them, through the *mana* derived from their *whakapapa*, to the land occupied by Christchurch. While the realities of settler law force Ngāi Tahu to contend with Western legal notions of ownership and property, they do not see that as extinguishing their *mana whenua*, since from a Māori point of view, people cannot own the land, rather they are *kaitiaki*, or guardians of the land (see O'Regan 2001). Thus, in the eyes of McMeeking and others who practice Māori *tikanga*, or custom, one can possess *mana whenua* without possessing legal ownership.

McMeeking thus framed the actions of Ngāi Tahu in the immediate response phase after the September earthquake in terms of obligations derived from the possession of *mana whenua*. She explained that following the September earthquake, Ngāi Tahu coordinated a Māori Recovery Network that brought together about twenty different Māori organizations to support people in the worst affected areas and collected data about those people to provide relief services. By the time the February earthquake came around, the Māori Recovery Network was already well established and had systems and processes in place to help earthquake victims and they partnered with the New Zealand Civil Defense to organize relief activities.

In McMeeking's eyes, this partnership between the *iwi* and the Civil Defense Forces was crucial for the legislative recognition of Ngāi Tahu:

so, I think. . .and this is the world according to me. . .but I think that was pivotal to the statutory partner status, because we reached 10,000 families and did useful things for 10,000 families and we were able to demonstrate to Government for the first time with evidence and statistics, that we were taking responsibility and contributing to the public interest. And that in itself was a continuation of the themes that we've had in redefining and

evolving the Treaty partnership over the prior 3 years. So that Māori Recovery Network is the largest and most tangible manifestation of that new language we had been injecting into the Treaty partnership.

So, I think from the government's perspective that was a really valuable demonstration that we meant partnership in a genuine sense. It didn't just mean, we want to partner with the Crown so we can serve our own interests. We want to partner with the Crown because being responsible for the outcomes and experiences of people who live in our traditional territory is part of our custom.

McMeeking interpreted the motivation behind the Māori Recovery Network as stemming from their custom, and she connected the Māori Recovery Network to the *iwi*'s efforts to define their post-settlement identity in terms of "treaty partnership." As was noted above, the conceptual basis of this partnership from Ngāi Tahu's perspective stems from the Māori concept of *manaakitanga*. From McMeeking's point of view, the Māori Recovery Network was necessary for maintaining the *iwi*'s *mana* and endeared Ngāi Tahu to government for bearing the responsibility for the well-being of all Christchurch residents, not just their "own people." She also links the recovery network to the government's decision to include Ngāi Tahu as a statutory partner in the CER Act 2011. The Christchurch Rebuild thus became a crucial site not just for redefining Māori-State relations, but also for the expression of contemporary Ngāi Tahu identity.

It is for these reasons that I argue claims to *mana whenua* are an assertion of Ngāi Tahu sovereignty (*tino rangatiratanga*). As Audra Simpson (2014) has shown, indigenous peoples who have experienced severe land loss through colonization develop alternative strategies for asserting their opposition to settler governance. In the case she explores of the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke, Simpson explains that by refusing Canadian citizenship, Kahnawa'kehró:non simultaneously challenge the sovereign authority of the settler Canadian state while asserting their own status as a sovereign entity. In her discussion of North American Seminoles, Jessica Cattelino (2008) analyzes sovereignty as an "everyday practice" rather than as a politico-legal concept. She argues that from a Seminole perspective, sovereignty acts to mobilize their past and their customs in a way that empowers them to self-determine both their identities and their futures. Writing in

(and of) a New Zealand context, anthropologist Marama Muru-Lanning (2016) claims that indigenous people may draw on counter-discourses that challenge the hegemony of certain concepts like ownership and authority. In the case of the Waikato River *iwi* with whom she worked, the absence of legal ownership necessitated the explication of extra-legal relations to the land under dispute, relational understandings that became authenticated by being taken up and debated by other groups and discursive regimes who also had claims to the land.

In the case of Ngāi Tahu and Christchurch, the *iwi*'s claims to *mana whenua* as both derived from and dependent upon the practice of *manaakitanga* echo the arguments of Simpson, Cattelino and Muru-Lanning in that sovereignty is expressed through practice. The practice of *manaakitanga* by Ngāi Tahu implies a specific relationship to the land, a relationship that exceeds Western legal notions of property and ownership and affirms the *iwi*'s *mana*. From this perspective, sovereignty is *asserted* rather than *bestowed*. Claiming that they are obliged to participate because they risk losing their *mana* for failing to practice *manaakitanga* implies that Ngāi Tahu are beholden to a set of values that are distinct from those of the settler state. However, this begs the question of how to understand claims to sovereignty in instances where multiple sovereigns are not recognized as co-existing as is the case in New Zealand. Cattelino provides the beginnings of an answer to this question by arguing that in the context of the Seminole tribe with whom she worked, the United States' sovereignty does not lie outside of or above the settler indigenous relationship that challenges either sides' claims to autonomy. Similarly, because TRoNT did not possess legal ownership of Christchurch or Canterbury, they relied on alternative relational logics that affirmed their status as the holders of *mana whenua* and therefore *kaitiaki*, or guardians, of Christchurch. This logic foregrounds the relationship between Ngāi Tahu and the land, a relationship that transcends the relation between Ngāi Tahu and settler law.

Ultimately, the state's recognition of Ngāi Tahu in the CER Act had little to do with the *iwi*'s claims to *mana whenua* status. Rather it was a legal requirement that stemmed from the state's obligations as outlined in the Ngāi Tahu treaty settlement which

itself is derived from the interpretive precedents set by the Waitangi Tribunal. In other words, the CER Act's recognition of Ngāi Tahu was not a positive affirmation of their *mana whenua* nor was it a recognition of any historical claims the *iwi* might have to land in Christchurch or in Canterbury. Rather, Ngāi Tahu recognition was a legal obligation imposed by the terms of the Ngāi Tahu Treaty Settlement that aligns with the state's own logic of Māori recognition as it is practiced in the context of the Waitangi Tribunal. The claims of *mana whenua* and the logic of *manaakitanga* expressed by McMeeking are absent from the CER Act, despite their being crucial for the authorization of TRoNT's participation from an internal perspective.

Therein lies the first moment of the cunning of the CER Act's recognition. The acceptance by the *iwi* as an enduring entity in their treaty settlement binds them to the state in a relation of mutual obligation. Because the *iwi* accepted this bond, their *mana* became implicated in their upholding of that relationship. Since the state called on TRoNT to participate in the Christchurch rebuild as a treaty partner, the *iwi* must engage or face the loss of their *mana*. Yet this deception is only the first moment of cunning found in the CER Act's recognition of Ngāi Tahu. In the next section, I outline the second way in which the CER Act was an act of cunning by the state. This second moment relates to the complexity of contemporary Ngāi Tahu membership and what effectively amounted to the CER Act's erasure of that complexity. In this way, the state was able to force the realignment of Ngāi Tahu desires for recovery with their own, deflecting Ngāi Tahu efforts away from projects that would aid in the assertion of *mana motuhake* (self-determination) and instead implicate the *iwi* in the ongoing production of settler modernity.

Matapopore Charitable Trust, Ngāi Tūāhuriri and the misrecognition of mana whenua

As I discussed in the previous section, TRoNT staked their participation in the Christchurch Rebuild on their possession of *mana whenua* and the logic of *manaakitanga* was used to rationalize their involvement in the rebuild. However, the authority of

TRoNT to claim that *mana* was contested by the various descent groups that comprise the *iwi*'s membership. Specifically, the *hapuu* Ngāi Tūāhuriri challenged TRoNT's initial acceptance of the CER Act's recognition as being inappropriately focused on the *iwi* at large rather than the actual families and individuals from whom the *iwi*'s claims to *mana whenua* flow. In this section, I discuss the creation of the Matapopore Charitable Trust in relation to the CER Act recognition. I argue that Ngāi Tūāhuriri claims to *mana whenua* highlighted the CER Act's second moment of cunning because it bypassed the legal rights of individual landowners, who, because of their specific relationship to the land, have claims to *mana whenua*. The CER Act ultimately misrecognized TRoNT as the bearer of Ngāi Tahu authority when that authority is itself contested by *iwi* membership.

Matapopore Charitable Trust was established to manage Ngāi Tahu's participation in the rebuild and acted on behalf of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri *hapuu*. As Debbie Tikao, General Manager of Matapopore said during an interview,

Our focus is really the recovery of Ngāi Tahu identity within the city, not only in the way it feels and behaves and in the way you live in it, but also in the way that it looks. So, it is going to be a visible presence as well as a city that is embedded with values. I think we've been very aware at all times that that's what we're doing. It's a recovery of identity.

Here, Tikao is articulating the scope of what I have referred to as the Māori Rebuild project. Rather than interpret recovery passively (recovery *from*), she frames Matapopore's involvement in an active tense—recovery *of* identity. Notice that Christchurch is not the object of the Māori Rebuild. Rather, Ngāi Tahu values, identity and history are the objects of recovery. This approach to the Rebuild stands in stark contrast to the approach taken by other rebuild institutions such as the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU) and the Christchurch City Council (CCC), who do see the Rebuild in terms of a recovery of the city's pre-earthquake urban environment. This difference is what discursively set the Māori rebuild project apart from other rebuild projects I have identified, and it supports my claim that Ngāi Tahu participation in the recovery is predicated upon a different set of priorities than that of the government.

These priorities are outlined in a vision statement for the Trust that appears on its website. Composed of landowning Trustee's from Ngāi Tūāhuriri *hapuu*, the Matapopore website describes the Trust's mandate in the following terms:

Matapopore is the *mana whenua* voice in recovery and is responsible for ensuring Ngāi Tūāhuriri/Ngāi Tahu values, aspirations and narratives are realised [sic] within the recovery of Christchurch. Matapopore do this by bringing together teams of Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Tahu experts in natural heritage, mahinga kai, te reo Māori, whakapapa, urban design, art, architecture, landscape architecture, weaving and traditional arts to work alongside central and local government.

As this summary highlights, the purpose of the committee is to ensure the voice of the *mana whenua* is incorporated in the recovery and they do this by drawing on professional experts in *matauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge), *tikanga Māori* (Māori custom), and art and design fields who are *iwi* members. Notice that the referent for *mana whenua* has been expanded to include Ngāi Tahu *and* Ngāi Tūāhuriri. How was it that Ngāi Tūāhuriri came to be recognized as *mana whenua* alongside Ngāi Tahu, and what does it mean for the CER Act's recognition of Ngāi Tahu as a strategic partner?

Matapopore developed their alternative approach to recovery through the adoption of a set of values specific to Ngāi Tahu that they attempted to infuse into each of the anchor projects that comprised the Christchurch Central City Recovery Plan (CCRP) or "blueprint." These include *whakapapa* (identity), *mana-motuhake* (independence and autonomy), *manaakitanga* (charity), and *ture-wairua* (faith). These values are outlined in a series of narrative essays authored by Te Maire Tau, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Canterbury and *rangatira*, or chief, from the Ngāi Tūāhuriri subtribe, who was commissioned by Matapopore to develop a narrative for each anchor project, as well as a "grand narrative" that weaves together each individual anchor project narrative. Tau's narratives are inspired by a *pepeha* given by Pita te Hori, a respected *kaumatua*, or elder, who in 1861, at a time when Ngāi Tahu were experiencing intense marginalization at the hands of the Canterbury Association, asserted

his (and his descendants’) *mana whenua*. In his “Grand Narrative for Christchurch,” Te Maire quotes Pita te Hori as saying

Ko taku ture i ahu mai i toku tupuna i a Tū-āhu-riri nana i mea, ‘Kia atawhai ki te Pākehā.

My laws commenced with my ancestor, Tū-āhu-riri who said, ‘Care for your people.’
(Tau, Grand Narrative for Christchurch, 5)

According to Tau, Pita te Hori’s statement simultaneously establishes the autonomy (*mana motuhake*) of Ngāi Tūāhuriri by referencing his adherence to the laws of his ancestor, Tū-āhu-riri, as well as asserting the authority (*mana whenua*) of Ngāi Tūāhuriri by instructing them to look after their people, an appeal for *manaakitanga*, which as I argued in the previous section, is a practice of sovereignty. This admonition to city leaders in 1861 to “care for your people” serves as the thread that ties together the narratives for each anchor project. More importantly though, according to Tau’s narrative, this *pepeha* establishes the *mana whenua* of Ngāi Tūāhuriri, an authority that exists apart from and independently of the authority claimed by the Ngāi Tahu *iwi*.

As I discussed in the first section of this chapter, while the CER Act recognized Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT) as a statutory partner because of their status as a “treaty partner,” TRoNT interpreted this recognition as an affirmation of their *mana whenua*. Ngāi Tūāhuriri ultimately contested the ability of TRoNT to claim *mana whenua* by asserting the rights of the individual landowners of M.R.873 (Māori Reserve 873) who hold parcels of the reserve block in trust for Ngāi Tūāhuriri *whānui* (extended families). This was a reserve that was set aside for Ngāi Tūāhuriri as part of the Kemp Purchase of 1848, a deal brokered between Ngāi Tahu chiefs and Henry Tracy Kemp (for whom the purchase was named), commissioner for New Zealand Governor George Grey. While much of the block was sold off to Pākehā settlers over the intervening 150 years, some parcels were retained that today comprise the village of Tuahiwi, 30 kms north of

Christchurch and just south of Kaiapoi Pa, an important pre-European Ngāi Tahu settlement that today is the site of the town of Kaiapoi.

The *mana whenua* claimed by Ngāi Tūāhuriri stems from both the legal ownership of the individual trustees and the historical occupation of the Canterbury region by Ngāi Tūāhuriri *whānui*. Ngāi Tūāhuriri are a *hapuu*, or sub-tribe of Ngāi Tahu,



Figure 27: Tuahiwi marae, ancestral marae of Ngai Tūāhuriri whanau. Photo by the author, June 2015.

although the term “sub-tribe” belies the complexity of the relationship between *hapuu* and *iwi*. Eruera Tarena, the TRoNT executive with whom I began this chapter, described the relationship between Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri in these terms:

Ngāi Tahu acts as the representative of the individual hapuu, or sub-tribes in Canterbury. Think about them as villages that are scattered all throughout Canterbury, each with their own *takiwā*, territory, and *mana whenua*, or authority. When Ngāi Tahu was named as a strategic partner,

the local hapuu in Christchurch, Ngāi Tūāhuriri, felt offended because ultimately Christchurch sits within their *takiwā*—not Ngāi Tahu’s.

I quote Tarena’s explanation at length because it is instructive of the kinds of conceptual translation Māori must constantly engage in to make their concepts and forms of social organization legible to non-Māori outsiders. As Tarena describes it here, the relationship between *iwi* and *hapuu* is segmentary (Fortes 1953). By this logic, *iwi* are the sum of the individual *hapuu* whose memberships are bounded by *whanau*, or family relations, and who occupy a specific territory. The *hapuu* are linked together by descent from an apical ancestor, in this case, Tahu Potiki, the namesake of Ngāi Tahu, whose territory is the sum of the territory held by each *hapuu*.

In his explanation, Tarena is drawing on a tradition of anthropological theorizing about the organization of non-Western societies and specifically, an ethnological interest in Māori cultural difference. Long present in the ethnological canon through the work of Elsdon Best (1924, 1925), whose passage quoting *kaumatua* Tamati Ranaipiri about the *hau* (Best 1942) found its way into Mauss’s *Essai sur le don* (1950), the objectification of Māori *culture* became a crucial site for anthropological theorizing (Godelier, 1996; Strathern, 1988; Weiner, 1992). Anthropologist Stephen Webster (1998) has discussed how the work of Best and that of Ralph Piddington, inaugural chair of Auckland University College’s Anthropology Department in 1949, created a distinction between Māori *culture* and Māori *society* that led to what Webster called the essentialization of Māori culture. By this, Webster refers to what Fabian (1983) dubbed the “denial of coevalness,” –the discursive positioning of temporally contemporaneous cultures as existing in different historical epochs. Māori *culture* was interpreted as a pre-contact cultural tradition, a “pure” Māori culture. For Webster, Māori *society* referred to the daily socio-economic realities of Māori, a topic which was largely absent from the work of Best and Piddington.

While the temporal dissonance of early anthropological representations of non-Western people has been heavily critiqued, in New Zealand, the anachronization of Māori culture was crucial for the development of *Māoritanga*. Promoted by Sir Apirana Ngata,

a prominent Māori politician and scholar in the 1920s and 30s, *Māoritanga* refers to a de-contextualized idealization of pre-contact “traditional” Māori culture whose purpose was to “re-educate” Māori about their own pre-European cultural legacy that was believed to have been lost because of the systemic violence associated with colonization. Webster argues that it was during this time that *te reo Māori* (Māori language), and *kapa haka* (Māori performing arts) emerged as a way for Māori to cope with their social and economic marginalization from white New Zealand society, while also serving as the main indicators of a distinctively Māori middle-class *habitus*. Despite its largely “invented” character (Hanson, 1989), *Māoritanga* was adopted by practitioners as a “pure” expression of Māori culture, and its practice has persisted into the present as crucial to the formation of contemporary Māori identities.

While the early ethnological works by Best and the social and political work of Ngata took a salvage approach to Māori *culture*, the 1960s and 70s saw Māori *society* at the center of a debate about non-state forms of social and political organization (Firth, 1963; Fortes 1953; Leach, 1962; Sahlins, 1961; Scheffler, 1964; Schwimmer 1978). The language of kinship and descent dominated these analyses, as anthropologists sought to fill in the ethnographic record with recorded observations of how Māori determined access to rights and privileges as well as the boundaries of their memberships in the absence of a state. The question of whether Māori *iwi* and *hapuu* could be accurately described as “descent groups” sat at the center of this flurry of academic writing because Māori social organization disrupted the concepts of the segmentary lineage and unilineal descent group due to the bilateral nature of Māori kin reckoning. The “problem” of Māori social organization was largely an internal anthropological debate, with some analysts arguing against labelling *iwi* and *hapuu* as descent groups while others called for the expansion of the concept of the descent group to include those structures. Those debates ultimately could not come to terms with the ambiguity of *iwi* and *hapuu* that had initially endeared them as a topic of interest to anthropologists.

The work on Māori social organization ultimately fell into the same trap as the earlier ethnological writing on Māori culture in that *iwi* and *hapuu* were removed from

the historical and social context of their production. Webster (1998) got away from this problem when called for a political economy approach that understood *iwi* and *hapuu* as emergent phenomena whose boundaries and logics for membership changed depending on the social and political circumstances under which they are mobilized. Angela Ballara (1998) traced the historical lineage of the equivocation of *iwi* with “tribe,” arguing that this was the result of efforts by early European missionaries, colonial administrators and anthropologists to make Māori “fit” into what Trouillot (1991) called anthropology’s “savage slot.” Ballara says that the “nested” descriptions of *iwi*, *hapuu*, and *whanau* alluded to by Tarena in his description quoted above, emerged out of the structural models of kin-based social organization developed by anthropologists and social scientists in the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite this inaccurate portrayal of the relationship between *iwi* and *hapuu*, the idea that these groupings were analogous to the social scientific categories of “tribe” and “subtribe” became entrenched in state policy. Because of the primacy accorded to *iwi* by the state, the concept was appropriated by Māori cultural practitioners as a significant organizational form just as Ngata’s *Māoritanga* was eventually adopted by practitioners as a “true” expression of Māori identity.

For the purposes of my argument, I understand *iwi* and *hapuu* as discursive positionings people claim to assert their stake in political matters. When my research participants talked about *iwi* and *hapuu*, they drew on the academic meanings I have just reviewed as well as other meanings that were based in other authenticating discourses such as *whakapapa* (genealogy) and history. Tarena explained *iwi* and *hapuu* as “tribe” and “subtribe” because he knew this would be legible to me, a self-identified white, American anthropologist. However, when I asked Te Maire Tau, a *rangatira*, or chief, of Ngāi Tūāhuriri to explain *iwi* and *hapuu* structure to me, he said that asking to define the structure of *iwi* is like trying to cut mercury with a knife- you can’t do it because it bends and changes shape depending on where you press the knife. You will never get a definite structure from mercury. Similarly with *iwi*—they are not corporate bodies with sharply bounded memberships but are rather best described as political alliances whose shape

depends on the socio-historical context in which they are mobilized. As these examples illustrate, *iwi* and *hapuu* are complex topics whose meaning and significance changes depending upon the context, and who the knowledge is being communicated to and for what purposes.

When the CER Act recognized TRoNT as the *mana whenua*, individual landowners drew on their overlapping *iwi* and *hapuu* affiliations to make claims of *mana whenua* on behalf of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri *hapuu* for the purposes of contesting TRoNT's authority. Nigel Harris, one of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri land trustees and sitting member of the Matapopore Trust committee described the process by which responsibility to carry out the CER Act mandate was eventually devolved to Ngāi Tūāhuriri in these terms:

When it first transpired that the Crown was going to negotiate with and have a statutory partnership with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as *mana whenua*, we kicked up. We opposed TRoNT, and certain other people acting as individuals participating in and around the rebuild because it cut across us as owners. Hence, I, myself, Rakihia Tau, and quite a few of the other *mana whenua* and other owners of those reserves and lands which give us the right as *mana whenua*, bearing in mind that TRoNT are only our representatives, they do not speak on our behalf without our consent, although they are mandated, we opposed it.

We called a meeting of owners [...] and we said that we had not only a fructuary but we had a usufructuary right, set down in law that we were the ones who had the ownership right within Ōtautahi [Christchurch] not a government or corporate institution. And so, it was decided at that meeting that Matapopore would be formed, and that there would be a mandated body in terms of that activity within the CBD and the Rebuild. So that's how it started.

Here, Harris is articulating what Jean Dennison (2017) has referred to as a circumstance of “entangled sovereignty.” Writing of the Osage Nation's attempts to maintain control of natural resources within their reservation, Dennison says that “sovereignty has never made sense as exclusive authority” (2017, 685). Rather, sovereignty is an entanglement, “an insistence on one's authority without the illusion of full control, a mess of negotiations and interruptions which almost always lead to further entanglements” (2017, 685). Harris's simultaneous evocation of TRoNT, Ngāi Tūāhuriri, the state, and civil law

(his references to fructuary and usufructuary rights) to justify his own claims to sovereignty illustrates Dennison's claim that entanglement highlights the unexpected interconnections created by ongoing colonial processes. Despite the collective dispossession of Ngāi Tūāhuriri, Harris maintained a connection to the land that is authorized through the Western legal custom of civil law, thereby granting him certain rights which he interprets as authorizing his claims to *mana whenua*. Only the colonial context in which Harris operates would produce the kinds of overlapping logics that Harris used to assert his claims.

Harris drew on additional entanglements when he explained his own personal involvement with Matapopore and how his claims to *mana whenua* are authorized not only by his legal ownership of M.R. 873, but also by his *whakapapa*, or genealogy:

How do I fit into this picture? I was born and bred on the reserve. So that's MR873 which is Tuahiwi. And so, I whakapapa in a direct line back to our founding ancestors. And so, one of our whanau is through the Rupini line, or the Ruben line. And so, my grandmother was the youngest daughter of twelve, of Hemi Wera Rupini. And he is in the Blue Book, so he is a registered kaumatua of Ngāi Tahu. So, I was born and bred around the pa. I was raised there, so I have really close connections to the pa and this takiwā. Also have land ownership, I am also a trustee of our whanau lands.

In this passage, Harris drew on multiple authorizing contexts to legitimate his claims to *mana whenua*. By referencing Tuahiwi as the place of his birth, Harris drew on the same logic used by McMeeking to rationalize Ngāi Tahu's claims to authority, namely, corporeal connections to land. However, he closes out his explanation by referencing his status as trustee—a legal designation authorized by the settler state that gives him certain rights and obligations in relation to the land.

Harris also referenced his *whakapapa* or genealogy, as authorizing his claim to *mana whenua* because he could trace a direct line of descent from Hemi Wera Rupini, who was listed in the 1929 “Blue Book,” – a census of all living Ngāi Tahu in 1848, the year of Kemp's Purchase (Ngaitahu Māori Trust Board, 1965). His assertion that he was related to a Blue Book kaumatua is significant because descent from one of the people listed in that census is the primary criteria for being recognized by TRoNT as an *iwi*

member. This rationalization of his claim to *mana whenua* through descent is another instance of Dennison's entangled sovereignties. The Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996—the act that recognized Ngāi Tahu the descent group as an enduring entity as well as establishing Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as the representative of the descent group—maintained the criteria for establishing Ngāi Tahu membership that was laid out in the Māori Purposes Act 1966. The act drew on the 1929 Blue Book definition of *iwi* membership:

the persons, being members of the Ngaitahu tribe living in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight whose names are set out in a list appearing at pages 92-131 (both inclusive) of the book containing the minutes of the proceedings and findings of a committee (commonly known as the Ngaitahu Census Committee) appointed in the year nineteen hundred and twenty-nine, the book being that lodged in the office of the Registrar of the Māori Land Court at Christchurch marked 'Ngaitahu Census Committee Minutes 1929.' (Ngaitahu Māori Trust Board, 2)

Harris staked his claim to Ngāi Tahu identity on a list whose authority derived from its recognition in settler law as the defining record of Ngāi Tahu members at the time of the first land purchases between Ngāi Tahu and the Crown. Harris used these entanglements between settler law, *matauranga Māori*, and Ngāi Tahu history to enact his autonomy in relation to TRoNT without relinquishing his claims to indigenous alterity.

The collective action of Harris along with a few other landowning trustees illustrates the emergent process of *hapuu* formation discussed by Webster (2010). Rather than act as structuring principal of social organization, *hapuu* acts in this instance as a rallying point to organize people related to each other through *whakapapa* who share a mutual interest in claiming *mana whenua*. This emergent and highly variable quality of Māori social units highlights one of the problems of indigenous legal recognition, namely the potential for misrecognition. This kind of misrecognition and the competing claims to authority it engendered in this specific instance has the potential to serve as justification for the denial of indigenous authenticity by the scrutinizing non-indigenous publics for whom Povinelli and others argue these frameworks were developed to appease in the first place. The internal contestation of Ngāi Tahu's *mana*, the fluidity of *iwi* and *hapuu*

affiliations, and the recourse to sovereign entanglements as a source of rights could justify Pākehā New Zealanders denial of indigenous authenticity to Nga Tahu, an *iwi* that has long been maligned as “plastic Māoris,” or as the “whitest tribe in New Zealand.” It is for these reasons that recognition paradigms have increasingly been rejected by indigenous peoples as the solution to their predicament.

Ultimately though, Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri did not reject the politics of recognition because, as I mentioned earlier, their *mana*—both the *iwi*’s and the *hapuu*’s—was put on the line. Ngāi Tahu’s long history of engagement with the state and their multiple previous recognitions in statute led to their fate becoming entangled with that of the settler state. As I have shown in this section, the misrecognition of *mana whenua* in the CER Act trampled the rights of individual landowners in favor of the corporate recognition of TRoNT. For Nigel Harris, Te Maire Tau, and the other Matapopore Trustees, the CER Act recognition was yet another instance of the state forcing them to inhabit a world not of their choosing.

In the final section of this chapter, I discuss the controversy surrounding the naming of the Hine Paaka Bus Interchange to show how “treaty partnership” failed in practice.

“It was a beautiful name. It was a tipuna name, so it was a real gift”: the Hine Paaka Bus Interchange and the failure of “treaty partnership”

In this section, I discuss in detail the Hine Paaka Bus Interchange, one of the 17 government anchor projects contained in the blueprint plan and one of the first to be completed in May 2015. I argue that Matapopore’s experience of working on this anchor project highlights the failure of “treaty partnership” to seriously engage with Ngāi Tahu aspirations for self-determination. Rather, what the controversy surrounding the naming of the bus interchange highlights is the deeply engrained erasure of Māori sovereignty by the settler state. I argue that the rejection of Matapopore’s gift of the “Hine Paaka” name amounts to the state’s rejection of Ngāi Tahu claims to sovereignty that the *iwi* believed it was practicing through their involvement in the rebuild. Ultimately, TRoNT’s

participation in the rebuild made them complicit in the ongoing settlement of New Zealand because of the continual rebukes by non-Māori rebuild institutions to affirm Ngāi Tahu efforts at self-determination.

As I discussed in the Introduction, the Māori Rebuild seeks to transform Christchurch's reputation from an "English City" into an indigenous city using culturally-informed architecture and design. As was made very clear to me by my Ngāi Tahu research participants, the presumption of partnership at a political level, and the ideal of biculturalism at a social and cultural level, was very much lacking in Canterbury, which is known for its "Englishness" and social conservatism (compared, for example, to the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural reputation of Auckland which is often referred to as the largest Polynesian city in the world). The Māori Rebuild then, is concerned with transforming the conditions of Māori-Pākehā relations in Christchurch to better align with the concept of partnership that has taken hold at the political level.

The Matapopore Charitable Trust sought to realize these aspirations by injecting Ngāi Tahu history and Ngāi Tahutanga into the built landscape of the city. In addition to the "grand narrative" mentioned earlier, Matapopore commissioned a narrative for each of the 17 anchor projects as well. These anchor project narratives interpreted each project or precinct in relation to the Ngāi Tahu values laid out in the grand narrative. Arapata Ruben, one of the Matapopore Trustees and project lead on the Bus Interchange, described the process of developing the project narrative in these terms:

So, for the bus interchange, we looked at its purpose. And the main purpose was as a conduit to get people from home to work, to home, to school, etc. And it was very centralized and there was a lot of movement around it. So, we looked at it we said ok, transport, you know, when we think of transport in a Māori context we think of our migrations. And so, the two key ones for us, for Ngāi Tūāhuriri was the migration stories, from Hawaiki nui to New Zealand, Aotearoa. And the second one was that migration into the South Island from Wellington, in the North Island. So, they were the two key things we looked at as core storylines. And from that we started expanding and we used one of our traditions that we talked about the seafarers and the navigational techniques using the constellations.

We touched on occupation in the North Island but mainly focused on migration into the South Island under the banner of Tu Haitara, were the first Ngāi Tahu to come into the Canterbury Plains. So that was a real opportunity there to share that history with the public and even our own people.

We pictured the buses are like our *wakas*. The bus routes are all like our trails. Going from our pā to our mahinga kai sites or to West Coast to trading routes and all that sort of stuff.

As Ruben explained here, Matapopore looked first at the function or purpose of the bus interchange and then developed a Ngāi Tahu equivocation that spoke to their histories and traditions relating to migration. Ruben's evocative imagery of buses as *wakas* (canoes), and the bus routes as trails and trade routes are suggestive of the kind of effect that Matapopore and Ngāi Tahu hoped to have through their involvement in the rebuild. Rather than serve as a purely functional structure, the narrative developed by Matapopore transformed the bus interchange into an immersive expression of Ngāi Tahu's worldview.

The name that was gifted by Matapopore to the Bus Interchange, Hine Paaka, added yet another layer of significance to the bus interchange and contributed to its transformation into an immersive cultural experience. Hine Paaka was the name of what Ruben called a "fowling tree," and played a significant role in *mahinga kai*, or traditional food gathering practices. Ruben explained the logic behind naming the bus exchange after this tree in these terms:

Because of its significant stature, it [Hine Paaka] could be seen across the flat plains, so it was like a beacon for all the travelers, traveling over to the West Coast, or coming from the West Coast or along the foothills. It wasn't an . . . it steered. . . it was like a lighthouse in a sense. And then it was a pou [post] in the ground that told . . . it was something you could fix on and you knew that there were swamps so you knew to stay on one side of the tree because there were swamps and stuff on the other side. So, it steered you away from danger as well, it provided safe passage, safe journeys. And when we explained the story behind the name and how we wanted to incorporate all of that into the building, that's exactly what the bus interchange does. It's a beacon for people that travel to and from work, school, it takes them there safely, it brings them home at night, all that sort of stuff.

By gifting the bus interchange the same name as the famous fowling tree that served as a beacon for Ngāi Tahu *whānui* travelling throughout Canterbury, the bus interchange likewise became layered with this significance as well. No longer just a transportation hub, the name “Hine Paaka” implies that the bus interchange will serve the same purpose to contemporary travelers as the fowling tree did to Ngāi Tahu migrants in pre-settlement times. Just as Hine Paaka the Fowling Tree was a part of Ngāi Tahu’s landscape in pre-European times, she will continue to be a part of the contemporary landscape, now as the bus interchange, evoking a Ngāi Tahu past and connection to the city that had previously been lacking.



Figure 28: Hine Paaka Christchurch Bus Interchange. Photo courtesy of Otagaro Ltd.

More importantly though, the gifting of the name Hine Paaka was an attempt by Matapopore to leverage their involvement in the rebuild to make claims about Ngāi Tahu’s and Ngāi Tūāhuriri’s authority over Christchurch. In addition to developing a Ngāi Tahu-centered narrative about migration and journeying to transform the bus interchange into a meaningful place for Ngāi Tahu, the gifting of the name *Hine Paaka*, was significant because it not only was the name of a significant fowling tree as Ruben

mentioned, but it was also a tipuna, or ancestral name. According to the CERA Grand Narrative, *Hine Paaka* is a female ancestor of Ngāi Tuhaitara, a Ngāi Tahu *hapuu* that was part of the first migration into the South Island (Grand Narrative, 6). As the narrative explains, Hine Paaka became a fowling tree after she died and served as a boundary marker first for Ngāi Tuhaitara and then later, Ngāi Tūāhuriri. Arapata Ruben explained the significance of Hine Paaka in these terms:

Hine Paaka was a name given to a very significant tree that stood for about six, seven hundred years just in the foothills here in the Canterbury plains, and, Hine Paaka the woman was a very high chieftainess, but we focused more on the tree itself that was named after her. It's what we would term, us mahinga kai people we called it a fowling tree, it was a birding tree.

And to get there it was probably a two day walk to get there, so there was travel involved in it. It wasn't just one tree, it stood amongst many, but it towered over all the others. And that bush line was well known for the birds. So, we captured all the birds there. Even kiwi, kiwi was known to be caught there. Kereru, kaka, kea, and rats, kiores. So, it was a very popular place, a very prominent place for Ngāi Tūāhuriri to go and catch their wares and store them up for winter. And what would happen during the day, they'd be out there capturing birds and they'd go back, during the day they'd take their catch of birds and hang them in this tree, the Hine Paaka, the fowling tree. And then at the end of the day, they'd go back there, bundle them all up, take them back into their makeshift camps and work the birds.

For Ruben and the rest of the Matapopore committee, Hine Paaka symbolized not just their ancestor, but it spoke to their historical occupation of the Canterbury Plains and served as justification for their claims to *mana whenua*. Furthermore, the *mahinga kai*, or food gathering practices, that Ruben spoke of serve as another justification for Ngāi Tūāhuriri's claims to *mana whenua* because the site occupied by Christchurch is known by them as Ōtautahi, which in pre-contact times was a place for *mahinga kai*.

As I mentioned earlier, Māori customs relating to childbirth create corporeal connections to the land. The burying of the child's afterbirth in the ground means that the child's bodily substance forms the actual land that serves as their *turangawaewae*, or "place to stand." People are thus "of the land" in a very literal sense. This logic applies to

the deceased as well, who are returned to the earth when they die and are buried at an *urupā*, located within the *takiwā* of the deceased's *whanau*. After being returned to the earth, the ancestors continued to live on, embodied in the landscape. As was explained in the Grand Narrative,

For Ngāi Tahu the ancestors did not simply exist and die; many became geographical formations – mountains, rivers, streams. The ancestor Hine Paaka became a sacred fowling tree, a place where birds were hunted and where the skins of the cull were stretched against the branches of a living ancestor, the tree, Hine Paaka. (Grand Narrative, 6)

For people like Nigel Harris, Arapata Ruben, and Te Maire Tau whose genealogy links them to the Ngāi Tūāhuriri *hapuu*, Hine Paaka symbolizes more than just an ancestor. She embodies the history of the *iwi*'s migration into the South Island, their occupation and use of that territory, and therefore their claims to *mana whenua*. When Matapopore gifted the name to the bus interchange, they were staking their claim to authority in Christchurch. Just as the Hine Paaka fowling tree was a symbol of Ngāi Tūāhuriri's *mana whenua*, so too is the Hine Paaka Bus Interchange an assertion of *mana whenua* in Christchurch. By gifting the name to the bus exchange, Hine Paaka the ancestor has become part of the urban landscape in Christchurch.

Despite this attempt by Matapopore to stake their claims to authority over Christchurch through the gifting of the name, they were ultimately foiled in their attempts to assert their *mana whenua* by the rejection of the Hine Paaka name. When I spoke with Debbie Tikao, General Manager of Matapopore, about this matter, she seemed rather dejected by the whole experience. When I asked Tikao to elaborate on what was so upsetting about the whole experience, she replied by saying:

Arapata Ruben was the project lead and he had given them the name “Hine Paaka” and it related to the narrative. It related to a fowling tree. It was a beautiful name, it was a tipuna name. So, it was a real gift. But because with the Bus Interchange they still don't know who is going to own and operate it into the future, they felt that it would be better to just stick with a working name, “Bus Interchange.”

And so instead of ringing us up and saying “hey, look we really love the name of the Bus Interchange and really want to get it through but in the

interim, this is what we're faced with" we end up getting this quite really formal letter. And it's just. . . you know Te Maire was wild with texts and calls late at night and he was writing this letter, and, in the end, I just went in to Greg [CCDU representative] and so, we didn't send the letter in the end, but I went to Greg and said "actually, that was quite offensive on a number of different levels. But actually, going back a step further than that, you know, the name Hine Paaka is a gift and you've actually disrespected that" and you know I explained to him a whole lot of stuff that you know could have been done better.

I recall Tikao's voice cracking slightly when she related this anecdote to me. I could hear the disappointment in her voice; the wounds that the callous rejection of the name had opened for her and the other committee members; the recognition that despite their efforts, the erasure of their past, their heritage, their connection to this place would be repeated.

More importantly for my argument though, the rejection of Hine Paaka was a denial of Ngāi Tūāhuriri's and Ngāi Tahu's *mana whenua*, justified by the very normalization of Ngāi Tahu erasure that the bus exchange narrative and name were intended to rectify. By rationalizing the decision to not use the name because of logistical concerns regarding future ownership, CCDU, with whom Matapopore were working to deliver the anchor projects, perpetuated the normalization of the erasure of Ngāi Tahu from the Christchurch urban landscape. The appeal to a logic of refusal that is framed as being out of their control ("they still don't know who is going to operate it into the future") ultimately indicates the lack of sincerity by non-Māori rebuild institutions to truly act as treaty partners.

I would argue that this is not a circumstantial exception of good intentions being thwarted by bureaucratic process, but rather is illustrative of the structural erasure of Ngāi Tahu and Māori more generally in that the logistics of ownership and operation of the building take precedence over the narrative and symbolic meaning of the bus interchange. This is framed as a kind of "common sense" reason for not using the name, and one that Tikao seems to accept which speaks to the deep-seated structures of marginalization that

Māori must confront. At the time of writing, the name Hine Paaka had still not been applied to the bus interchange.

Conclusion

As I have shown in this chapter, the CER Act recognition of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu ultimately did not advance Ngāi Tahu's claims to sovereignty despite the intentions of Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri rebuild actors to leverage that recognition for that very purpose. The idea of "treaty partnership" was adopted by both state-derived rebuild institutions and Māori institutions as the model for governing the Christchurch Central City Rebuild. However, the state's recognition of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was ultimately a misrecognition in that it forced Ngāi Tahu into accepting *iwi* as the dominant representative of their interests, while also misrecognizing their desires in relation to the recovery. Ngāi Tahu attempted to at first leverage the recovery legislation for the purposes of advancing their claims to *mana whenua*. However, because of the misrecognition of *iwi* and *hapuu*, TRoNT's authority to act as it had been was challenged by individuals who also had claims to *mana whenua*. The Matapopore Charitable Trust sought to reverse the historical erasure of Ngāi Tahu from the urban landscape and reclaim Christchurch for Māori through the incorporation of their values and history into the design of the new city. Yet as I showed with my discussion of the bus interchange and the rejection of the Hine Paaka name, Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri claims to *mana whenua* within Christchurch were ultimately thwarted by the logistics of ownership and operation of public services like the bus interchange.

Ultimately, the rejection of the Hine Paaka name not only perpetuated the erasure of Ngāi Tahu from the urban landscape, but it rendered their participation in the rebuild complicit in their own dispossession by the neoliberal settler state. Since Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri were staking their involvement in the rebuild on the recognition of their *mana whenua*, the rejection of their claims to sovereignty through the rejection of the Hine Paaka name renders their contributions to the bus interchange as merely decorative art. The political significance of their involvement as represented in the gifting of the

name has been removed, and only the design elements remain. It is ultimately these ornamental elements, lacking in narrative context that the application of the Hine Paaka name would have provided, that are acceptable expressions of Māori difference to the settler state and the settler population. Ngāi Tahu were thus made complicit in their own erasure by providing the state with an “acceptable” expression of their identity. The rejection of the Hine Paaka name amounts to a refusal to contend with Ngāi Tahu claims to sovereignty, thereby evacuating Ngāi Tahu involvement in the rebuild of its political content.

In the next chapter, I discuss one final form of dispossession perpetrated by the neoliberal settler state within the context of Rebuild discourse, this time, in relation to what I have called the grassroots rebuild project. Just as the government and Māori rebuild projects acted as a kind of double-edged sword whose enactment resulted in both opportunity and oppression, the grassroots rebuild similarly engaged in a bait and switch tactic in which the opportunity presented to grassroots rebuild actors through their participation in that particular rebuild project required the ongoing dispossession of Ngāi Tahu . In other words, the realization of the grassroots rebuild project required that grassroots rebuild actors claim rights to occupy land in the Central City, land whose governing authority was ultimately contested as I have shown throughout this chapter. Rather than engage with Ngāi Tahu and recognize their status as *mana whenua*, the grassroots rebuild project was ultimately guilty of perpetuating the denial of Ngāi Tahu ’s *mana* within the context of rebuild discourse.

Chapter 4

Repossessing Christchurch: rebuild citizenship and indigenous exclusion

Minding the gaps

Once a month, Gapfiller, a local community arts organization formed in the wake of the 2011 earthquake, held a volunteer “working-bee” to maintain their numerous art projects, public parklets, and their central city home base known as “The Commons.” Located across the river from Victoria Square on the site of the former Crowne Plaza Hotel, The Commons acted as a hub for the transitional city movement. Influenced by a trans-national movement of locally-inspired, grass-roots-led urban planning initiatives known as “participatory city making,” the grass-roots rebuild in Christchurch emerged as one of the leaders of this movement, with Gapfiller garnering international awards and media recognition for their work in central Christchurch. Partner organizations Greening the Rubble and RAD (Recycle A Dunger) Bikes also called The Commons home and I would often stop by and knock on the door of one of the temporary structures located there to catch up with whomever was around and receive informal updates on the progress of the transitional city movement.

Locally, Gapfiller were known for their creative, largely DIY, often “cheeky” interactive public art projects whose self-proclaimed purpose was to reconnect people to the city and invite people to participate in its regeneration. For example, the *Retro Sports Facility* located at The Commons consisted of a grass playing field and a custom-built movable grandstand, that was meant to show the general public (and CERA) the absurdity of spending tens of millions of dollars on a new event stadium and a “Metro Sports Facility” when a centrally-located green space could fulfill some of the same functions as those large-scale (and high ticket price) projects. As one of the Gapfiller founders explained it to me, the Metro Sports Facility required a massive physical infrastructure and they wanted to show the government that they could do the same thing but without the massive infrastructure. All the Gapfiller project required was the social infrastructure to get the games going. Referring to themselves as “vacant space activators,” the Gapfiller crew were constantly adding members (and fans) to their ranks

as their projects became grander in scale and city residents came to rely on them to hold the government publicly accountable regarding some of the more unpopular anchor projects.

During one of these monthly working-bees organized by Gapfiller, several international volunteers were in attendance. Like myself, they had come to Christchurch to take part in the rebuild. One volunteer named Twee originally hailed from Canada but had most recently been in Australia where she had done some community outreach work. She said she decided to leave Australia and come to Christchurch for a few weeks because she had heard about Gapfiller in the Australian press and was really interested in how the city was recovering and wanted to contribute in some way. Another volunteer named Heather was travelling around the world on a Watson Fellowship, studying urban gardens and public space. She had just arrived in Christchurch that same day and had read about the work Gapfiller was doing and wanted to “be a part of the action.” Like Twee though, Heather was only planning on being in town for a few days, leaving me to



Figure 29: Gapfiller volunteer "working-bee" at The Commons in Central Christchurch. Photo by the author, May 2015.

wonder how much the transitional city movement was actually connecting with the local population as they claimed to do.

One volunteer I met named Amelia echoed my own observations about the authenticity of Gapfiller. Originally from the UK, Amelia said she became involved with the transitional city movement when she moved to Christchurch after living in a small town in the North Island. She moved to Christchurch for the lifestyle it offered and because her children were starting school and she didn't think the school in the small town was very good. As we worked at pulling weeds from one of the garden beds at The Commons, Amelia asked me how I found the people in Christchurch. I replied that they were mostly ok and that I was getting on fine. A slight smirk spread across her face as she expressed gratitude that my experience was more positive than hers. She said it was rather difficult for her in the small town where she had lived prior to moving to Christchurch. People were friendly enough, but even though she lived in the town for a good number of years, people never really accepted her. She implied that the social structure in New Zealand is quite rigid, making it difficult for outsiders to feel welcomed and included.

Our conversation shifted to discussing the transitional city movement and the extent to which it actually represented a locally home-grown resurgence of community development and state opposition, as Gapfiller liked to claim, or if it was merely a pet-project of upper-middle class Pākehās who felt increasingly dispossessed because of local, national, and international developments that seemed to threaten their traditional values and dominant status in New Zealand society. Amelia seemed to fall squarely on the side of the latter, saying that she thought Gapfiller was great, but they tended to attract students, travelers, and generally well-educated white middle to upper middle-class people. She suggested that if I were really interested in learning what was going on as far as community-building was concerned, I should try and meet people from the Inner-City East or from some of the eastern suburbs like Linwood and New Brighton. There, she said I might have the opportunity to meet different kinds of people—more “true Kiwis and Māoris” was how she phrased it.

I found Amelia's comments challenging Gapfiller's authenticity striking considering the transitional city movement's claims to representing and advocating for those left out of or ignored by the government's rebuild plans. One of the refrains I heard Gapfiller staff repeat over and over was that they understood their role in post-earthquake Christchurch as providing an invitation to participate in the rebuild to those who otherwise had no role. If, as member groups often claimed, the transitional city movement was concerned with creating opportunities for participation and the forging of connections to the city for those people who were most marginalized and dispossessed by the government rebuild project, what was the source of Amelia's ambivalence towards Gapfiller? What caused the disjuncture between their professed values of inclusivity and place-based authenticity and Amelia's assertions of white middle-class posturing?

To answer some of these questions, I discuss in this chapter what I call rebuild citizenship as it was understood and practiced from the perspective of grassroots rebuild actors. Rebuild citizenship refers to the perceived rights of participation claimed by grassroots rebuild actors that were narrated as being under threat by the government rebuild project. I show how rather than stake their claims to rebuild citizenship based upon an ascribed status, cultural identity, or socio-economic class, grassroots rebuild actors' adherence to a set of traditional New Zealand values of fairness and equality of rights allowed them to transcend the racial, cultural, and class divisions that divided New Zealand society and to subsequently claim an inclusive, utopian vision for the future of Christchurch. The grassroots rebuild performed their politics of resistance by practicing what they called "inclusive urbanization," which in its specific articulation in Christchurch, involved a respect for the natural environment, adherence to a "No. 8 wire," or D-I-Y mentality, and a disavowal of the corporate cosmopolitanism embodied in the government rebuild project.

I argue that despite a rhetorical disavowal of identity politics in favor of an inclusive, rights-based citizenship approach as a strategy for resisting what was perceived as the overreach of government power, the grassroots rebuild project was unable to effectively achieve such inclusivity because of the particular rebuild practices associated

with this project that were rooted in a colonial logic of possession and ownership that contributed to the ongoing dispossession of indigenous Māori. Despite lip-service paid to respecting the treaty relationship and *mana whenua*, the way rebuild citizenship was practiced by grassroots rebuild actors resulted in a lack of coordination and cooperation between the grass-roots and Māori rebuild projects, leaving the grass-roots rebuild guilty of re-possessing Māori lands in the name of a normatively non-indigenous Christchurch citizen.

Rebuild citizenship: neoliberal anxieties and first world apprehensions

The issue of citizenship and its transformation in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters has only been tangentially explored by disaster scholars, usually from a social vulnerability perspective that focuses on the impact that differential access to resources and the unequal application of rights based on ascribed statuses such as race, class, and gender has on recovery outcomes (Torry, 1979). These studies argue that in times of environmental and human-induced catastrophe, recovery outcomes tend to mirror broader socio-economic patterns of privilege and wealth distribution based on culturally determined hierarchies of difference. From this perspective, the impact of citizenship, or universal belonging to a particular political community, is superseded by the demands placed on collectives by identity politics. For example, in the case explored by Bolin and Stanford (1998, 1999) about the 1994 California wildfires, the researchers showed how post-disaster policy favored the speedy recoveries of middle-class homeowners over lower-income renters. Similarly, Vincanne Adams (2013) showed how after Hurricane Katrina, recovery became raced in addition to being classed because of how economic incentives for home repairs were structured, exacerbating pre-disaster socio-economic disparities between blacks and whites in New Orleans. Hoffman (1999a) emphasized what she referred to as the “regeneration” of traditional gender patterns in the same post-disaster context explored by Bolin and Stanford, arguing that women had a more difficult time coping with post-disaster life because they were often expected to look after the domestic sphere while men returned to their jobs in the public sphere. This

situation left women in a position in which it was easier to dwell on their losses than men because they were relegated to their homes—places that were material reminders of the devastation and disruption they had experienced because of the wildfires. Men on the other hand had the privilege of returning to work, offering some semblance of continuity with their pre-disaster lives.

These analyses all highlight the ways in which the rights and privileges associated with membership in a national political community were curtailed by identity-based prescriptions either through policy or historically produced social convention. Membership in broad social categories like race and gender took precedence over membership in local, place-based networks based on residency or a shared sense of locality. In the cases referenced above, the issue of “rights” to recovery seemed to depend less on the shared experience of disaster or residence in a disaster-afflicted locality and more on trans-local and trans-historical processes of social differentiation. To that end, the shared experience of disaster as the basis for membership in a distinct and self-determined political community has been explored by Hoffman (1999b) although not necessarily in those terms, as arising through reciprocal exchanges of aid and relief as a means for creating unity. Membership in the community of victims is relegated to those who experienced the hazard event and who suffered trauma because of that experience. Disaster researchers Siddiqi and Canuday (2018) apply a social contract framework to their notion of disaster citizenship, arguing that disasters challenge the state-citizen relationship by throwing into question the state’s ability to provide basic security for its citizens. If the relationship between state and citizen is defined by mutual obligation and responsibility, then the occurrence of a disaster signals the failure of the state to meet its obligations to its citizens, challenging the moral authority claimed by the state.

At the time of my fieldwork in Christchurch, the topic of citizenship was highly charged because of larger national debates around New Zealand’s participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), a multilateral free-trade agreement brokered between 12 Pacific-rim countries including New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. According to the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the “TPP

will give New Zealand better access to globally significant markets,” and “diversify New Zealand’s trade and investment relationships” by eliminating tariffs and other restrictions on trade between participating states (Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1). From the perspective of New Zealand citizens, what was most troublesome about this agreement were the restrictions it would have placed on national sovereignty, particularly the ability of states and corporations to bring lawsuits against New Zealand for breaches of parts of the agreement, even if those breaches were due to the implementation of existing law. Specifically, there were concerns about the standing of legislation that protected Māori rights to land and resources, as well as the ability to act on treaty settlements that might interfere with rights claimed by multinational corporations through international law. Furthermore, the values of economic freedom that informed the trade deal were understood by New Zealanders as antithetical to their traditional values of fairness, equality, and democracy.

I attended a *hui* on this topic at Canterbury University in August of 2015, organized by Dr. Abby Suszko, a Māori legal scholar, who discussed some of the human rights issues specific to New Zealand’s involvement in the TPP, specifically the notion that by signing on to the TPP, the New Zealand state was giving away its sovereignty to international organizations, including multinational corporations, by allowing the provisions contained within the TPP to supersede domestic law. Suszko explained that because of the way power is structured in New Zealand, the TPP could have significant impacts on the ability of the New Zealand state to protect the human rights of its citizens if those rights impede the ability of corporations to practice certain provisions of the TPP. She compared New Zealand to the United States, where, she said, people are quite used to having their rights curtailed for the benefit of corporations. Not so in New Zealand where the state has not tended to so easily bend to the will of corporations. During the *hui*, Suszko pondered on what would happen under the TPP if the Crown decided to return a certain piece of land to Māori but a corporation, multi-national presumably, also had a claim on that land. The TPPA could complicate Māori rights to that land and complicate their mode of redress. Suszko explained that as things stand now, those Māori

could go to the government and have their rights affirmed. However, if as critics of the deal argued, the Crown gave away some of its sovereignty by signing on to the deal, that may open the possibility that those Māori would now have to go offshore to have their rights recognized by an international court or tribunal.

These fears regarding the integrity of New Zealand's national sovereignty were reiterated during a panel series I attended that was part of the biannual Christchurch Arts Festival in August of 2015 called "Shifting Points of View." As part of this series, Margaret Wilson, Head of Political Science at Canterbury University discussed her then-new book entitled *Struggle for Sovereignty* (2015), that, according to Wilson, focused on the changing role of the state in New Zealand society since the so-called "neoliberal revolution" of 1984. Prior to that moment, the state was understood as a welfare state, which, according to Wilson, provided public services and social and material infrastructure to promote social values of fairness and equality of rights that stood at the heart of New Zealand society, and which Wilson claimed, emerged from New Zealand's specific history of colonialism. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Christchurch was from its inception a planned settlement whose goal was to create a "better Britain" in the antipodes by creating a society that was free from the rigid class structures that stratified English society into the upper and lower classes. The legacy of this history is expressed contemporaneously through what New Zealanders refer to as "tall poppy syndrome," a phenomenon by which those who have achieved notable success are criticized and resented because they have risen above their peers causing their "poppy" to stand out above the rest. From the perspective of many New Zealanders, neoliberalism poses a threat to their cultural values because it promotes individual prosperity over the collective good, thereby encouraging the singular growth of individual "poppies" rather than increasing collective prosperity.

Despite the adoption of a neoliberal worldview by political and economic elites during the past thirty years, Wilson argued that traditional values of fairness and equality continued to hold ground among many New Zealanders. As Wilson mentioned during her talk at the Arts Festival and discussed in her book, the TPP flew in the face of these

values. Rather than promote forms of freedom and fairness that supported the kind of cooperative society historically pursued by New Zealanders, the values undergirding the TPP were more in line with a United States brand of neoliberal democracy that privileged the rights of corporations and economic individualism to the detriment of more collectively-oriented forms of social development. As Wilson wrote in her book,

“the values of individuals (as expressed through public choice theory), and freedom (as expressed through free deregulated markets) that were advocated by supporters of neo-liberalism in the early 1980s were in sharp contrast to the values of fairness and equality of rights of individuals that had underlain New Zealand thinking for decades” (Wilson, 2015, Location 23 of 963).

Wilson goes on to say that the emphasis on freedom, specifically economic freedom as expressed through market deregulation, is more closely associated with the value system of the United States, whereas New Zealand’s value system tended to emphasize equality of rights over economic individualism. While the neoliberal experiment in New Zealand was presented by its supporters as promoting “fairness,” the increases in social and economic inequality that occurred following economic deregulation due to the dismantling of the welfare state and the selling-off of public wealth to private interests exposed neoliberal concepts of “fairness” and “equality” as rather different from those concepts as they were understood and practiced under New Zealand’s value system.

Throughout the transition from a social welfare state to a neoliberal state, advocates of market deregulation argued that converting state-owned assets and enterprises into private ownership was necessary if New Zealand wanted to succeed in the new global economy and maintain its status as a First World country. The TPP was seen as the next step in that project. However, the failure of the neoliberal revolution on the domestic front led many New Zealander’s to question whether realigning their entire social fabric to fit within a neoliberal paradigm was in their best national interest. Discussions around the TPP thus provided a platform for New Zealanders to express their anxieties about larger shifts in the global distribution of power, particularly their claims to first world status and their relationships to other western, developed nations. For example, the very first question Wilson received during the Q&A following her

presentation asked whether it was inevitable with globalization that nation states will be working together, requiring New Zealand to put aside some of its own priorities to maintain global harmony.

At the time of my fieldwork, the deal was still being brokered and the actual text of the document had not been released to the public. While the TPP ultimately stalled because of the United States' withdrawal from the negotiations, the fears it brought to the surface regarding the country's sovereignty and its implications for exercising certain rights guaranteed by New Zealand law contributed to feelings of marginality I heard expressed by New Zealanders regarding their ability to influence and participate in the global economy and in transnational processes of cultural production. These feelings of marginality often surfaced through humorous anecdotes about the New Zealand landmass being left off world maps. This became such a common trope that the New Zealand government got in on the joke at one point, using a map sans New Zealand on their website's 404 "No results found" page when using the website's search function (Martin, 2017). While presented humorously, these jokes belie a deeper resentment felt by New Zealanders regarding their country's international reputation, a resentment felt by those who often aspire to mimic the lifestyles of the celebrities they see depicted on television from the United States and Australia. The fact of being left off the map reinforces New Zealanders' sense of marginality at the international level.

From an economic standpoint, while New Zealand is often included in the block of "First World" nations because of its political, economic, and cultural ties to Europe, Australia, and the United States, this status is increasingly being questioned by New Zealanders, particularly in relation to the post-earthquake context found in Christchurch. While the three-worlds model for classifying national economies has largely been replaced with alternative models following the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, New Zealand remains relegated to a peripheral or semi-peripheral position even under Wallerstein's world systems theory for example because of the structural specificities of New Zealand's economy. While the country experienced some industrialization beginning in the 1880s, this mostly took the form of large refrigeration facilities oriented

around the production of lamb and mutton for export. Some light manufacturing appeared in the post-WWII period, but the New Zealand economy remained largely dependent on agricultural exports, specifically meat, wool, and dairy, to Great Britain throughout much of its history. When the United Kingdom joined what is now the European Union in 1973, New Zealand lost access to its primary export market and sought to diversify its economy by seeking additional trading partners in the Asia-Pacific region as well as strengthening its trade relationship with the United States. Despite these attempts at diversification, the New Zealand economy remained very susceptible to economic downturns and dips in commodity prices because of its dependence on niche agricultural products such as powdered dairy exports to a single market, China.

On the domestic front, the deregulation of markets and privatization of state assets in the 1980s paved the way for Kelsey's FIRE economy (2014). According to Kelsey, this is problematic because under the current neoliberal paradigm, projections for economic growth are dependent on the continued growth of the Chinese market for dairy exports, earthquake reconstruction, and positive net-migration (2014, 47). From Kelsey's perspective, this situation is unsustainable because it renders the economy hollow, dependent upon external factors for its continued growth. Furthermore, Kelsey and others have argued that since neoliberalization, New Zealand has taken on many of the elements typically characteristic of "Third World" or developing countries, namely, high levels of socio-economic inequality, declines in manufacturing and heavy industry in favor of service economies, specifically tourism catering to wealthy foreign tourists (mainly from the United States and China), and a reliance on foreign capital and investment that does little to benefit local economies. When considered in relation to longstanding racial inequalities between Māori and Pākehā, New Zealand's image as a developed First World country on the cutting edge of the global economy becomes less certain. When the Christchurch earthquake struck in February of 2011, it was met by this mood of political and economic dissatisfaction.

In addition to these broader concerns about the government's general lack of transparency and abuses of power articulated in the panels and forums I mentioned

above, Cantabrians were reeling from the recent dismissal of their democratically elected regional council, Environment Canterbury (ECAN), which was replaced with a government-appointed commission. Regional councils in New Zealand such as ECAN are primarily responsible for transportation and environmental management and are an important institution in New Zealand's system of elected local government. The democratic election of regional, district, and municipal councils to manage local populations and their environments had been a cornerstone of New Zealand's political culture, providing residents with a sense of control over their local affairs. The dismissal and subsequent government appointment of the council was interpreted by many as an instance of national government overreach, contributing to the already established distrust of central government. The passage of the CER Act in April 2011 gave control over the rebuild to yet another government appointed body, CERA, presided over by an appointed government Minister. Local residents interpreted this as yet another instance of the national government's disrespect for New Zealand's democratic institutions.

This pattern of disenfranchisement at multiple levels of government converged with the concern around the country's sovereignty in relation to the TPP negotiations and the perceived ongoing economic crises. By the time rebuild plans were being considered, Christchurch residents were already disillusioned with both national and local leadership, as well as harboring feelings of suspicion towards the neoliberal ideology adopted by the country's economic and political elites. The creation of CERA and the appointment of the much-maligned Gerry Brownlee as the "earthquake czar" provided Christchurch



Figure 30: DEMOCRACY NOPE. Street art satirizing Earthquake Minister Gerry Brownlee. Photo by the author, 2013.

residents with a rallying point around which to focus their frustrations with the status quo. The grass-roots rebuild and their practice of rebuild citizenship emerged as a local response to these larger international and national issues. Grass-roots rebuild actors claimed certain rights based upon their residence in the city, rights that were presumably open to everyone, regardless of race, class, gender, or ethnicity. In the next section, I explore ethnographically grass-roots rebuild actors' understandings of rebuild citizenship in post-earthquake Christchurch to show how it emerged out of those feelings of dispossession and disenfranchisement I heard expressed by Christchurch residents.

Narrating rebuild citizenship: The Christchurch City Makers and the promise of inclusive urbanization

In this section, I provide an overview of the grassroots rebuild project by focusing on the narratives and practices associated with the performance of rebuild citizenship. I show how the grassroots rebuild positioned itself as a populist movement that advocated for the concerns and desires of the people of Christchurch at large—concerns and desires that often stood in opposition to the aims and objectives of the government rebuild project. I do this by exploring ethnographically the recovery practices associated with this project, which were referred to by grassroots rebuild actors as “inclusive urbanization.” I argue that performance of these practices and belief in these narratives provided the contours of what I call rebuild citizenship, a political status that was believed to confer

certain rights to city residents by virtue of their desire to participate in the recovery. This status was in theory open to anyone who accepted the grassroots rebuild project's invitation to participate through their various institutions such as Gapfiller, Greening the Rubble, Life in Vacant Spaces, the Student Volunteer Army, and other local community organizations that partnered with these groups to restore some of the social infrastructure that was disrupted by the earthquakes.

About a month into my fieldwork, Coralie Winn, founder and Director of Gapfiller, invited me to an informal gathering of what she called “creative types” who were all interested in the rebuild and who got together once a month to share ideas and talk about what they saw happening in the city. They met at the Smash Palace, one of the few pubs to open in the city center after the earthquakes and a popular meeting spot for many people. The owners were well known within the central city community because of their willingness to take a financial risk post-earthquake and open their pub in what was at the time a commercial desert. The community showed their appreciation for the owners' risk-taking by keeping the bar well-patronized. Group members rather self-consciously referred to themselves as the Christchurch City Makers. They were people



Figure 31: Recovery art at the Smash Palace. Photo by the author, September 2015.

from all walks of life—PhD students, artists, engineers, non-profit and social services workers, and creative professionals—some of whom had moved to Christchurch from elsewhere and decided to settle there because of the potential they saw in Christchurch to provide the kind of lifestyle they desired, while others had lived in Christchurch prior to the earthquakes and therefore had strong attachments to it, motivating them to participate in its recovery. Topics of conversation ranged from dissatisfaction with CERA for forcibly buying local businesses to make way for the Stadium precinct despite the ongoing uncertainty around whether that anchor project would actually take off, to expressions of support for City Council for unveiling the first segment of what will eventually become a city-wide network of connected cycleways.

I came to realize throughout my fieldwork that this informal gathering was part of a much larger network of people who operated under various labels—the Christchurch city-makers, transitional-city movement, grass-roots rebuild—and who shared a single goal which was to enact their vision of Christchurch through inclusive participatory city-making. I came to understand the meaning of participatory city-making by volunteering with a few of the local community organizations and attending events explicitly focused on this topic. In August of 2015 I attended one such event—a panel discussion hosted by an organization called Te Putahi/Christchurch Centre for Architecture and City-Making, founded by Jessica Halliday, a local architectural historian and prominent figure in the grassroots rebuild. The panel was entitled, “The Future of Inclusive Urbanisation [sic] in Christchurch.” According to the organization’s website, Te Putahi is “focused on the current rebuild and on-going renewal of our city for the long term.” The website goes on to say, “our work will create space for people to learn and develop as citizens, neighbors, and as built environment professionals.” Here, Te Putahi is claiming that their goal is to help people develop into certain kinds of normative subjects, namely, citizens, neighbors, and career professionals. The kind of personhood imagined through the articulation of these subject positions is not identity based, i.e. based on ascribed statuses such as gender, race, class, and ethnicity. Rather, they are relational notions of personhood—citizen to nation; neighbor to neighbor; and career professional to industry. It is the

complex negotiation of these statuses and the relations they imply that constitutes what I call “rebuild citizenship.” The performance of this form of citizenship in service to collaborative acts of rebuilding is what grassroots rebuild actors saw as bringing about the social recovery of Christchurch. As the Te Putahi website goes on to say, “we understand that people engage for different reasons. We will work with those both affecting and effected by change to the built environment” to further their personal development as citizens, neighbors, and career professionals.

The abstract promise of inclusivity expressed on the Te Putahi website was given more concrete expression over the course of the panel discussion I attended, whose participants consisted of a local community board member, a community organizer, an academic, and a landscape design professional, all reflecting on the meaning of inclusive urbanization and how its principles could be applied to the post-earthquake context in Christchurch. When asked by the moderator what “inclusive urbanization” meant for each of them, the panelists’ answers offered a diverse perspective on the meaning of inclusivity. “It is about building cities for people, with people,” said one, “for the people themselves, not what we as leaders and representatives think they need.” Another panelist explained that for him, inclusive urbanization goes beyond just “people” to include non-human life and ecology as well. Another said an important area that must be considered are human rights and other frameworks that uphold human dignity. In relation to this last point, all the panelists stressed the importance of placing the treaty relationship and respect for the *mana whenua* at the center of any discussion of inclusivity.

As for the meaning of “inclusive *urbanization*,” Halliday, the panel’s organizer, said it referred to everyone sharing equitably the products and outcomes of urbanization. Another panelist said it was about the opportunity to build back a more inclusive city that allowed everyone to participate in the life of the city. “Contributing to” and “benefiting from” were key words that panelists used when explaining their understanding of inclusive urbanization. They referenced Council’s “Share and Idea Campaign” as a model for the kind of participatory city making they envisioned. As was discussed in an earlier chapter, “Share an Idea” was a six-week campaign held in 2011 that invited Christchurch

residents to offer up ideas for how their city should be rebuilt. The campaign received over 100,000 submissions and drew a crowd of 10,000 to its 2-day expo held at the Canterbury Arena. The council reviewed the submissions and organized all 106,000 around five key drivers to guide the redesign: a green city; a stronger built identity; a more compact central business district; an accessible city; and a place to live, work, play, learn, and visit (Sargent; 131). As Matthew Galloway, editor of *The Silver Bulletin*, a Christchurch-based design publication, said, Share an Idea was the first step towards “rebuilding a sense of place, and to promote a sense of democratised [sic] power” (Galloway, 113). Inclusive urbanization was thus conceptualized as both creating obligations, specifically the obligation to contribute, and privileges, specifically the privilege of benefiting from a city that participants helped to create.

Their emphasis on obligation and privilege aligns with more conventional understandings of citizenship in which the citizen-subject acquires its status through the performance of certain obligations (usually expressed in the form of taxes paid to the state) in exchange for certain privileges (usually in the form of legally defined rights). However, these are not the same kinds of obligations and privileges that grass-roots rebuild actors were referring to during the panel discussion. Rather, the obligations and privileges they saw as structuring what I refer to as rebuild citizenship were not authorized by the state, but rather they earned their legitimacy from what Marxist geographer and anthropologist David Harvey has referred to as rights to the city. According to Harvey, the right to the city is defined as “the right to change and reinvent the city more after our heart’s desire” (2012, 4). Claiming a right to the city involves claiming power to shape the process of urbanization, power to “shape the way our cities are made and remade” (2012, 5). While Harvey claims that in theory, this right is constituted by establishing democratic control over the deployment of surpluses (usually in the form of financial capital) through the process of urbanization, more often than not (particularly in the neoliberal era), these surpluses are controlled by private interests—the developers, investors, and political and economic elites—who shape the city after their own particular needs (2012, 24). It is for this reason, that Harvey says people rise up and

claim a right to the city, “as a cry for help and sustenance by oppressed peoples in desperate times” (2012, xiii).

Lack of democratic control over decision making processes and the distribution of resources was one of the primary complaints voiced by grass-roots rebuild actors regarding the way the Christchurch rebuild had played out. In an essay by local activist Barnaby Bennett, he criticized then-earthquake Minister Gerry Brownlee for scrapping plans for a light rail network that was part of the City Council’s Draft Central City Recovery Plan. This project had been one that emerged directly out of the Share an Idea campaign but was ultimately dropped from the Blueprint plan adopted by CERA because it was deemed a “luxury,” while “a large inner city covered stadium costing a similar amount to the light rail was included” (Bennett et. al, 96). The rejection of the Council’s Draft Central City Recovery Plan came up during the Te Putahi panel discussion as well when one of the participants said one thing she sees a lot of in talking to the community is that there is a lack of trust. She said people took Share and Idea very seriously, but Minister Brownlee saw the results and didn’t like it, so he put it aside and came up with his Blueprint instead. I heard versions of this story—that Minister Brownlee single-handedly discarded the Council’s plan because he didn’t “like it”—throughout the duration of my fieldwork. While it was most likely apocryphal, its repetition highlights the deep-seated feelings of resentment Christchurch residents felt towards the national government and what they perceived as its mismanagement and overreach into their local affairs.

CERA officials often claimed that the “blueprint” was the direct descendant of the Share an Idea plan, however the public tended to disagree with these claims, arguing instead that the blueprint was designed in service to the goals of political and economic elites such as Minister Brownlee, who saw Christchurch as a pawn in their personal quests for increasing their political and economic influence. As John McCrone, a senior journalist with *The Press*, said, “it turned out almost every element of the Blueprint was a proposal that had been kicking around in someone’s mind for a long time” (McCrone, 103). These were not the ideas generated by the public through the Share an Idea

campaign though. Rather, these were ideas whose origins lay beyond Christchurch and the earthquakes, part of larger projects and strategies controlled by people with little connection to Christchurch that required new locations to expand their reach and influence into previously untapped markets. As McCrone went on to say regarding certain precincts and anchor projects that appeared in the Blueprint, “the government had a national convention centre [sic] strategy. Rugby authorities had been agitating for a covered stadium. There was a view within the arts community that the Town Hall auditorium was too large [...] The QEII swimming pool was too far out as a competitive facility” (McCrone, 103). Christchurch residents’ belief that the Blueprint was not designed with their interests in mind was bolstered by comments made by Minister Brownlee, who claimed that once the rebuild was complete, Christchurch would be the sporting capital of New Zealand (Dally, 2013). When the Hagley Park Cricket Oval became the first anchor project to be completed in 2015 (just in time to host the Cricket World Cup), it seemed as though Brownlee’s predictions were coming to fruition.

At the heart of these discussion of what constituted inclusive urbanization was the idea that Christchurch residents, and Cantabrians more broadly, were mired in a multiplicity of relational networks that exceeded both the spatial and temporal limits imposed upon them by the disciplinary techniques deployed by the government rebuild and its neoliberal capitalist use of space (See Chapter 1). More specifically, events such as the Te Putahi panel discussion and others like it were attempts by local activists, artists, and community development-minded individuals to set the terms of the narrative about Christchurch and where it was headed. Disaster scholar Gregory Button (2010) has discussed the significance of the production and control of knowledge in disaster scenarios as one of the key elements in setting the tone for recovery and reconstruction. While states and corporations often use knowledge as a political tool to foment doubt and uncertainty amongst the general populace for the purposes of maintaining control (and profits), other segments of society, such as organized groups of citizens like the Christchurch City Makers, also contribute to the production of knowledge through narrative practices. In Christchurch, grassroots rebuild actors attempted to take control of

the narrative about the city's future through interactive art installations, public lectures, forums, and discussion panels, as well as through visual and print media. At this and other events like it that I attended during my fieldwork, grassroots rebuild actors constructed their own narrative about Christchurch and its post-disaster fate.

In August of 2015, this narrative of collective disenfranchisement was put on full display at a documentary screening held as part of the New Zealand International Film Festival. The festival marked the world premiere of the film, *The Art of Recovery* and was screened at the recently restored Isaac Theatre Royal located in the heart of the central city. The film depicted the post-earthquake rise of the transitional city movement and highlighted some of the activities that comprised the grassroots rebuild. According to the story told in the film, it was the combination of the resentment and disillusionment harbored by the community towards their leaders with the characteristically “No.8 wire,” DIY mentality of Cantabrians that created the conditions for the transitional city movement to emerge. The film presented a contrasting narrative focused on the attitudes and actions of government ministers and CERA bureaucrats that reinforced the “us vs. them” mentality that galvanized the grassroots rebuild to develop their practice of rebuild citizenship. The film portrayed CERA as full of out-of-touch bureaucrats making decisions about a city they had no connection to and little knowledge of, while the people on the ground were providing the kinds of social infrastructure needed to bring life back to normal. During the screening, the audience cheered when they saw people they recognized from the community or knew personally, while the interviews with CERA officials often elicited derisive laughter from the crowd. At one point, the audience even “boo-ed” when the Director of CCDU talked about the future of the transitional movement, saying that they had “done what we asked them to do” and that as the city transitioned into a more permanent state, they ought to “pack up and go home.”

After the film, Young took questions and comments from the audience. One audience member said she had never experienced a sense of community like she had that night in that room. Young said it was precisely that sense of community she mentioned that he was searching for when he made the film. This post-screening Q&A is a prime

example of the kind of community-building the grassroots rebuild hoped to accomplish through their advocacy of inclusive urbanization. By seeing their story told through film on the big screen in a landmark venue in the central city, attendees were able to see their efforts reflected back to them and have their stories, their values, and their hopes for the future expressed in a tangible way. It was through events such as this where the narrative of rebuild citizenship was put on full display that people were able to achieve a sense of belonging and camaraderie and to organize themselves against their perceived enemy, which in this case was represented by CERA bureaucrats, but was inclusive of political and economic elites more broadly that working- and middle-class Cantabrians saw as a threat to their way of life.

Rebuild citizenship as it was conceptualized and narrated in the film and in the panel discussions and community events I discussed earlier can best be characterized as a form of “insurgent citizenship” as described by James Holston in the context of building out the urban periphery of Sao Paulo, Brazil (2012). In that instance, Holston described how certain sectors of the Brazilian population were actively excluded from the rights and privileges associated with Brazilian citizenship because of how they were interpellated by state processes of social differentiation. As a response to that exclusion, dispossessed citizens claimed a sense of citizenship based upon their ongoing, if illegal, occupation, of land and the rights they believed they were due because of their long-term engagement with urban space. In the case of Christchurch, rebuild discourse as it was defined within the parameters of the CER Act, did not create a space for ordinary city residents to engage with the rebuild on their own terms. If we were to apply Harvey’s terms of the right to the city to the predicament faced by the grassroots rebuild, grassroots rebuild actors were denied access to the financial surpluses being distributed to other stakeholders, in this case property developers, professional design teams, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, rendering them unable to participate in the official recovery plans. The narrative grassroots rebuild actors developed in service to their desire to participate in the recovery was an attempt to reclaim some of the benefits of citizenship that they believed were stolen from them in the wake of the 2011 earthquake. Like Holston’s

insurgent citizenship, grass-roots rebuild actors claimed the rights of citizenship based on the fact of their residence in the city and the improvements they believed they had made to post-earthquake Christchurch through the transitional city projects they built.

Reconnecting Christchurch: Forming attachments to place through participatory city making

In this section, I discuss the ways in which the grassroots rebuild's vision for Christchurch was brought into being through the practices of participatory city making. I show how grassroots rebuild actors interpreted the rights associated with rebuild citizenship as a right to occupy space within the central city. This occupation was necessary, they claimed, to reconnect residents with the central city in effort to make the city meaningful in light of its decrepit state. However, as I will argue, this right to space that grassroots rebuild actors claimed as part of their bundle of rights to the city ignored the historical claims of Ngāi Tahu to that same land. I show how despite a disavowal of identity politics in their conceptualization of rebuild citizenship, its practice was inherently flawed because of the inability of the transitional city movement to overcome the legacy of Christchurch's colonial history as it related to the occupation of indigenous lands and processes of social differentiation.

I experienced first-hand the practice of participatory city making when I helped Greening the Rubble maintain one of their temporary park projects in July 2015. Once a month they group held a volunteer working bee to maintain their various projects around town. This month we were at one of their larger projects called “Gardens of Tranquility” on Manchester Street, right in the heart of the city center. When I arrived at the park, I found Gina and Duncan, co-founders of Greening the Rubble, already at work. This park was divided into 3 or 4 different sections that interpreted “tranquility” from a different cultural perspective and included a Chinese-inspired Zen garden, a *whare* to represent the Māori perspective, and a *malae* typical of many Pacific Islands cultures. Gina explained that the design came out of a competition held at Lincoln University in which landscape design students submitted their proposals and the student body voted on their favorite. When it came time to build the actual park, they invited local school children to come help with the planting and then had them come back periodically to maintain it and see how their garden had grown. The idea was to give the children a sense of ownership over the garden which would not only motivate them to take care of it, but also to innovate. This way they could form a connection to the place where they lived and went to school



Figure 32: Greening the Rubble's "Gardens of Tranquility." Photo by the author, February 2015.

instead of being told to wait for the rebuild to be completed before they start building that connection.

The idea of connecting people with the city to make it a meaningful place in the imaginations of residents was what initially spurred the idea for Greening the Rubble. Gina explained that the earthquakes kept a lot of people out of the city center for a long time, even well after the Red Zone cordon had been lifted because people just assumed there was nothing to do there. So, she said, one day she had an idea to do a “Transitional Trail”—a kind of walking tour of transitional projects to get people back into the city and show them that there were still things going on. She wanted to help people realize they could still have a future in Christchurch. Children’s participation—who were very young at the time of the earthquake was crucial to this project. They’ve never seen what it was before the earthquakes, said Gina, and that stifles what they can imagine it to be in the future. Getting them involved through building community gardens such as this one that involved schoolchildren, university students, and adult volunteers would give them a sense of ownership over the city, and hopefully encourage them to stay in Christchurch into adulthood since they would now be invested in its future success.

As we worked, Gina, Duncan and I engaged in conversation which mostly centered around the experience of the earthquakes and the controversy around the government rebuild plans. Gina said that before the earthquakes, she had never heard of a thing called “disaster capitalism” but having experienced the corruption at CERA, people really took it upon themselves to educate themselves about what was happening to their city. This discussion of the post-earthquake knowledge economy exemplified yet another function of the grassroots rebuild—to develop a specific political consciousness to further develop grassroots rebuild actors as a clearly articulated subject position. By talking about their experiences of marginalization and disenfranchisement while collectively transforming derelict urban spaces into parks and gardens by working the land with their hands, grassroots rebuild actors forged connections between their politics of oppression and their practices of participatory city making. These connections then served as the

basis for a form of political subjectivity that pitted the grassroots rebuild against the aims of the government rebuild, creating an oppositional dialogue between the two projects.

Feelings of disconnection—both from the city center and from the broader New Zealand citizenry—were what grassroots rebuild actors believed their practice of participatory city making would remedy. When the leaders of the transitional city movement described their motivations for engaging with the recovery in the specific way they had chosen—through temporary activation of vacant space—they often spoke of the loss they experienced at the hands of the earthquake. Specifically, they spoke of the loss of their livelihoods and the lack of clearly defined roles for them in the government rebuild plans.

Gapfiller co-founder and director Coralie Winn described being made redundant at her job at the Christchurch Arts Centre shortly after the earthquakes, a fate shared by many young creative professionals and artists:

I was on tour, performing up in Wellington when the first earthquake happened. That was on Saturday. I knew I was to go back to work on Tuesday. They rang me on Monday and said why don't you take another day off, just to adjust more to what's going on. I remember wandering around the city and seeing that buildings had fallen over and there were diggers everywhere. It was very strange and very upsetting, and I suddenly thought to myself, "I think I'm going to lose my job." And I hadn't thought about it at all before. I didn't think it was possible. I was just like, "yep. I think that's going to happen." And it did. So, the next day I got called in and they were like "we're really sorry but, we are going to disestablish position because we don't have the money. So, I was made redundant and by the end of September, I was without a job.

With no job and nothing on the horizon, Winn said that she had a lot of time on her hands to think about her next move. She explained that the post-disaster context made it difficult for someone with her skill set to find a clearly defined role in the recovery economy, and that her fate was shared by many other creative professionals and people involved in the arts in Christchurch. As she told me during one of our many conversations,

Creative people don't really know what to do after a disaster. There are clear roles for certain people after a disaster with certain skills. Architects,

construction workers, consents officers and council. . . all of that. They have very clear roles in term of rebuilding the city physically. But then there is a huge amount of people whose role isn't as obvious. So, we started thinking about how we could, in a small way, allow or reach out to people who were maybe creative people. . .and other people to kind of contribute.

It was these feelings of wanting to participate but not sure how to go about it that eventually got Winn and others to start thinking of what they could do to contribute. Winn said the idea for her first project came out of her experience of touring with a performance group in Wellington just prior to the occurrence of the September earthquake. She and her partner, Ryan Reynolds, had a seen a pop-up Garden Café in a car park in Wellington and thought about trying to recreate it in Christchurch. After putting up around \$7,000 of their own money and securing a site, Gapfiller's pop-up Garden Café ran for about 10 days in early December of 2010 and involved more than just serving up cuppas to locals. It also hosted live music, poetry readings, film screenings, and even petanque—a version of lawn bowling.

When I asked Winn to reflect on that first project, she emphasized the intense interest by the wider community it spurred to not only participate in that specific project, but to form a community of like-minded people focused on the creation of more temporary projects. As Winn explained,

that first project was pretty magical because lots of different people came. You couldn't kind of pigeonhole them as being one group of people, which was really interesting. Like it wasn't just like the cool artsy people, but they were the locals, kind of random semi-homeless people. And then there were people that came from some suburban areas, kids and their families. . .old people. It was really interesting for how diverse it was because it was very welcoming and it was just a really strong sense of coming together and share experiences and talk about the city, and just be amongst other people on this crazy kind of kitschy garden site.

Lots of people began offering ideas for what they think the sites can become, or what they would do, or what they had seen in other cities. Most days someone would say "I saw something like this" and it was often like, Berlin or New York or London, or when they had traveled overseas they had seen something like this. And I though "like this"

meant raw, on an empty site just taking over a space with people doing stuff.

According to Winn, Gapfiller's early followers were a diverse group of people from all walks of life who might not have had much in common before the earthquakes. What they shared was a desire to connect with each other and a reason to re-connect with the city and make it into a meaningful place that reflected their values and aspirations for urban life. Gapfiller provided a space, both discursively and physically, for people to act on those desires and forge the kinds of connections with their neighbors and fellow citizens following the disruptions caused to their lives by the earthquakes.

It was not long before Winn, Reynolds, and others involved in that first project began thinking about the longer-term trajectory of their newly formed organization and the wider transitional movement that developed around them. Winn said that following that first project, she began receiving ideas for other projects from people in the community. She said that was what convinced her and Reynolds that what they were doing had the potential to change Christchurch in the long term. In Winn's words,

We were suddenly projecting into the future like "holy crap what would happen if just half of these people suggesting ideas were empowered to realize them. What would that do for the city? What would that do for its identity, for people's relationship with it, for the energy of the city? What would it do for tourism in Christchurch? Christchurch could become known for it. And that was very clear. And even at that first project, to see that far forward into the future and what the potential was it was sort of like people could see through the project. It wasn't about necessarily what was there, because what was there was a bunch of junk really.

Winn and her collaborators interpreted that support and enthusiasm from the wider public as a mandate to institutionalize the transitional city movement to ensure it had a place in the post-recovery social landscape for Christchurch. It was not long before additional transitional organizations emerged, partnerships were formed with already existing groups, and a calendar of scheduled events and festivals began to take shape, and the emergence of The Commons, a home-base where grassroots rebuild organizations could come together and collaborate with each other. Greening the Rubble, the Festival of

Transitional Architecture (FESTA), Te Putahi/Christchurch Centre for Architecture and City Making, RAD Bikes (Recycle-a-Dunger), farmers markets, and other one-off type events all called The Commons their home.

For Winn, Reynolds, and other grassroots rebuild actors, participatory city making offered a chance to turn the disruptions caused by the earthquakes into an act of creative destruction defined by the transformation of the disastrous effects of the earthquakes into an opportunity to restore some stability to their lives. The grassroots rebuild provided a means for young creative professionals who did not have the hard skills, expertise, or social capital needed to participate in the large-scale development projects to turn the tragedy of the earthquakes into a positive experience for the development of their careers. During a conversation I had with Winn about the future of Gapfiller, she said the organization had successfully convinced CERA to include in its contract with Fletcher Construction, one of the large construction firms who provided the winning bid on the East Frame precinct, to incorporate interim community use into its strategy and design. She said the hope was that the temporary projects mandated in the contract might lead to the creation of neighborhood associations and community networks that could then shape more permanent outcomes for the neighborhood.

Similar to the ways in which Holston's insurgent citizens in Sao Paulo made claims to rights based on their experiences of building up their communities without the privileges associated with citizenship such as access to infrastructure, financing, and regulatory oversight, so too did rebuild citizens make claims to rights based on the transitional place-making activities they engaged in without formal recognition in the CER Act. Rebuild citizenship can be considered "insurgent" because it developed out of legalized forms of disempowerment, in this case, the structure of power established by the CER Act which did not leave room for the people who comprised the grassroots rebuild to participate in the city's recovery. Grassroots rebuild actors therefore developed alternative ways and means for establishing a role for themselves in the post-earthquake social milieu.

While grassroots rebuild actors focused on the act of collaborating and working together to transform vacant spaces in the city into meaningful places, this project required a reliable source of funding and access to land in the city center to ensure its long-term success. According to Winn, when the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority was first created her organization thought it would make things easier because CERA would be acquiring lots of land in the city. They initially thought this might be a good thing because then they would only have to deal with one landowner. However, Winn said that what they found in practice was that the bureaucracy and the risk aversion that comes with being a government department meant there was too much red tape to wade through so that very little CERA-owned land ended up being used. Most of the land they acquired access to came from private landowners. During a talk I attended by Ryan Reynolds at Te Putahi/Christchurch Centre for Architecture and City Making, Reynolds talked about an organization he created called Life in Vacant Spaces (LIVS) that was designed with the intention of lowering the bureaucratic barriers for doing these transitional, community driven projects by acting as a broker for temporary use leases. At the time of my fieldwork in 2015, LIVS had brokered leases for 165 community-driven, temporary projects.

As for securing a reliable source of funding, according to Winn, once the organizational infrastructure was put in place, they worked with City Council to develop a Transitional Projects Fund and an actual line in the budget designated for projects for temporary use. Gapfiller, Greening the Rubble, and LIVS, were all funded under that budget line and the Transitional City Projects Fund has supported other projects by private individuals and smaller groups who had applied for funds. The ability to access land in the city center for the purposes of temporarily improving it was ultimately the key factor in determining the success of the grassroots rebuild. Because of the work done by LIVS, grassroots rebuild organizations were able to carve out an institutional space for themselves, enabling them to claim the rights to the city through the practice of participatory city making they believed they possessed and that had been denied to them by the structure of power established by the CER Act.

Conclusion: Exposing the contradictions of rebuild citizenship

If the government rebuild used architecture and spatial planning to achieve its goal of disciplining the people of Christchurch into an economically efficient and productive population, the grassroots rebuild framed itself as an explicit retort to that project. Led by a group of mostly young, urban, and educated professionals, the spirit of the grass-roots rebuild was typified by more intimate place-making practices than those of government planners, designers, and project managers. Their approach to place-making tried to generate an attachment to place by reconnecting people with their city through what they called participatory city making. While at times, the grass roots and government projects overlapped, the simultaneous enactment of these competing approaches to place-making produced a dialogue amongst rebuild actors that ultimately politicized Rebuild discourse and framed the government rebuild as an act of biopolitical control over the residents of Christchurch. The grassroots rebuild positioned itself as opposing the biopolitics of the state, and instead encouraged the creation of a new social landscape through the regeneration of community networks and connections to place that were disrupted by the earthquakes.

Despite its opposition to the government rebuild, grassroots rebuild actors' demands for access to land in the central city ultimately undermined their vision for an inclusive, self-determined vision for the future of Christchurch because in narrating their own dispossession, they made no reference to the historical dispossession of Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri throughout the colonial period. Rather than align themselves with Ngāi Tahu and work together to resist the settler state by advocating for practices that would lead to the decolonization of New Zealand, the grassroots rebuild was made complicit in the ongoing dispossession of indigenous New Zealanders. In the end, the grassroots rebuild's denial of identity politics in favor of a rights-based approach to gaining political power rendered their movement in structural opposition to the Māori rebuild. Rebuild citizenship thus became the property of non-indigenous Christchurch

residents and reproduced the very social divisions grassroots rebuild actors hoped to overcome through the practice of participatory city-making.

In the next and final chapter, I account for this lack of recognition of Ngāi Tahu's *mana whenua* by the grassroots rebuild by returning to a discussion of the Māori rebuild project and what Māori rebuild actors believed made Christchurch socially vulnerable. I argue that the production of social vulnerability in Christchurch was the result of ongoing racial antagonism between Māori and Pākehā. I show that within the context of Rebuild discourse, inter-racial antagonism remained the most challenging obstacle to achieving recovery. I illustrate these fears ethnographically by focusing on the controversy around proposed changes to the Victoria Square Park in central Christchurch to argue that claims to two separate and distinct demographic entities in Christchurch reveals the persistence and influence of racial thinking among both Māori and non-Māori residents of Christchurch for structuring discursive frameworks about the nature of difference in New Zealand.

Chapter 5

Revealing Christchurch: Anti-Māori prejudice and affective vulnerability

Caring for the people

One of the goals of the Māori rebuild project was to transform Christchurch, a place that was a hostile environment for Ngāi Tahu, into a welcoming one. Indeed, most of the Matapopore trustees expressed that their greatest desire in terms of outcomes was to transform relations between Māori and Pākehā. The mantra guiding the Māori rebuild project to “care for your people,” foregrounds the importance of enduring and reciprocal social ties and the creation of a caring and comforting community. It was believed by Māori rebuild actors that this—caring for the people—was the greatest mitigation strategy for responding to future disasters

While the denial of the Hine Paaka name for the Bus Interchange discussed in Chapter 3 served as a symbolic rejection of Ngāi Tūāhuriri’s claims to authority by the state, the precedent set by the Matapopore committee for offering cultural advice to design teams was willingly adopted by private construction firms as well as municipal and regional councils in Canterbury and the surrounding districts. Indeed, the topic of taking on non-government projects came up often during the monthly meetings. The value of Ngāi Tahu expertise was recognized and the obligation to consult with them began to be taken seriously by both public and private sector organizations. Looking at the situation from a purely institutional and legal point of view, it would seem that Ngāi Tahu’s and Ngāi Tūāhuriri’s desires for change had come to fruition.

However, despite this accommodation and cooperation at the institutional level, anti-Ngāi Tahu sentiment persisted in popular discourse. While the *iwi* made strides in building and strengthening local institutional relationships, Matapopore’s efforts did not seem to translate into a shift in negative local attitudes about Ngāi Tahu. Whether it be accusations of “selling out” because of their highly corporate culture and successful business portfolio, being labelled as “plastic” or “white Māoris” because of their history of intermarriage, or claims that they were not a real *iwi* because they lacked the deep cultural knowledge and language proficiency compared to that possessed by North Island

iwi, Ngāi Tahu continued to confront false representations of who they were and what they stood for. Rather than provide an opportunity to correct these misrepresentations, the earthquakes and the recovery period revealed the extent to which they continued to inform Ngāi Tahu's social position in Christchurch.

In this chapter, I argue that it was overwhelmingly believed by rebuild actors that what made Christchurch vulnerable to disaster, more so than a failure of environmental or ecological adaptation, was the failure of *affective* adaptation, namely, the persistence of racial prejudice against Māori-identified people in Christchurch. In other words, the pre- and post-earthquake embodied experiences of racism by Māori-identified rebuild actors served as the source of their feelings of societal marginalization, contributing to the weakness of social ties among differently raced groups in Christchurch. The social response to the earthquakes, rather than changing race relations in Christchurch, revealed the extent to which these embodied feelings of racial prejudice continued to structure group relations in Christchurch post-disaster. The cohesiveness of community ties has been shown to act as a source of strength and resilience in times of environmental catastrophe. The lack of such ties in Christchurch was retroactively recognized as the source of the city's vulnerability to a large-scale disaster such as the earthquakes, and according to Māori-identified rebuild actors, what served as the main challenge in overcoming the trauma of the disaster.

I show that from the perspective of Māori rebuild actors themselves, rather than serve as a source or factor in creating social change, the earthquake recovery revealed ongoing racial antagonism as the source of Christchurch's vulnerability. To make this argument, I show how historically Ngāi Tahu were raced as Māori and became the recipients of anti-Māori sentiment because of the conflation of tribal identity with a pan-Māori racial identity. This conflation emerged out of New Zealand's, and specifically Christchurch's, colonial history that created a structure of inequality between Māori and the white European community. I show how racial boundaries in the South Island have historically been quite blurry, yet their use persists. I argue that the persistence of racial antagonism stems from New Zealand society's emphasis on "culture" as the structuring

principle of difference within the country, which allows Pakeha to avoid confronting the racism that continues to affect Māori-identified groups and individuals. I show that despite the denial of its existence by rebuild actors, this logic of racial difference informed many of the rebuild outcomes. I illustrate this by focusing on the controversy around the Victoria Square redevelopment plan which forced the Matapopore committee to redesign their plans for the Square.

Anti-Ngāi Tahu prejudice and the construction of racial difference in the South Island

The desire expressed by Māori Rebuild actors to “turn things around” in terms of making Christchurch a more welcoming place for Ngāi Tahu belies the complexity of Māori and Pākehā (ethnically European and racially white) identities in Christchurch. The evocation of “our people” by Ngāi Tahu rebuild actors implies not only that Ngāi Tahu are a self-evident group distinct from other groups in Christchurch, but by implication that there is an equally self-evident group of non-Ngāi Tahu people who do feel at home in Christchurch. While people on both sides speak easily of “Māori” and “Pākehā,” as being easily identifiable, distinct categories, closer inspection of the supposed referents of these terms reveals that the distinctions they are meant to indicate are less obvious than it would at first appear.

In this section, I situate this discussion of race and identity against a discursive backdrop in which the centrality of the race concept for inter-group relations between Māori and Pākehā is denied in favor of a “culture difference.” I argue that the persistence of racial ideology, despite its denial by the ideology of biculturalism, obscured the long history of interracial marriage and prevalence of mixed-race people among groups of Ngāi Tahu and Pākehā that created what I call a situation of affective vulnerability. This refers to the negative feelings and attitudes that different social groups harbor against one another, preventing them from forming relationships across boundaries and maintaining harmful social divisions. Specifically, the categorical distinctions racial thinking created

within the Christchurch community continue to breed racial animosity and resentment between the two groups whose boundaries are quite fluid and not so easily definable.

In 1957, American psychologist David Ausbell traveled to New Zealand to develop an etic perspective on what he called the “New Zealand national character.” Entitled *The Fern and the Tiki*, the book that emerged out of this project was most notable for dispelling what was then, and what continues to be, a frequent claim amongst New Zealanders regarding race relations in their country: “the most successful mixing of two races yet achieved.” As Ausbell noted while ventriloquizing one of his interlocutors, “this is one thing we New Zealanders are really proud of—the way we handle our race relations” (1960, 150). Ausbell rightly pointed out that this idea was mostly confined to descendants of the European settler community, and that when Māori people themselves were asked about racial prejudice, they tended to relate experiences in which they felt marginalized or discriminated against because of their perceived racial difference from the white, European majority.

I was introduced to this book by Te Maire Tau, Assistant Professor of History and Director of the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre at the University of Canterbury. Tau served as my primary interlocutor and access point for all things Ngāi Tahu, seeing as how he was a *rangatira*, or chief, of Ngāi Tūāhuriri. I was therefore under Tau’s *mana*, which granted me access to people and places that would otherwise have been inaccessible. Tau was thoroughly convinced of the truth of Ausbell’s thesis and believed that his book provided the most accurate description of the Pākehā character, particularly his racial prejudices. Tau believed Ausbell’s characterization of the New Zealand psyche still held true nearly 60 years later.

However, anytime I attempted to bring up issues of race with Tau or any other of my New Zealand interlocutors, they would dismiss my interest in race as a preoccupation of Americans that was not relevant to the New Zealand context. As Te Maire said once during one of our conversations, “You Americans see race in everything, you’re completely preoccupied with it. That’s not us.” Te Maire’s dismissal of my interest in race is interesting considering that he himself often stereotyped white people, particularly

ethnically European and racially white New Zealanders, also known as Pākehās, although his criticisms were often expressed through the idiom of cultural difference rather than race. Despite this conflation of race and culture, lines of difference continued to be drawn using racial logics. It is this very denial of the existence of race that continues to empower racial thinking in Christchurch.

Race was used in colonial New Zealand to advance what Veracini (2010) calls indigenous transfer—the biopolitical and discursive transformation of the indigenous population from a self-determined place of autonomy to a marginalized or subordinated social category in relation to the settler population. Scholars of colonialism have shown how racial identity is used by the state as a way of managing populations, specifically as a form of boundary creation to distinguish the colonizer from the colonized (Stoler 2002, Canessa, 2012). As Stoler pointed out, the persistence of racial categories into the present does not mean that the membership of those categories has remained the same. In other words, additional criteria other than just physical markers have historically played a role in determining membership in racial categories as the needs of colonial states changed in terms of population control and management.

In New Zealand, the shifting boundaries of membership were most often concerned with how to classify mixed-race people. Ngāi Tahu historian Angela Wanhalla has shown that during the early contact period, which she identifies as occurring between 1790-1840, inter-racial marriage between Māori and non-Māori was not only common but was encouraged. Wanhalla explains that this practice was a continuation of a longer Ngāi Tahu tradition of intermarriage between *iwi* members and non-Ngāi Tahu outsiders to forge economic and social alliances with other Māori groups (2010). These relationships were primarily entered into between Ngāi Tahu members and European whalers and sealers who were some of the first Europeans to venture south into Ngāi Tahu territory. These relationships were established for the same reasons as intermarriages between Māori groups—for economic benefits that association with one of the European trades brought with it. Ngāi Tahu recognized that there was great value in

these industries and wanted to share in the benefits primarily as a way of increasing their *mana*.

With the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 and the advent of Wakefieldian schemes for European settlement, the settler state had a vested interest in maintaining the group divisions that had characterized those earliest encounters between Ngāi Tahu and European traders for the purposes of securing land rights. However, by the time of formal settlement, there already existed a significant mixed-race population throughout the South Island. The colonial state recognized the existence of this group as a hurdle to plans for large-scale settlement, as they blurred the lines between colonizer and colonized which disrupted the power dynamics the British expected. As Veracini notes, settler colonialism as a form of domination was premised upon the displacement of the indigenous population by an exogenous other (2010). One of the ways that indigenous groups were distinguished from settler populations was through spatial segregation. According to Wanhalla, the creation of native reserves in New Zealand were meant to be separate and distinct spaces from European settlements (2010, 71). Spatial organization thus came to play a crucial role in establishing racial boundaries.

While Wanhalla's study focused primarily on the Otago and Southland regions, the same issues around boundary maintenance between the Māori and settler populations applies to the history of Canterbury as well. As historian Harry Evison described, Ngāi Tūāhuriri were interested in gaining a foot in the burgeoning farming industry that colonial developers saw as being the future economic driver of that region and desired to be close to the planned European settlements (1997, 177). However, as Veracini reminds us, the politics of colonial settlement required the segregation of the indigenous population from the settler population. As a compromise, colonial agents negotiated with Ngāi Tūāhuriri chiefs and created the Tuahiwi reserve on the outskirts of Christchurch, far enough away to keep Māori out of the city, but close enough to exploit their labor to assist with developing the city.

According to Ngāi Tahu scholar Hana O'Regan, these policies of segregation were not effective in preventing interracial marriages and these unions were in fact

encouraged in Canterbury as a way of physically strengthening Ngāi Tūāhuriri after the devastating raids by Te Rauparaha and Ngāti Toa from the north island in the decades prior to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. In addition to being weakened because of violent conflicts with these north island raiders, Ngāi Tahu were also vulnerable to European diseases introduced by the whaling and sealing stations. Ngāi Tahu encouraged inter-marriage, so their children would inherit genetic immunity to these diseases that older generations lacked.

It is this history of inter-marriage that serves as contemporary justification for Ngāi Tahu's distinctive position in relation to the European settler community as well as for the *iwi*'s difference from North Island Māori. One of the Matapopore design consultants commented on this during an interview, stating that

They [Ngāi Tahu] started breeding earlier, or at least that's what I was told. They started marrying earlier than up north. The sealers and whalers came down here and Ngāi Tahu people strongly encouraged them to marry-in because the children were dying of diseases, so they were desperately breeding with Pākehā to get the immunization for their children. Down at Moeraki there is an urupā, a burial ground just for the children. Starvation and disease.

In this passage, this design consultant drew on the unique Ngāi Tahu history of northern invasion and relations with European whalers and sealers to frame the prevalence of mixed-race ancestry amongst Ngāi Tahu as a response to the more destructive elements of the early colonial period. Rather than interpret this history as evidence of assimilation, this Matapopore arts consultant interpreted it as a Ngāi Tahu strategy to ensure the continuity of their lineages into the future.

Interestingly, this design consultant went on to claim that because of this history, Ngāi Tahu have different physical features than their northern counterparts. Inter-racial relationships were encouraged by *iwi* leadership itself because of the poor state of Ngāi Tahu's health which contributed to contemporary stereotypes that Ngāi Tahu have less stereotypically "Māori" features. As she explained it,

If you see a dark Ngāi Tahu person like my partner George, he's not dark from his Ngāi Tahu side, it's from the other side and that's pretty

common, although I don't know if it is with Te Maire. I'm not sure if he has North Island heritage as well. But most people that look Māori like Tui, they look Māori from their Northern side.

Here she claimed that those Ngāi Tahu people who do look stereotypically “Māori” inherited those traits from their northern descendants. What is interesting about her claim though is that her reference to Te Maire and Tui—two of the Matapopore trustees and prominent *iwi* members, undermines the claim she is making. She identified Te Maire and Tui as two Ngāi Tahu people who “look” stereotypically Māori, although she is unsure if they have northern whakapapa. This throws into question the idea that physical features alone distinguish Ngāi Tahu from both Pākehā and other Māori groups. This slippage is significant because it highlights the extent to which racial thinking is used by Māori to distinguish Ngāi Tahu from other Māori groups, particularly those that hail from northern *iwi*, when there are other more accurate ways of measuring difference, such as locale.

Maintaining a distinction between Ngāi Tahu and northern Māori is important from the perspective of Ngāi Tahu identity because the migration of northern Māori to Christchurch beginning in the 1940s as part of the nation-wide Māori urban migration contributed to the marginalization and erasure of Ngāi Tahu from Christchurch's urban landscape. As Wanhalla (2010) has described, the rise of mixed-race community in the South Island led to the development of a unique Ngāi Tahu identity that straddled traditionally “Māori” ways of life and settler lifeways in the early colonial period. When northern Māori moved to Christchurch and encountered Ngāi Tahu people, they did not conform to those northern Māori's expectations about how a “proper” Māori should look and act. This led to what O'Regan describes as feelings of *whakamaa*, or shame, on the part of many Ngāi Tahu about their own competency as Māori. The denial of cultural authenticity to Ngāi Tahu by North Island *iwi* further contributed to the stereotype of Ngāi Tahu as the “white” tribe.

Yet rather than represent the inauthenticity of Ngāi Tahutanga, the differences encountered by North Island Māori in the South Island had more to do with the historical

development, specifically the history of inter-racial relationships, that shaped Ngāi Tahu identity. Another one of the Matapopore arts consultants, who is herself from a North Island *iwi* and married into Ngāi Tahu, explained one such difference in these terms:

Up north, people live around them [*marae*] whereas down here they don't. People tend to live in the centers and then go out to them on weekends, and the reason for that is that they had to leave to survive. The best land was taken so they were left with the stuff that wasn't productive. So, they weren't able to sustain their lives which caused people to go to the cities, so that's how it evolved around here I guess. But up north people do live around them, so it's quite different.

Here this arts consultant described a difference in residence patterns between North and South Island Māori. The absence of recognizable Māori villages in the South Island coupled with their erasure from the urban landscape led Northern Māori to assume that Ngāi Tahu had either assimilated into Pākehā culture to the point of losing any trace of their “Māori-ness” or that they had experienced severe culture loss due to colonization and therefore needed to be re-educated about how to be properly “Māori.” O'Regan (2001) said that this created a situation in which Ngāi Tahu were erased from their own cultural space by other Māori who, in O'Regan's experience, often spoke or acted condescendingly to Ngāi Tahu because as she notes, their *marae*s looked differently than northern *marae*, their physical features were different from northern Māori, and their language and customs were different from northern Māori.

The idea that Māori culture is more normalized in a North Island context has implications for how white Southerners are viewed as well. Christchurch's “Englishness” was often contrasted with the more “Polynesian” character of Auckland, the country's largest city which happens to be in the North Island. Accounting for nearly one third of the country's total population, Aucklanders are derisively mocked by Cantabrians as “jafas”—(J)ust (A)nother (F)ucking (A)ucklanders—implying that Aucklanders are a “dime a dozen.” Auckland is framed as being a fast-paced cosmopolitan metropolis that is more diverse than Christchurch and offers a superior urban lifestyle. Māori culture is also seen as being more normalized not just in Auckland, but in the North Island in

general. In contrast, Christchurch was framed as a provincial backwater, dominated by a rural elite, more English than Polynesian in character, and most significantly, racially white. These prejudices seemed to structure a national imaginative geography that pitted north against south and undoubtedly influenced Ngāi Tahu's reputation as "white" Māoris. More importantly though, the lack of a strong Māori presence in the south was also understood as a negative reflection of Pākehā attitudes towards Māori in the South. In other words, because Māori culture was not as visible in the South, white South Islanders were seen as being more prejudiced against Māori because of a lack of exposure to Māori people and culture.

Whether or not the North Island was actually more accepting of racial and cultural difference does not matter. What matters is that these notions were deployed by Ngāi Tahu Rebuild actors as posing a challenge to their work to incorporate their values and have their presence in the city recognized. As one person who had lived for some time in Auckland said to me during an interview:

So, the challenge is that we live in Christchurch, the biggest city in Canterbury, and the biggest city in the South Island. It has a reputation as being very English in look and feel and flavor. One of the observations I've made coming south from Auckland in the North Island which is the largest city in New Zealand and also the biggest Polynesian city in the world, is that Auckland has a really strong Polynesian flavor to it. Māori culture is normalized up there, you see it, you feel it.

It is different in the South Island and it is different again in Canterbury. I saw down here was a really strong "old boy network" that still had a lot of influence in how things were done. And those old boys are the old landowners and farmers, so there is not as strong of an urban mentality down here. That is one of the dynamics of working down here which has been quite challenging for us.

In this passage, the interviewee drew on this national imaginary of north versus south, particularly Auckland versus Christchurch, to make a claim about the structural differences between the two places. Auckland is more diverse and presumably a more open society with greater opportunity for expressions of Māori culture within mainstream society, while Christchurch is ruled by an "old boy network," seemingly beholden to the

interests of large landowning families and rural farmers. This interviewee went on to describe what he understood to be the effect of these dynamics on Māori lives in the south:

I don't like to call my neighbors rednecks, but that's the reality of living in the South Island. My mother's parents were a mixed marriage, so a European-Māori marriage. They lived in the Māori village where my grandfather is from with a bunch of kids as they all has big families. When they got away on the weekend to have a bit of a breather or to be romantic with each other there was never a room available if my Māori grandfather inquired. If the European wife requested a room there was always one available. So, it's a hostile environment and it has been a hostile environment for a long time.

Here, the interviewee used an anecdote about his grandparents, a mixed-race couple, and their experience of discrimination when seeking accommodation for a weekend getaway to justify his claims of South Island "redneckery." When considered in the context of the previous transcript cited, the interviewee attempts to explain the discrimination experienced by his grandparents first as a product of a North/South division, then as part of an urban/rural distinction, and finally as the product of his grandfather's racial identification as a Māori.

What emerged from the testimony of these Ngāi Tahu rebuild actors was a complex understanding of racial identity in Southern New Zealand. The aversion by some to discuss the topic of race belies the extent to which racial categories continue to structure relations between different segments of the Christchurch community. Because of the history of inter-racial marriage in the South Island, racial identity became difficult to determine based on physical appearance alone, thus additional criteria were developed to categorize people. The spatial logics used by some Ngāi Tahu rebuild actors ultimately rest on a binary racial logic that pits Māori against Pākehā.

As I will show in the next section, the South's history of racial mixing coupled with the pressures of urbanization created a situation in which Ngāi Tahu were simultaneously forced into the city while having their presence (and contributions) to the community erased. The social response to the earthquakes revealed that while difference

was narrated through several different frameworks in Christchurch, race continued play a significant role in how people understood the structure of difference. Whether it be location (North or South Island), social context (urban or rural), or the ever-elusive concept of “culture,” race always lurked in the background of people’s experiences of difference.

The Māori Rebuild and the legacy of Ngāi Tahu urbanization

If the Christchurch Rebuild revealed the structural vulnerability of the city’s population, the question remains of how to account for that vulnerability. Developmentalist approaches to disaster understand vulnerability as the failure of human social systems to adequately adapt to the environments in which they develop. However, post-colonial and settler colonial contexts such as that in Christchurch challenge that definition because the locating of communities near or in hazardous or high-risk environments is no accident. Rather, proximity to hazardous environments is one of the characteristics for defining vulnerability. In other words, groups are not made vulnerable because of a failure of adaptation to the environment, but rather groups are made vulnerable because of their intentional placement near to or in hazardous environments. In Christchurch, more than a harsh natural environment, Ngāi Tahu were subjected to a hostile social environment, constituting them as a socially vulnerable.

Within the context of settler colonialism, the creation of vulnerable populations is what Veracini (2010) and Belich (2009) refer to as the “mass transfer” of indigenous populations out of existence. Veracini claims that all settler projects are premised on “cleansing the settler body politic of its (indigenous and exogenous) alterities” (33) and that this is accomplished through various practices of population transfer in which indigenous peoples are either physically removed from certain spaces or discursively transformed so that their identities are radically altered so that they no longer occupy a position of alterity vis a vis the settler population. In New Zealand, historically this process was directed towards Māori identified groups, and Ngāi Tahu were certainly no exception. Throughout the history of settler expansion in the Canterbury region, Ngāi

Tahu were physically transferred first to a reserve, then to the urban ghettos of Christchurch. This process rendered them socially and economically vulnerable because it instilled amongst the Ngāi Tahu population certain negative affective experiences including detachment, disinterest, and alienation from Christchurch.

This view corresponds to claims by critical indigenous scholars who argue that cities are not designed with the accommodation of indigenous peoples in mind (Coulthard, Smith, Simpson). Rather, cities are spaces created to (re)produce settler modernity which ultimately does not provide a discursive space for the actualization of indigenous autonomy. In the case of Christchurch, Ngāi Tahu were first pushed out of the city into the rural hinterlands and provided with the least desirable, least productive parcels of land, rendering them economically vulnerable. Tuahiwi *marae*, located about 30 kilometers north of Christchurch became one of the centers of Ngāi Tahu culture while Christchurch developed as a regional hub of settler culture. Yet, because of zoning regulations passed by local district councils in the 1950s and 60s, Ngāi Tahu could not subdivide their land amongst their children who were effectively dispossessed and forced to move into the city. Unsurprisingly, Ngāi Tahu were again provided access only to the least desirable, least geologically stable areas of the city, namely, the eastern suburbs of Aranui, Wainoni, Linwood and Phillipstown. These areas suffered the worst degrees of destruction from the earthquakes and were also the slowest to recover because of the high levels of human engineering undertaken those areas of the city to make the inhabitable.

As part of the emergent social project of settler colonialism, the urbanization of indigenous peoples represents what Povinelli (2011) called an act of social endurance in which the vulnerable are forced to cope with the conditions of normality produced in this case by the settler majority. Because Ngāi Tahu existed in a socially differentiated world in which their ways of life and their aspirations for the future were not materially supported by hegemonic discursive regimes and institutional frameworks, their legibility as subjects was dependent upon their engagement with ways of life that were not designed with them in mind. In other words, Ngāi Tahu's vulnerability stemmed from

their discursive marginality, preordained by the logic of settler modernity and enacted either through displacement, assimilation and miscegenation, or genocide.

In Christchurch, Ngāi Tahu erasure took the form of what Povinelli would call a “non-catastrophic” threat since it did not rely on an event such as an earthquake to pose a risk. Rather, settler erasure forced Ngāi Tahu to endure a hostile environment that led people to have negative feelings towards Christchurch. These negative feelings ultimately contributed to the vulnerability of the Christchurch community as a whole because of the indifference and resentment it bred amongst Ngāi Tahu identified people towards the city and the divisions it created within the Christchurch community at large. As another Matapopore design consultant explained,

In the history of New Zealand, we were expected to die at the end of the nineteenth century. There were active government policies to facilitate that, to break down the culture and destroy it. That has changed over time and we’re not in that space anymore, but that’s the legacy of where we live. Our elders felt that more strongly than the current generation but that’s the reality. There was a long period of time where our people were pushed to the margins, expected to die, and disrespected. So, do they want to come to the city? I don’t know. Do you want to go where you’re not welcome? That’s the situation that we want to turn around.

Here, this design consultant attributed Ngāi Tahu erasure, and the subsequent resentment it instilled amongst Ngāi Tahu people, to government policies that intentionally sought the systematic destruction of their culture and their way of life. Pushing them into marginal areas of the city which did not reflect their values nor recognize their presence created a kind of emotional detachment from Christchurch even though many Ngāi Tahu people reside there.

The effect of their displacement from their own lands to a place to which they had no connection, and which made no attempts to create a comfortable space for them created a situation in which even urbanized Ngāi Tahu continued to identify with the rural villages from which they had migrated. As a Ngāi Tūāhuriri kaumatua explained during an interview, despite having moved to the city, Ngāi Tahu, and specifically Ngāi Tūāhuriri people still considered the *marae* to be “home”:

At that time, our people were coming in. . . well because there was the work in the city. There was no work back home. We used to work at Marathon Rubber Factory we used to make gumboots and rubber thingies, whatever else they made. And Māori worked in those places. Or Brooks, the biscuit factory, Māori worked in those places. Litchfield, the shirt factory, Litchfield shirts, they worked in that factory. The work was in town, so you come to town. So, you're bussing all the time, so you might as well move in to town and find a place to live. Exactly like everyone else does. Which meant that we've left our place, somewhat lonely, but other people are still living at home, and we always go home. And that's our home, back there. And we go home because our people are there, the land belongs to us, we belong to the land, really, more than the land belongs to us. So, anything that's happening out there, we go. We want to be there, especially if there is a tangi on, we want to be there, because they are related to us, or they are friends of our relations. Or all that sort of stuff. And a lot of the tribal decisions were made out there, have been made at Tuahiwi.

This kaumatua's assertion that that they moved into town to be close to work "exactly like everyone else" belies the qualitative difference that Māori, and specifically Ngāi Tūāhuriri, experienced while living in the city versus the experiences of their Pākehā neighbors. The fact that "home" remained at the *marae* rather than "home" moving to Christchurch with them, speaks to the fact that the kaumatua's experience of living in the city was not in fact "exactly like everyone else."² For Ngāi Tahu people, "home" always remained the land to which one belonged, which in the case of the kaumatua quoted above was Tuahiwi *marae*.

² The opacity of where "home" is located for Ngai Tuahuriri people led me on an interesting journey during my fieldwork. I had an interview scheduled with Te Maire Tau that was supposed to take place at his office at the University of Canterbury. As I was preparing for the meeting, Tau's assistant emailed me to tell me he wanted me to meet him at "home." The assistant said to get in touch with Tau if I had any questions and then copied his entire contact information—phone number, email address, and physical address into an email that she sent to me. I assumed—wrongly—that "home" meant his house. I looked up the bus routes and while it was rather far off, if I took two buses and walked about 20 minutes I could arrive to our meeting on time. When I got off the bus I found myself turned around and could not find the address that had been provided by the assistant. Tau eventually called and asked where I was. I said I was looking for his house. "My house?! Why are you going to my house? There's not bus that goes to my house. I told Kirsty to tell you to meet me at home—at the *marae*!" He told me to stay where I was and within ten minutes he was there to pick me up and take me to Tuahiwi where we finally did our interview together.

This experience of both physical and emotional displacement had affective consequences on both those Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Tahu who first migrated into the city and for subsequent generations who were born in Christchurch. According to another of the Matapopore design consultants, the Māori rebuild had the potential to transform these negative feelings of being out of place and disrespected in the place where you live:

a secret to success is attitude. And how do we put a good attitude in people? I believe you make them feel good. And a people who feel good about themselves and their culture suddenly have a different perspective and approach to life. They are respected. I was talking before about the legacy of this landscape where our people, our culture have not been respected. I believe that has had a massive impact on our well-being that impacts our attitude and our approach to being healthy and well. This is why I believe that recognizing our values in the environment and building those values provides a platform for our people to feel better about themselves and their culture.

For this design consultant, the erasure of Ngāi Tahu identity from the Christchurch landscape had a profound impact on the general well-being of Ngāi Tahu identified people. In his eyes, the Māori Rebuild offered the promise of creating those attitudinal changes that he believed are the keys to social and economic success.

More than this though, Ngāi Tahu rebuild actors hoped for the acceptance and acknowledgement of Ngāi Tahu values by the Pākehā majority as one of the key outcomes of the Māori Rebuild. As one of the arts consultants worked on the Justice and Emergency Precinct explained,

I think recovery is about being involved culturally, which we didn't have the opportunity to growing up. I also I think it is about non-Māori learning about Māori as part of recovery. Everyone has to change.

This arts consultant went on to say that part of what she believed non-Māori must learn is the extent to which Māori culture and values have always been central to crafting and developing elements of a national New Zealand culture. As she explained

I think lots of parts of New Zealand culture are influenced by Māori culture, but they are not recognized as being of Māori influence. So, I think that's really cool if people see Māori culture and say "ah crikey that's part of our New Zealand culture, and yeah we do welcome people

into our homes and we are friendly, and we are nice, and we actually get that from the way Māori have taught us, have shaped us.” So just a recognition of things that are Māori and a recognition of the value that it brought to the country.

I think it’s good for Māori because for a long time there was shame around being Māori but now it’s sort of slowly getting recognized and we are really proud of who we are and what we’ve done.

In this passage, this arts consultant is stating that not only does she believe Māori culture has shaped a broader national ‘New Zealand’ culture, but that the contribution of Māori culture to that national culture is not recognized because of anti-Māori prejudice by the Pākehā majority. She also mentioned the shame that practitioners of Māori culture used to experience. She thought that Pākehā appreciation of Māori culture would finally put to rest those feelings of shame by affirming the value of Māori culture while also instilling an appreciation amongst Pākehā that they themselves have benefitted from Māori culture.

According to the members of the Matapopore committee, building mutually beneficial relationships between Māori and non-Māori was the primary way to overcome these feelings of shame and moving past the harmful processes that created Christchurch’s vulnerability. One of the Matapopore arts consultants explained the importance of relationship building for the Rebuild by drawing on her own professional experience doing bi-cultural awareness training:

So, it is about building a good relationship first with the people you are teaching so they are comfortable to discuss their guilt or discuss their anger or to discuss anything. For example, they might think it is unfair that Ngāi Tahu have been given this money, that it has given them an unfair advantage. I think it is really important to not have antagonism, but I also think it is important to just be in a space where you can talk it out because that is what leads to progress. I don’t think antagonism is helpful at all.

And so that’s what we do. For example, with te reo [Māori language], we explain to them that you have to practice good pronunciation because that is actually part of the worldview. Or we take them on to a *marae* to actually experience stuff. But we take them on in a supportive way, not to confront them. More to support them and give them the tools they need so that when they do step onto the *marae* they feel supported and feel comfortable, so they can explore their thoughts.

Here, this arts consultant is expressing the idea that engaging with anti-Ngāi Tahu attitudes and anti-Māori prejudices at a substantive level and creating spaces in which both sides can address them is the way to foster meaningful cross-cultural relationships. Non-Māori will only overcome their hesitancy to engage with Māori if they feel supported and welcomed.

This design consultant provided a specific example of this tactic from her experiences working on the Rebuild regarding some artworks that the Ministry of Justice wanted to include in the new Justice and Emergency Precinct which is one of the 17 government anchor projects. These were Māori-produced artworks that the Ministry wanted placed in the new building. Matapopore were open to including some but not all because they were not actually produced by Ngāi Tahu artists using Ngāi Tahu values and principles of artistic expression. Rather, they were produced at a time when Ngāi Tahutanga was not recognized as a legitimate expression of Māori culture because of the dynamics between Ngāi Tahu and the non-Ngāi Tahu Māori population in Christchurch described in the previous section. She explained the situation in these terms:

the Māori Land Court have old artworks that they wanted to bring through, and our arts advisor was not keen to have a large amount of these. From the perspective of the Māori Land Court, they had had them at the Court for a long time and they were very familiar and very important to them, so we had to explain that even though those artworks depicted Ngāi Tahu ancestors, they weren't done by Ngāi Tahu artists, and they weren't done with a Ngāi Tahu aesthetic. They came from a period of time where someone from up north sort of came down and said "this is how you do it," and so we had to explain that history and to explain where Ngāi Tahu has been in the last 20-30 years, gathering momentum and making their own mark and doing it their own way in order for them to understand why we would prefer to have new artworks that represented where we were at now rather than look at some things from the past that sometimes bring quite sad memories.

And having that knowledge, having been able to have an open relationship where we can take them through that helped them understand. I think they appreciated our help, but you have to have the relationship in place first. You have to have good relationships so that you can sit down

and talk openly and honestly. And that's what I try to do with everything, just try and build the relationship.

In this passage, this arts consultant explained that because she had good relationships with the project team from the Ministry of Justice, she was able to explain to them why their ideas about what kinds of artworks to include were misguided and did not align with the values outlined in the project narrative provided by Matapopore. Rather than engage each other antagonistically, which she believed was the route some involved would have preferred to take, the situation was resolved with a positive outcome that affirmed the contributions of both sides.

While rebuild actors working at higher levels of concept design and strategy were committed to cooperating and honoring the Treaty's principle of partnership, the same could not be said for the general Christchurch population. During an interview with one of the Matapopore Trustees who traces his descent from Ngāi Tūāhuriri whanau and who worked as a cultural advisor to the Department of Conservation prior to joining the Matapopore team, he explained why from his perspective there was such intense opposition to Ngāi Tahu involvement in the urban redesign of the city. Citing a project he worked on involving the Otakaro/Avon River Precinct, one of the Matapopore Committee Trustees explained he was brought on-board to help restore the health of the river, which cuts directly through the city center, for the purposes of returning it to its status as *mahinga kai*, or an important food gathering site for Ngāi Tūāhuriri. From his point of view, while this project was certainly informed by Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri values as they pertain to the use and exploitation of natural resources, the benefits of improving water quality and rebuilding the ecosystem so that fish would return and could then be harvested from the river for consumption was a benefit for all Christchurch residents, whether Ngāi Tahu or not.

Despite this, the plans around rehabilitating the Ōtakaro/Avon River remained controversial. A Trustee of the Matapopore Committee discussed a plan to restore a specific section of the river located in the central city:

there is a row of poplar trees that is an iconic landscape for Christchurch. If you take a photo of it and you show it to any person from Christchurch, any person from around the world, they can immediately pinpoint the location. So, there is this fear amongst the people of Christchurch clutching their anxieties that “aw, these Māoris are going to ask for all of these trees to be cut down and all of these cultural landscapes that we are familiar with are going to disappear out of sight.” And nothing could have been further from the truth. We didn’t want less trees, we wanted more trees. We didn’t want to achieve more trees by cutting any down. There is this perception that because we wanted native trees and the use of planting of native trees to bring back native species, there is a perception in the community that to do that we would be cutting down all these introduced species of trees.

Here, this Matapopore trustee is alluding to a fear amongst those whom he calls “the people of Christchurch” that calls for the reintroduction of native plant species meant the destruction of their own cultural landscape. From his point of view, the anxieties of Christchurch’s mainstream majority take on a structure of “us versus them” in which the inclusion of a Ngāi Tahu perspective or recognition of Ngāi Tahu’s presence in the community is interpreted as an erasure of settler culture.

The fears expressed by Pākehā Christchurch about the loss of their “cultural landscapes” indicate that they see their difference from Ngāi Tahu not in racial terms, but in terms of cultural difference. The idea that the non-Māori Christchurch majority sees itself as having a completely separate and distinct cultural identity from that of Ngāi Tahu signals a shift from a biologically informed way of understanding and articulating difference to a cultural one. From the Matapopore Committee’s point of view, overcoming that separation is one of the outcomes, or changes, they hoped to see because of the Māori Rebuild. Indeed, people often spoke as though these attitudes had already changed. Yet based on the testimony of many of the Matapopore Committee members, it was clear that these attitudes still divided the community. Most importantly though, while “culture” was evoked as the point of difference motivating these fears, the lines of “culture” tended to conform to the historical boundaries of racial categorization.

These negative attitudes fomented anxiety amongst Ngāi Tahu identified Rebuild actors, causing them to intensely guard their work from popular scrutiny by not releasing

any information about their involvement in the anchor projects. I recall one Matapopore meeting in which my presence was questioned by one of the Trustees who feared that I would divulge information about the anchor projects before the Committee was ready to do so (“I’m just making sure you’re not going to shout it to the world”). I was sworn to a vow of secrecy, I was made to return all materials distributed during meetings, and research participants were instructed not to talk about certain topics during interviews. Their guarded approach to their work ultimately stemmed from fear of anti-Māori backlash by the general public about the perceived value (or lack thereof) of their contributions.

The Victoria Square redevelopment controversy

These fears of an anti-Ngāi Tahu backlash seemed to be justified when Matapopore started consulting on the redevelopment of Victoria Square. Situated on the corner of Armagh and Colombo Streets just north of Cathedral Square in the Central City, Victoria Square might first appear as a small blip, an excuse for some green space to break up the monotony of the urban street grid and a way to fill out a block of land whose suitability for large-scale construction was compromised because of the angle at which the Avon River cuts through it. A statue of Queen Victoria, British Monarch and signatory to the Treaty of Waitangi sat at its center, accompanied by a statue of Captain James Cook. There was also a large illuminated fountain—the Bowker Fountain touted as Australasia’s first illuminated electric fountain—and a carved *pou* or post that was installed in the 1990s by the City Council to commemorate the signing of the Treaty. The square experienced a small amount of infrastructural damage from the earthquakes, but aside from some cracked paving stones, the square remained largely intact, especially when compared to the surrounding blocks.

As one of the Matapopore Trustees pointed out to me, there is really no logic connecting the statuary, the *pou*, and the fountain. While Queen Victoria and Captain Cook are both important figures in the general history of the country, there is no real connection between the two, and little to no connection to Christchurch or the Avon

River. Cook was long dead by the time Victoria took the throne. Contemporarily, the Queen was quite beloved by Māori and specifically by Ngāi Tahu since she is associated with the Treaty and the beginning of the partnership between the British and Māori, Cook had virtually no role in their collective memory. The carved *pou* was commissioned by the city council in 1990 to commemorate the signing of the Treaty, but as it was pointed out during one of the Matapopore Committee hearings, the artist was not Ngāi Tahu, but rather came from a North Island *iwi* and therefore does not reflect a Ngāi Tahu aesthetic, nor was it made using Ngāi Tahu techniques or materials found within the *iwi*'s *rohe*.

There is certainly no indication of the square's local historical significance. During Christchurch's formative years in the mid-nineteenth century as a fledgling colonial settlement, the settler population had not yet reached the status of statistical majority and still relied on trade with Ngāi Tūāhuriri, the local Ngāi Tahu hapuu, for certain goods that only those with access to mahinga kai, or food gathering sites, could provide. During this time, Victoria Square was known as 'Market Square,' and was a place where Ngāi Tūāhuriri traded with the settler community. Each group provided goods and services to the other that they could not provide on their own. This history offers an early example of the kind of cooperative, reciprocal relationships between Māori and Pākehā that stand at the center of the Māori Rebuild and illustrates the kind of partnership guiding contemporary Treaty politics.

Having that Treaty relationship recognized served as the primary goal of the Matapopore Committee for Victoria Square and served as a topic of conversation during a number of their monthly meetings. During one meeting, the Ngāi Tahu commissioned artist for the Victoria Square project attended and provided an explanation of how she approached the plans for redevelopment. She explained that based upon early feedback they had received from the general public, Victoria Square was a site for the enduring symbol of Queen Victoria within the wider Christchurch imagination. The challenge from their point of view then became how to take those symbols that are already present and make them signs of Ngāi Tūāhuriri's *mana*, even Queen Victoria. She explained that the guiding principle of her work was about respecting the covenant between Ngāi Tahu and

the Crown. The artwork itself would incorporate the names of Ngāi Tūāhuriri treaty signatories.

The return of the carved *pou* was discussed, since it had been removed from its place in the river due to some in-river works that were done. The Council was championing its return to the original location. The group decided this was inappropriate because it was not made by a Ngāi Tahu artist. A local resident artist made the *pou*. So, while the *pou* was commissioned to commemorate the signing of the Treaty, it was not in fact a reflection or assertion of Ngāi Tahu's *mana*. City Council it seemed did not have an awareness of the nuance surrounding the meaning of the *pou* and believed that since it had been carved by a Māori artist for the 1990 Treaty commemorations, it aligned with Matapopore's vision of celebrating the covenant embodied in the treaty. From Matapopore's point of view, the *pou* was a reminder of the erasure they experienced at the hands of northern Māori who migrated to Christchurch in the latter part of the twentieth century and set the terms for expressions of Māori culture and identity, violating Ngāi Tahu's *mana whenua*.

Their misunderstanding with the council was only the beginning of the pushback Matapopore received regarding the Victoria Square redevelopment. When public consultation on the proposed changes began, there was significant opposition from the general public about adding any new features to the park. One of the Matapopore trustees recalled this experience during our interview:

Our key aim for the Victoria Square redevelopment for instance was somewhere in that square, some acknowledgement of Queen Victoria, who was queen when the treaty was signed and whose name is mentioned in the Treaty of Waitangi, and some mention of the [Ngāi Tahu] signatories of the Treaty. That's it. That was the thing we wanted, and the people of Christchurch clutched at their anxieties again as if to say, "aw no!" We didn't want to take her [Queen Victoria] out. We didn't want it moved away, all we wanted was something in there to acknowledge the relationship between the two as equal partners. And so that created hysteria of its own. And so that whole proposal because of the public outcry got thrown out.

Part of our role has been communicating to the public that we're not going to paint *kowhaiwhai* patterns on every building in Christchurch, and we're not going to change the colors of the statues, so they look a little more suntanned and a little bit more like us or paint *mokos* on them." But, at key locations around the city, whether they have a cultural, historical use for occupation or food gathering or whatever, we would like to see some outward physical acknowledgement of that history, and in the same way, some acknowledgement of that relationship between the Crown and the signatories.

This trustee's depiction of the backlash to Matapopore's plans is reminiscent of his account of the plans to reintroduce native plant species to the Avon River ecology that I mentioned earlier. His statements making light of accusations that they were going to change the complexion of statues imply that he saw the normative Christchurch public as white and of European descent and that they have little desire to forge common ground with Māori or to promote visible markers of Ngāi Tahu identity within the city.

Despite these prejudices, this trustee claimed to see some positive change happening in terms of the kinds of attitudinal adjustments Matapopore consistently mentioned as one of their priorities. Similar to the experiences shared by the arts consultant regarding her cultural advising that I mentioned above, this trustee claimed that when time is taken to build understanding and foster relationships across perceived lines of difference whatever those may be, meaningful change can occur. While the artworks commissioned by Matapopore were ultimately put in place, the carved *pou* was reinstated and publicly recognized as a symbol of Ngāi Tahu's *mana* despite the discussions I witnessed about its unsuitability for this purpose.

Conclusion: Colonial trauma and affective transformation

In this chapter, I argued that the rather than act as an agent of change, the Canterbury earthquakes revealed anti-Māori racism the underlying form of social vulnerability that caused the social, political, and economic crisis that ensued. I have explained how racial categories and boundaries are blurred in the South Island because of that region's specific history of encounter and intermarriage between Māori and Pākehā.

The fears regarding the loss of Pākehā culture stem from the difficulty of maintaining group boundaries in a place where traditional markers of racial difference are difficult to perceive because of the long history of interracial marriage in the South Island during the colonial period. Culture thus came to stand in for race. However, over time as biological racism and racial thinking receded from New Zealand's national consciousness, culture emerged as the marker of difference between the white, European settler majority and the indigenous Māori minority. Racial difference transformed into "culture" also became spatialized, as Christchurch developed its English identity. The city thus became associated with the white, Pākehā society, while the rural outskirts were the appropriate place for non-white Māoris, even though a sizable Māori community existed in Christchurch's eastern suburbs since the 1950s. Despite this, Māori culture was thought to be found "out there," beyond the confines of modern, English Christchurch.

When Māori rebuild actors discussed the transformative potential of the Māori Rebuild, they all framed their desires in terms of overcoming race-based antagonism between Ngāi Tahu and Pākehā Christchurch. Whether it be resentment engendered through genocidal government policies, the erasure of Ngāi Tahu's presence in the city despite being forced to move there to provide a convenient labor supply, or the unacknowledged contributions of Māori to a national New Zealand culture, Ngāi Tahu-identified rebuild actors pegged the success of the Māori Rebuild on its potential to overcome this racial antagonism that is the legacy of Christchurch's colonial experience. Rather than act as an agent of change itself, the earthquakes revealed the extent to which Christchurch's vulnerability was the direct result of this legacy.

Conclusion

Repairing Christchurch

Overcoming *ressentiment*

Indigenous groups are often viewed by states as harboring unhealthy feelings of anger and resentment that are believed to produce increased social instability and political violence (Coulthard, 2014: 107). However, in the post-earthquake context in Christchurch, those kinds of feelings did not necessarily map onto the colonizer/colonized binary, but rather cut across class and political affiliation in addition to race and ethnicity. While the neoliberal settler state developed an outlet for the expression of indigenous resentment through the adoption of strategies for recognition and reconciliation that allow for a more productive engagement with those negative feelings, Pakeha resentment had not yet been discursively articulated to be legitimized as anything other than Pākehā fragility. This was illustrated in the Victoria Square controversy in which plans to introduce Ngāi Tahu elements into the Square were opposed by a vocal minority of local residents.

Recognition politics, and more recently what Sean Glenn Coulthard referred to as reconciliation politics, were attempts by settler states to restore estranged or damaged social and political relationships to ease the anger and resentment that are the lingering affects of colonial injustices (2014, 107). The Waitangi Tribunal and the Deed of Settlement on the Ngāi Tahu claim are examples of Coulthard's politics of reconciliation and are important institutional mechanisms for overcoming the feelings of anger and resentment that persist due to the suppression of identity related differences in social and political contexts. Claims settlements almost always include an apology from the Crown for whatever injustices are said to have occurred as documented in the Tribunal reports that accompany the settlements. The problem with these processes though according to Coulthard is that in settler colonial contexts where there was no transition from a colonial authoritarian past into a liberal democratic present, a transitional period must be fabricated in which the abuses of settle colonialism are relegated to the past to redeem the present and achieve the goal of reconciliation. The ongoing resentment that indigenous

peoples feel towards post-colonizing states and settler populations is thus delegitimized since it is believed that the state has atoned for the sins of its past.

However, Coulthard argues that the true power of resentment does not lie in its accommodation by reconciliation politics. Rather, he argues for an alternative understanding of resentment that sees it is a positive, productive force for change rather than an inherently negative and violent affect of marginalization. This is not the *ressentiment* described by Nietzsche. That resentment, according to Coulthard, was an “irredeemably vengeful, reactionary, and backward-looking force” that incapacitates people in their ability to overcome past trauma (2014, 108). Rather, the resentment described by Coulthard is “a politicized expression of Indigenous anger and outrage directed at a structural and symbolic violence that still structures our lives, our relations with others, and our relationships with land” (2014, 109). This form of politicized resentment recognizes that the pain and suffering experienced by indigenous peoples is a symptom of structural injustices perpetrated by the state.

As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the structure of power established by the CER Act and interpreted by me through the concept of Rebuild discourse highlighted the need for a reconfiguration of political alliances to resist attempts by the neoliberal settler state to re-settle Christchurch in the name of a neoliberal elite class of capitalists and government officials. Unfortunately, because of the persistence of racial thinking amongst many Christchurch residents, the cross-racial alliances needed to resist the intrusion of state power into the recovery of Christchurch were not realized.

Each chapter of the dissertation highlighted an instance in which the practices associated with one of the rebuild projects that comprised rebuild discourse contributed to the dispossession of certain demographics of people. In Chapter 2, I explored the planned gentrification of the Inner-City East neighborhood that was part of the government rebuild project and which required the displacement of that area’s traditional residents, to be replaced with a new resident population of affluent, young, urban professionals. In Chapter 3, I analyzed the Māori rebuild project to show that while it did provide Ngāi Tahu with an opportunity to have their presence in the city recognized through the

incorporation of their cultural narrative into the built landscape, the process through which that recognition occurred was flawed because it did not respect the *mana whenua* of Ngāi Tūāhuriri, nor did it result in the affirmation of Ngāi Tahu's *mana* as I illustrated through the example of the rejection of the Hine Paaka name for the Bus Interchange. In Chapter 4, I showed how the practice of rebuild citizenship adopted by grassroots rebuild actors required the occupation of land in the central city, land whose governing authority was contested by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri. Finally, in Chapter 5, I argued that the persistence of racial antagonism amongst Christchurch residents contributed to the lack of mutually beneficial relationships and cross-racial networks that otherwise could have contributed to the resistance to state power embodied in the CER Act. Ultimately the Christchurch Rebuild failed to address the underlying issue of racial antagonism that continues to inform New Zealander's understanding of social difference.

The stories I have told about each of the rebuild projects highlight the fact that the settler state was invested in more than just the dispossession of Māori people, but anyone who did not subscribe to the neoliberal ideology espoused by the transnational capitalist elite who co-opted the Christchurch Rebuild for their own benefit. As I have shown throughout this dissertation, the neoliberal settler state mobilized the Christchurch Rebuild to reassert its claims to local territorial sovereignty considering its waning ability to practice an inter-national sovereignty in relation to the desires of transnational corporations and more powerful states such as Australia and the United States who have vested economic interests in maintaining the country's Anglo-settler dominance. The politics of reconciliation are no longer adequate to address the complex social and political entanglements that threaten state power. Rather, all they serve to do is reinforce negative feelings that Māori and Pākehā harbor towards each other.

The bifurcation of personhood in New Zealand into categories of Māori and Pākehā—categories defined not only through race but through the intersection of race, class, and ethnicity—illustrate what Ann Stoler called the durability of imperial forms (2016). By this, Stoler referred to the multiple forms of power that operate

simultaneously to give form to the present. Speaking of durabilities rather than legacies frames colonial holdovers not as isomorphic to their past selves. Rather durabilities recognize the affective power of imperial forms in the present as a consequence of their historical origins (but not determined by those origins). In other words, durability does not imply a repetition or extension of the past into the present, but a recognition that the legacy of colonial histories impinges on the present in new and novel ways through the enduring strength of social and cultural institutions, affects, and other forms of social infrastructure that locate their *raison d'être* in the history of colonial invasion and imperial domination.

In the case of Christchurch, the durability of colonial practices of othering served as the barrier preventing rebuild actors from realizing their desires for post-earthquake Christchurch. While the government, grassroots, and Māori rebuild projects were motivated by the same desire to positively transform Christchurch, the subjectivation of rebuild actors in terms of structurally-opposed identities challenged their ability to transcend those identities through their practices of recovery. In each of the preceding chapters, I outlined the different political projects that comprised Rebuild discourse and how those projects were ultimately extensions of and reactions to the settler colonial project begun in the nineteenth century and not necessarily confined to the temporal limits set by the earthquake recovery. While the grass-roots and Māori rebuilds were both reacting and responding to the reterritorialization of Christchurch by the neoliberal settler state, they were unable to align themselves and work together to challenge the ongoing domination of Christchurch. As I have shown in each of the chapters of this dissertation, it was the ingrained cultural belief that Māori and Pākehā occupy different worlds and therefore have incompatible interests when it comes to governing the nation that prevented grass roots and Māori rebuild actors from developing alliances to challenge state power as it was exercised in the context of the Rebuild.

While there is no easy answer for how to build these alliances or bridge what are perceived as incommensurable differences between te Ao Māori and te Ao Pākehā, Māori anthropologist Ann Salmond has offered an interesting challenge to the notion of

ontological incommensurability that seems to plague Christchurch and New Zealand society more broadly. Salmond approaches the problem of difference in New Zealand not as a problem of the incommensurability of worlds, but rather as a failure to recognize that incommensurability, or in her words, cosmo-diversity, as a force for adaptation (2017, 2). Rather than see difference as something immutable that must be negotiated through politics, Salmond argues instead to focus on the production of *hau* in the context of cross-cultural encounter.

While *hau* is not a new concept in anthropology, Salmond's use of the term restores some of the complexity it carries in te reo Māori. *Hau*, according to Salmond, is the essence of life. It drives the whole world and represents the exchanges between the forces of nature, between humans and non-humans, as well as social interactions between groups to create new forms of life. As Salmond states, "exchange is the stuff of life. As beings engage with each other in these relational networks, new forms of life are generated, along with efforts at domination, control, or liberation" (2017, 15). Salmond argues that rather than see the history of Māori-Pākehā relations as a negotiation of difference, we ought to view it in terms of the exchange of gifts, because it is through the exchange of gifts that "relationships are created as *hau* intermingles, binding different individuals and their descent lines together" (2017, 49). In other words, rather than see difference as divisive, Salmond is asking us to see the unifying potential of the recognition of difference through productive power of exchange. Perhaps recognizing the Canterbury earthquakes as an instance of the *hau* that unites them all in common struggle against the structures of power that seek to dominate them will help bridge the gap between those dispossessed by rebuild discourse. Rather than focusing on the differences between them that endure from the colonial period, an emphasis on producing *hau* will diminish the power of imperial durabilities in what are sure to be the unsettling times ahead.

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Figure 33: "EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT" Installation by Martin Creed, Te Puna Waiwhetu Christchurch Art Gallery 2015. Photo by the author.