Memory, Modernity, and the City:
An Interpretive Analysis of Montreal and Toronto's Respective Moves From Their Historic Professional Hockey Arenas

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to understand how and if the popular claims that hockey is an integral part of the culture in Toronto and Montreal are referenced, oriented to, and/or negotiated in everyday life. Taking the cases of the moves of the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Montreal Canadiens from Maple Leaf Gardens and the Montreal Forum, respectively, the thesis asks: What can these similar cases tell us about the culture of the cities in which they occurred and, if it is possible, in what ways can the culture of the cities (as a shaping force) be made recognizable in the discourse generated in, around, and by the moves? The perspective taken is a "radical interpretive" approach, involving a critical blend of interpretive theories and methodologies – including semiology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and dialectical analysis – that aim to reflexively question the themes that the cases themselves bring to light. The thesis thus concerns itself with issues of cosmopolitanism, globalization, and modernity as well as the concomitant questions of identity, commitment to place, and practical social action in the modern city.

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DEDICATION

For Mom and Dad.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

One of the abiding Canadian legends is about the special relationship that this country has with its ‘national pastime,’ the game of hockey. That is, the claim has often been made throughout this nation that Canadians share a unique and specific kind of attachment to the game itself. While this special relationship to hockey is claimed throughout Canada, it has historically and culturally been captured to a great degree by the cities of Montreal and Toronto. Both of these cities have taken the game - and particularly their respective professional hockey teams – as a kind of avatar into which they have poured their local mythologies, histories, traditions, and symbols. Even a cursory review of the popular literature and newspaper articles reveals that both the Montreal Canadiens and the Toronto Maple Leafs are commonly thought of as integral aspects of the cities’ respective identities. In a phenomenological sense, these sentiments are taken for granted; they are part of what Husserl called the “lifeworld” of people in Montreal and Toronto. It is this idea that first interested me in this topic. It is commonly known that both of these cities have a particularly strong and unique orientation to hockey and to their teams especially. However, this claim contains an implicit and generally unasked line of questioning: what does the claim of a strong bond between hockey and the Canadian city mean in terms of the culture of these cities? What is the nature of this bond? How has hockey become linked to the cultural identities of Toronto and Montreal? In what ways? More generally, what is the relation of a hockey team to its city, and what can we learn about a city through its hockey team?

It was these questions that I had in mind as I began my work on this thesis, which comes as a result of my involvement with *The Culture of Cities: Berlin, Dublin,* *Montreal, Toronto*. This is a SSHRC-funded, multi-university and international project which takes the city as its central focus of interest. Culture of Cities collaborators see "the city as an object of analysis from the perspective of culture. An object in this sense is not intended as a concrete 'thing' but (sociologically) as a distinction that exercises in varied ways a vital force in the lives of people" (Culture of Cities Midterm Report: 6). Therefore, researchers on this project have been afforded an opportunity to see cities – in all their numerous and varied landscapes, communities, and 'scenes' – as having a "unique identity" (6). Such an identity is created among the city's members as a commonplace and taken-for-granted dialectical activity – a back-and-forth of shared, negotiated, contested, and accepted meanings. This is the concern of the above reference to the city as a 'vital force' in the lives of its citizens in the sense that it is the city – its presence, its multiplicity of perspectives, and the structural and meaningful identities that it creates – that inherently shapes the conversation.

Researchers for the Culture of Cities Project "assume that this 'living dialectic' as reflected in the creativity of social practices, requires in its turn, a creative methodology commensurate with such an image of the vitality of the city" (6). The method most generally employed is the deep and critical reflection upon a particular case study, particularly where such a case offers the researcher a vivid contestation between two opposing perspectives on living in the world and more specifically in the city. In Blum's words:

> The research undertaken by the *Culture of Cities Project* searches for critical occasions or case studies that bring to view in various ways concerted collective engagements with this question of the common bond of the city, questioning that tacitly includes consideration of how the city is the same *and* the other, is the same by virtue of being other than the others (2001: 10).

Thus the Culture of Cities Project is interested in the concept of ‘the city’ as both an archetypal construct (i.e. all cities are the same because they share certain characteristics), and as a potentially unique emplaced entity that absorbs and portrays all the specificity of locality. Through this use of the case, the claim that a city has specificity, that there is such a thing as a ‘common bond’ shared between its citizens, is brought to light. As such, this claim to a specific culture (which is sometimes posited by people in the city, including many people involved in the Maple Leaf and Canadiens cases) can be pursued and explored. As well, it is in the dialogue that occurs between interlocutors in cases where there is a direct engagement with an issue or ideology that the city makes problematic that is most effective in making visible (or, in the language of the Culture of Cities Project, ‘material’) the specificity of the city. Thus, we can say that the methodology is qualitative rather than quantitative, and more than that, it is *interpretive*. While the term ‘interpretive’ is generally thought of in sociological circles as denoting a theoretical orientation to the social world, the following work is based upon the concept that theory and method are inextricably intertwined (Bonner, 1997; 2001). As such, a large portion of the methodology is reflexivity, the deep and thoughtful application of theory to a particular question about the world. In this thesis, I use reflexivity as an attempt to take into account the way people – including everyday actors, journalists and sportswriters, and sociologists – understand their world, and act on the basis of that understanding. The concept of reflexivity, which is explored and demonstrated throughout the work, will be touched on in greater detail in Chapter Three.

The majority of the remainder of this work is my analysis of the cases or ‘critical occasions’ in both cities during the late 1990s in which their professional hockey teams moved from their traditional, historic hockey arenas to new, modern, and more spacious venues. Montreal was the first to propose a new arena – something that caused much discussion in this city, since the historic Forum was exceptionally storied and much beloved by Montreal citizens and fans of *Les Canadiens*. The Forum was a place filled with memories unique to Montreal: within its walls, 24 Stanley Cups were won, the body of the legendary Howie Morenz was laid in state, wrestling and boxing matches held, concerts by the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were held, political rallies staged, and, most importantly, for 72 years it was Montreal's premier house of hockey. However, the Canadiens' management, after releasing studies they had procured which stated that it would not be economically or structurally feasible to renovate the old Forum, announced to the Montreal public in the summer of 1989 that plans were underway to replace it. A new site would need to be found, and plans drawn up for a new building which would reflect the corporate needs of the team in the modern NHL and the cosmopolitan desires of the team's cosmopolitan fan base. By 1993, construction was underway on 'the new Forum,' and in March, 1996, the Canadiens were moved into their 'new Forum' (now christened by management '*le Centre Molson*') with great fanfare. This included a tremendously successful auction in which the team sold off artifacts from the Forum including seats, popcorn machines, penalty boxes, Stanley Cup banners, and even the organ. As well, the team organized a farewell hockey game for former players, a parade to move the mythic and symbolic Forum ghosts to the new arena, and ceremonies at both the final Forum game and the first in the Molson Centre. And of course these events inspired much discussion in Montreal about the place that the Forum did and should hold in Montreal, and the meaning of the move itself. This discourse has been continuously present in the city from the first hint that the Canadiens would move to a new venue until today.

Not long after Montreal's move, many in Toronto started to wonder how much longer it would be before their own Maple Leaf Gardens would be replaced. The Gardens was, after all, the last of the Original Six team arena still in operation. By 1996, the Leafs organization was seriously looking around for a location to accommodate a new arena. This proved to be a difficult endeavour, as the organization considered first a site at Toronto's historic Union Station, and later building a new arena at the Canadian National Exhibition. Finally, in February, 1998, the Leafs announced a takeover of Toronto's professional basketball team, the Raptors, which included (among other things) the rights to the building that team had been constructing for the past two and a half years, the Air Canada Centre. Once the difficulties of location had been settled, the Leafs moved forward quickly, and, in a very similar week of commemoration of their arena as the Canadiens had had previously (including the auction, the parade, the opening and closing ceremonies), the team moved into the Air Canada Centre on February 19, 1999. As in Montreal, this case provoked debate and dialogue within Toronto, as citizens tried to decide what this move meant for themselves, their team, and ultimately, their city.

As examples of the 'critical occasions' so inherent in the methodology of the Culture of Cities Project, the above cases provide a lengthy discourse on the orientation that each city has to (a) professional hockey; (b) their historical arenas; and (c) its own identity as a place where (a) and (b) have a unique importance. My two-fold research question is: *What can these similar cases tell us about the culture of the cities in which they occurred and, if it is possible, in what ways can the culture of the cities (as a* *shaping force) be made recognizable in the discourse generated in, around and by the move?* Because this research project is based upon a radical interpretive perspective (Bonner, 1997; 1998; 2001)[1] which relies heavily on a hermeneutic orientation to the social world, this question, while specific to the cases at hand, will also serve for me as a platform to explore some of the more general concepts which run throughout the particular cases and which we can see as aspects of the human condition. The work is also largely thematically-oriented; that is, I am interested in the reoccurring themes that run throughout the dialectical discussions in both cities centering on this topic. Thus, the work is both phenomenological and hermeneutic in the sense that it is interested in bringing to light what is generally taken for granted and subjecting it to a reflective gaze. From a phenomenological perspective, I am interested in using reflexivity to 'bracket' (Berger, 1963; Berger & Luckmann, 1966) the 'givenness' of the social order – in Berger's words, to pursue what he called 'ecstasy': "the act of standing or stepping outside (literally *ekstasis*) the taken-for-granted routines of society" (1963: 136). Even more so, however, I place an emphasis on hermeneutic reflection, which stresses that the researcher acknowledge that understanding of any kind is inextricably intertwined with history, community, space, and time. This emphasis helps me to recover the cultural aspects of understanding and meaning-creation that phenomenological reflection alone would miss. It is also specifically through this line of questioning that general themes emerge from the particularities of the cases themselves. Thus, although my research question focuses my attention on the unique cultural identities of each city, and how they are exemplified through the cases at hand, through the application of the radical interpretive perspective I am able to reach out to more general aspects of the social world that become illuminated through the dialectic to-and-fro of the discourse of the moves.

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[1] This perspective is "radical" in the sense that it is deeply interested in interpreting the social world at its roots, its foundational level. The perspective sees the world as being ultimately and completely rooted in interpretation by everyday members - and the stability and recognizability of the world expresses a dominant and often taken-for-granted interpretation, which can supersede other claims to knowledge. Thus, it is these root interpretations that have to be addressed reflexively in order to understand the social world in a deep way. Additionally, this perspective is "radical" insofar as it might seem to strike an extreme note that the world does not exist independently of language (including the languages of surveys and science). As such, radical interpretive perspective is different than more mainstream interpretive

At this point, I would like to briefly outline the chapters to follow. Chapter Two consists of a literature review, which is divided into two sections. I begin by summarizing the quite lengthy amount of literature pertaining to the interrelated nature of hockey and Canadian nationalism. As I mentioned at the outset of this introduction, the symbolic link between these two social objects is a strong theme that runs through Canadian popular culture. As such, there is a large body of popular literature that deals with this subject, particularly from hockey broadcasters, sportswriters, and retired players. Also, sociologists such as Bruce Kidd and Todd Macfarlane (1972) and particularly Richard Gruneau and David Whitson (1993) have made this linkage a subject of rigorous academic study. In addition to looking at the relationship between hockey and Canadian nationalism, I review some of the works that deal with the related topic of the link between Quebecois nationalism and hockey. This, too, has been discussed in depth in the popular literature (Salutin, 1977; Dryden, 1983; Carrier, 2001) as well as in sociology (Belanger, 2002). Within this literature on nationalism is a tension – the link between hockey and nationalism that is being examined in the above works depends upon a particular kind of commitment to both of these concepts. This is ironically being undermined by the very influence which helped to create professional hockey as a factor

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perspectives such as symbolic interactionism which can be said to be “empirically interpretive” rather than “radically interpretive” (see Bonner, 1994).

of Canada’s cultural makeup – corporate capitalism. Because of the latter’s own commitment to its own self-promotion and self-growth, emphasis has increasingly been placed on the twin forces of Americanization and globalization. These tension created by these two forces comes out strongly in this body of literature, and is also a tension that runs throughout my own analysis of the two cases in Montreal and Toronto. I conclude Chapter Two with an overview of urban sociology that is relevant to this project. In particular, I divide the literature into two categories: political economy of the city and urban interpretive theory. The first is based in the works of Karl Marx, Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, and Saskia Sassen, while the second necessitates a look at the urban theorizing of the postmodernist Michel de Certeau and on Alan Blum’s most recent book, which takes the city as its reflective centre. These bodies of literature (i.e. hockey/Canadian nationalism and urban social sciences) help me to establish the kinds of claims that can and have been made about both hockey and the city, and relatedly the kinds of responses that social scientists and everyday members have come up with in an attempt to address these claims.

While illuminating in many respects, my review of the aforementioned literature on this topic shows that there is a significant gap in the academic literature surrounding the issue of hockey such that the research question that I am interested in – the relationship between a hockey team and its city – has not been addressed in any depth. One exception is the work of Anouk Belanger (2002), who has done work on the Canadiens’ move from the Forum to the Molson Centre. In many ways, she serves as a strong interlocutor for my own hermeneutical theorizing, as her orientation to the problem is largely from the political economy perspective of David Harvey.

Additionally, my addressing of the Toronto case adds a comparative element that aids me in developing my arguments for the unique cultures of both cities. The question that I am proposing, and the way in which I will go about researching and theorizing this subject, is a step toward filling a niche in both the sociology of sport and urban sociology.

In Chapter Three, I begin to deepen my explication of this project's theoretical and methodological understanding. I start off with a discussion of radical interpretive perspective, detailing particularly the four major theories that illuminate my work: semiology (Barthes, 1972), phenomenology (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1975), and dialectical analysis (Blum, 1974; Blum & McHugh, 1984). As I touched on above, radical interpretive perspective is interested in reflectively gaining a deep understanding of the collective meanings and interpretations inherited and created by a culture. This emphasis on interpretation allows (and needs) radical interpretive perspective to utilize a variety of interpretive theories that have similar orientations to the social world. Thus, phenomenology is helpful to me in uncovering the structures of meaning made by individuals in society while semiology, hermeneutics, and analysis help me to reveal in what way these meaning-structures are based upon the 'already-there' qualities that society bequeaths to each of us – through our history, traditions, community, and time. Following this, I discuss the particular method that I utilize – the case – and discuss the methodological (and therefore also theoretical) tenets espoused from the radical interpretive perspective – an emphasis on lived experience, reflexivity, and writing and re-writing, all of which are used in tandem with data collected from various local newspapers and other archival resources.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six address my analysis of the cases; they progress chronologically, from the discussion that took place in the cities before the moves occurred (Chapter Four) to the ceremonies and festivities that surrounded the moves themselves (Chapter Five) and finally to the period following the moves up to the present (Chapter Six). I have chosen to order the thesis in such a way because, it seemed to me, each different period in time – and the dialogue being held therein – illuminated a different, yet integral, theme. These themes run throughout the cases, and can be detected at all stages in time, yet at different stages in the cases, certain themes are brought out more strongly in the literature and popular discourse. Thus, Chapter Four, in dealing with the time in Montreal and Toronto after the moves were announced but before the actual opening and closing ceremonies had taken place, also is engaged with a strong tension that emerged at these times, which we could call the tension between the new and the old, the modern and the traditional, between cosmopolitan sensibilities and local loyalties. First, however, I begin by addressing the phenomenon of hockey itself, using Gadamer's concept of 'the game as aesthetic' in order to develop an argument for the necessity of a particular (hermeneutic) way of theorizing the game as a having the potential to be given by its players (and, as I discuss, its fans) "a holy kind of seriousness" (Palmer, 1969: 172). This formulation then allows me to dialogue with the implicit modern caution against taking hockey seriously – especially the corporate entity of professional hockey – since for such analysts love for the game can be seen as the result of the emotional and commercial manipulation of people as consumers by the culture and practices of capitalism. This dialogue is returned to as I begin to examine the cases themselves; first the project and then the realization of a move from an old, yet strongly symbolic public space to a modern, cosmopolitan, and indeed, exciting new venue. The theme that strongly emerged from this aspect of the cases was the engagement by these cities with the ever-present tension between the lure of cosmopolitanism and the pull of tradition. As well, the way in which the cities engaged this modern problematic allowed for me to begin formulating the particularities of their identities and their implicit cultural beliefs about themselves and their place in the world.

In Chapter Five I address the rituals and ceremonial events staged by both teams as they moved to their new buildings. This chapter thematically explores the idea of ‘commemoration’ as a phenomenon of place, following upon the work of phenomenologist Edward Casey (1993; 2000). As well, it looks seriously at the significance that the space/place tension (in my work, referencing specifically the characterization of these by Yi Fu Tuan [1977]) as it applies to the cases. As I shall demonstrate, this tension has much in common with the one looked at in Chapter Four between the modern and the traditional, but because the emphasis is now put upon the more specific concepts of space and place, the experiential phenomena of ‘being placed’ – particularly the lived experience of memory and how that affects collective meaning-making – becomes increasingly central. The symbolic quality of what is being remembered here is examined in detail, particularly the metaphors of religion, i.e., the Forum and Gardens as “shrines,” “temples,” “cathedrals,” etc. The cases are then comparatively analyzed; although the ceremonies themselves were remarkably similar, again, the particularities of the city made themselves visible in the distinctive way each city dealt with the events at hand.

Chapter Six looks at the aftermath of each move. In this chapter, I build on the themes dealt with in Chapters Four and Five, resulting in an argument that centres on the subtle threat of nihilism that has permeated the discourse. This chapter looks at the general feeling that has come out of the literature that ‘something’ is inexorably being lost to time and modernity, although what this ‘thing’ is, precisely, is not always explicit. This leads me to an exploration of the idea of nostalgia, for what I have described above is its very definition. I question whether this is ‘mere nostalgia’ in the dismissive sense, and try to analyze what is at the root of this longing for what has been lost to the past. Berger, Berger, & Kellner (1974) have offered the opinion that modern life, for all its temptations and gifts, may seem to make one homeless, lacking a place. This claim is analyzed in reference to the case – in this chapter, the cases are illustrated by different writers’ reflections upon the moves, and by the fates of all four buildings, old and new. Finally, I examine all of these issues as being rooted in the fear of nihilism or meaninglessness, as I mentioned above (Bonner, 1998: 173; Bonner, 2001; Blum, 2003: 1-23). The themes from the previous two chapters are revisited again in this analysis, and there is particular emphasis on the specific ways in which both cities exemplify, understand, and deal with the issue of nihilism in relation to the cases.

Throughout this thesis, there will be an attempt to strongly examine the ways in which these cities are displaying something about their cultures to us in these discourses, which are deeply concerned with their commitments, beliefs, and identities. My conclusion returns to this question explicitly, trying to articulate what we have learned about Toronto and Montreal. As well, I adhere to the hermeneutic example in going from these particularities to the more general concepts and thematic elements that have been illuminated through this discussion. Through this analysis, I return once again to the question of theorizing from the radical interpretive perspective that is formulated specifically in Chapter Three, and which itself is a theme that flows through the work. Thus, in the following chapters, I address the nature of hermeneutic/reflexive questioning, the tensions between globalization and home, between the possibilities of space and the safety of place, and between the fear (or acceptance) of nihilism and the search for meaning. However, most significantly, I work towards an understanding of how my analysis of the moves in Toronto and Montreal from their old venues to the new ones can help me to say something meaningful about the natures and identities of these cities.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Hockey and the Canadian City

Nationalism

In comparison to other places, Canada puts out a plethora of literature about hockey. To many, this would 'seem only natural,' as many Canadians feel that Canada is the locale of hockey *par excellence*. The general claim that is often made is that, unlike any other part of the world, Canadians have taken the sport of hockey as something of a national obsession; Bruce Kidd and Todd Macfarlane have written that "[hockey] has a significance here it has nowhere else in the world, like bullfighting in Spain or cooking in France" (1972: 6). Gruneau and Whitson continue this theme, saying, "Hockey has found a central place in Canada's national culture through many factors, including *Hockey Night in Canada* broadcasts on the CBC; the long history and sheer numbers of community, industrial, and age-graded teams; and the collective memories of nearly a century of hockey folklore, subcultural traditions, and heroes" (1993: 254). As I stated in the previous chapter, I am interested in the relationship between the mythology surrounding a hockey team and its city, and particularly as it pertains to the cultures of the cities of Montreal and Toronto and to the specific case of the move to a more modern venue.

I begin my analysis by examining the literature – sociological and otherwise – surrounding the topic of hockey as a cultural phenomenon in Canada, with particular attention paid to Toronto and Montreal. As Canadian cities, and especially as the two original cities of professional hockey, Montreal and Toronto partake in the Canadian "mythology" of hockey in a way that perhaps no other cities in Canada can claim. It is often said (and felt) that the roots of the meaning that the Maple Leafs and Canadians have for the citizens of each city go deeper: as the two Canadian members of the "Original Six" teams of the NHL, their legacies have had longer to take hold than those of any of the other cities in Canada. As such, their respective mythologies are permeated with the intensive interest and fascination with hockey that has been found in Canada longer and arguably with greater intensity than anywhere else in the world. This section will address the cultural dialogue which surrounds the subject of hockey in Canada, and as such is the social setting for the hockey discourse(s) found in Toronto and Montreal.

As I have expressed above, most writers who talk about professional hockey in Canada must address this claim that there is a Canadian tendency to be passionately interested in hockey like 'nowhere else in the world.' For over a hundred years[2], it has had an influence over this country unparalleled by any other sport – and some would argue, any other culturally representative idea. This game – epitomized since 1917[3] by the glamorous National Hockey League – is said to have captured our collective imaginations, bringing together Canadians of diverse backgrounds, beliefs and shorelines in a vast and northern country that is full of such diversity, and such wide geographical expanse. For many, this commonality is not something that has come easily to Canada or to Canadians in our not-so-long history. As former Montreal Canadiens goaltender (and current Toronto Maple Leaf President) Ken Dryden writes, along with co-writer Roy MacGregor, "Canada has never worked seriously at developing the traditional instruments of community: the icons of nationhood – flag, constitution, monument – the myths, legendary figures, events and commemorative dates. Without such evidences of nation worship, without focal points for community expression, it can seem we lack a sense of nation" (1989: 18). Here, the claim is that hockey has provided Canadians with one outlet for their unfocused nationalist emotions. "Hockey," Dryden and MacGregor write, "makes Canada feel more Canadian" (1989: 19).

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[2] Gruneau and Whitson write, "The real origins of the game as we know it are synonymous with the beginning of hockey's institutional development. Once this is acknowledged there is no mystery about the birthplace of modern hockey in Canada. Sports historians are virtually unanimous in their recognition that hockey's organizational roots, early written rules, and formally regulated codes of conduct first took hold in Montreal during the 1870s" (1993: 37). In spite of this claim, the right to the title "The Birthplace of Hockey" is still somewhat contentious, with both Kingston and Halifax, in addition to Montreal, claiming the title.

Before I go any further, I want to discuss one extremely important way in which this 'hockey equals Canada' discourse is proscribed; this is the issue of Quebec nationalism and the unique impact that it has had on hockey in Montreal and vice versa. As Gruneau and Whitson note, "The distinctiveness of Quebec society alone has always lent itself to suspicions about the possibility of a homogeneous Canadian common culture and a singular national identity" (1993: 273). Included in this interpretation is the idea that hockey has always had a very particular relationship with the political and cultural landscape in Quebec, in a manner that is perhaps reflective of the particular relationship of Quebec to Canada. For decades, hockey – symbolized in particular by the Montreal Canadiens – served as a stand-in of sorts for political power, something they lacked as a historically colonized and marginalized cultural group. This claim is illustrated by former Canadiens' goaltender Ken Dryden, who points to how this is manifested in Montreal in his book *The Game*:

> In Montreal, language is the single dominant fact of life. Two languages, French and English, side by side, on signs, newsstands, and grocery shelves… they are what make the city distinctive, capable of delighting the visitor with its charm, its ambiance; they are what give Montreal its romance. But language is also the source of Montreal's division. While the city is no longer quite the 'two solitudes' of novelist Hugh MacLennan's wonderfully evocative phrase, for the French and the English who once divided

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[3] Source: http://nhl.com/hockeyu/history/evolution.html.

> demographically east and west, culturally, and in the workplace, and who now more often confront each other directly, language is the principle source of tension and rivalry. It has to do with status – majority status and minority status – and the correlation between numbers, influence, and language that has never been quite direct. (1983: 23).

From this perspective, it becomes clear that the battle over language is really a battle for power and cultural survival – and that one major symbolic battleground has traditionally been professional hockey.

In this manner, such actors claim that Quebec nationalism and hockey have a symbiotic relationship similar to the Canadian nationalist relationship to hockey – it helps to provide an insecure culture (either insecure politically or socially) with an identity, something to take pride in, something to share with others. Roch Carrier describes the mood in the Forum after Maurice Richard surpassed Nels Stewart for the all-time leading scorer in the NHL on November 8, 1952: "Maurice Richard has hoisted the French-Canadian flag on the flagpole of planet Hockey. The story of the small people, defeated, colonized, and docile, ends here. We belong to a race that produces world champions! Now we know the taste of victory" (2001: 204). In his play, *Les Canadiens*, Rick Salutin dramatizes his view that as people in Quebec gained more political power and cultural freedom – particularly with the embrace of a new separatist provincial government, the Parti Quebecois, on November 15, 1976, led by Rene Levesque – they needed to rely less and less on the symbolic power that victories in hockey afforded them. He has Canadiens' player Dave Kirk, disconsolate after the underwhelming reception given the game the night of the election in lieu of the election results, ask a group of boys playing road hockey, "Hey, even though you don't need us anymore, who's still…on the ice…not anywhere else, but on the ice…who's still number one?[…] Even though you don't need us[…] Even though it's just a game[…] Even though we're just a hockey team" (1977:

177). Salutin makes the point that once Quebec had begun to reach some of its separatist goals, gaining much political power in the process, the Canadiens lost much of their transcendent qualities that had previously supplied the Québécois with symbolic power. Still, he and other claimants like him assert that it is important to remind ourselves of the ways in which this symbolic power lingers in memory, in architecture, in the city's space, and in the ways in which people still talk about the team. The Canadiens, they would say, provided the province of Quebec with a focus to rally around, and there is still much of the special qualities linked to this communal interest remaining today. This is a claim that I will explicate further when I get into the intricacies of the case.

It is perhaps not unusual that so much can seem to be made out of a game. Modern life does not provide one with many outlets for unironically emotional or even just uncynical behaviour; it is difficult to partake without irony in the expression of communal excitement, interest, or joy. As well, we live in an era "when everything seems to be in flux." (White, 1997: 20). In sport, we tend to search for (and in certain circumstances, we may feel that we have found) the simplicity and clarity that we feel existed in 'days gone by.' In a time of increasingly rapid technological and social change, many people look to sport – particularly professional sport – as one way to provide them with some continuity.[4] Peter White argues this point: "Sport provides us with one of our only sources of stability in terms of ritual, myth, and legend. It is also attractive because sport offers a clear identity of who is the good guy – the team you support – and who is the bad guy – the other team. And the outcome is clear and simple, unlike so much in life; you win or you lose" (White, 1997: 21). From this perspective, the 'rituals and myths' that have generally not been a part of Canada's national history have found an outlet to the Canadian psyche (to use such a term extremely figuratively) through the game of hockey. Tod Hoffman comments that in *Home Game*, Dryden and MacGregor are "concerned with hockey's contribution to the creation of community, its role as something which speaks to all Canadians across the myriad barriers inserted to establish ever more narrow categories of people. Hockey serves as a communal source of memory and ritual, of joy and sorrow" (Donnelly, Ed., 1997: 31). The claim is that hockey is a facet of Canadian social life that brings communities together – the small communities of towns, communities within/composed of cities, communities of likeminded hockey fans. These smaller communities form a larger one in that they all fall under the banner of 'Canada.' In this way, hockey has acted to formalize a notion of Canada as a [national] community. This is a strong theme that emerges in any kind of literature on hockey, and in many ways, it is a theme that runs throughout this work, although in different ways and for different reasons. The work must therefore take into account these claim and reflexively deal with the interpretive foundations that they may indicate about the world out of which they were created. In this way, I formulate the Canadian hockey fan as one who is able to interpret and portray 'his own' (i.e. his culture or Canada) as 'the good' (i.e. natural) through his passion for the game of hockey. Therefore we can come to see that is not only to hockey that the fan supplies the special significance; this significance is given to Canada as well as the place where hockey reigns as ‘our common passion,’ a passion that has a collective pull on us ‘like nowhere else in the world.’ Such claims interpretively seem to indicate that this perspective contains a rationality that uses hockey as a means of making the idea of “Canada” observable as a recognizable phenomenon. This formulation, however, denotes a certain concept of what Canada means. We must, therefore, ask ourselves what vision of Canada is necessitated by such a concept [i.e., the concept of the archetypal ‘Canadian hockey fan’], and where we can find the groundwork for such a claim in the existing literature.

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[4] Think of James Earl Jones's speech about baseball in the movie *Field of Dreams* (1989): *"The one constant through all the years, Ray, has been baseball. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game, is a part of our past, Ray. It reminds us of all that once was good, and that could be again."* For a comparison between the American passion for baseball and the Canadian connection to hockey, see Tod Hoffman's "Game of Our Lives," in Peter Donnelly (Ed.), *Taking Sport Seriously: Social Issues in Canadian Sport*. Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc. Toronto, Ontario. 1997. Page 30-37.

First of all, Canada must be seen as a place that has some kind of *unity*. Without unity, it would be impossible for us to even discuss such a thing as a ‘Canadian hockey fan,’ as there would be no truthful essence around which to center this discussion. It is the concept of unity – the belief in some essential similarity between Canadians – that has allowed Dryden & MacGregor to refer to hockey as ‘our [Canadian] common passion.’ Following this is the necessity to see Canada as being *distinctive* from [especially] American and other international interlocutors. This idea – that Canada is recognizably distinct – is the reason that one can argue that hockey is ‘our own,’ in other words, is held up proprietarily by Canadians as something which belongs to them ‘like nowhere else in the world. A third element that is essential to our discussion is a focus on *tradition*. The need for tradition is the need to carry on the goodness of the past, to remember the passion that once inspired and has the possibility to inspire again. Thus, our discussion of the particularly Canadian passion for hockey seems to be grounded in Canadian nationalism of a very particular kind.

Americanization

The Canadian theologian and philosopher George Grant has talked about such nationalism. More to the point, he has ‘lamented’ its passing from Canada. In both *Lament for a Nation* (1965) and *Technology and Empire* (1969), Grant says that true nationalism – the kind that includes unity, distinctiveness, and tradition – is essentially conservative. Grant’s conservatism venerates the above three values, appreciating tradition over progress, unity over universalism, and distinctiveness over generality. However, he argues that the nationalism procured by such a conservative stance is in danger of being dissolved in a wave of modernity, at the forefront of which is what Grant calls “American imperialism” (1965: 28). The ‘Modern Age’ is the embodiment of the liberal ideology, which includes reason, progress, capitalism, universality, social rights and freedoms, and the good of technological advance (1965: 67-68). These are the principles upon which the American state is built, and their success in embodying the liberal ideololgy has resulted in the United States becoming the most powerful nation in the world. This has enabled it to export its culture worldwide, something that has proven to be ‘progressive’ – but leaves Grant and others pessimistic about the future of the particular and local culture of the Canadian nation (if there ever was such a thing). Grant writes that by his time Canada had become unable – and unwilling – to stem the tide of Americanization which acted to “make all local cultures anachronistic” (1965: 68). The conservatism that could make Canadian nationalism possible is simply not an option in modernity, as by the 1960s Canada had accepted the American [modern] ideology for its own. Ultimately, Grant concluded that “the impossibility of conservatism in our era is the impossibility of Canada” (1965: 81).

Such a concern has been mirrored in regards to the challenges facing the game of hockey in the modern era. There has been much unease about the deterioration of 'our game,' a turn of events that has led to many nostalgic remembrances to 'the good old days' by hockey commentators and analysts. In *The Death of Hockey* (1972:163), Bruce Kidd and John Macfarlane pronounce: "If we cannot save hockey we cannot save Canada." This is redolent of Grant's 'impossibility of Canada' statement. As we have discussed, it has been claimed that the game of hockey evokes in Canadians the values of unity, tradition, and distinctiveness, three hallmarks of Grant's conservatism. The concern for Kidd and Macfarlane is similar to Grant's concern – that encroaching American imperialism is taking away from Canadians everything distinctive about us that makes us a nation. As Daniel Mason writes, "Although the utility of the term *Americanization* can be contested, Canadians tend to be wary of the influences of American media products and couch these concerns in terms of cultural dependency and a loss of local identity" (2001:141). The perceived threat to the nationalist conception of Canada that hockey is said to impart is a strong example of this Canadian wariness. What precisely are the concerns of those who fear that Americanization is ruining 'our game'? Chris Cuthbert and Scott Russell provide an interesting commentary on the difficulties for hockey and Canadian nationalism:

> Sometimes [what you love about hockey] gets lost in the commercial break – one of seven per period, twenty-one per game – as we bear silent witness to hockey's penetration of the American Sunbelt. The teams become confused with markets, the players are disguised as so many free agents and the action, it seems, has drifted off course – endlessly mired in the dreaded wasteland of the neutral zone at the National Car Rental Centre in Sunrise, Florida.
>
> Holdouts, lockouts, Group 2 compensation and video replay conspire to put a lid on so much simmering greatness out there. (2000: 15).

This quote speaks about hockey in a way that is opposite to how I have discussed it above. Russell illuminates a version of hockey in which it is sterile, unemotional, and business-oriented, inevitably creating in its fans a corresponding unease, or outright apathy. This ‘Americanized’ version of the game means that hockey has been necessarily redefined in terms of ‘markets’ and making money: “Once hockey became a business it was inevitable that the men who owned it would prey upon the community leagues, just as it was inevitable that eventually they would seek the richer markets of the United States” (Kidd and Macfarlane, 1972: 100). Thus, this view asserts, the things that are beautiful or inspiring about the game of hockey – its speed, the necessity of finesse, its ‘rituals, myths, and legends’ – are lost and are replaced by a business that “fails to understand its loyal and knowledgeable core audience and relentlessly seeks to present the game as louder, bigger, simpler, meaner, flashier, dumber, in order to attract a new audience – an audience of sports fans who aren’t hockey fans” (Klein & Reif, 1998: 94). Increasingly, the NHL has moved to attract such fans, people who would otherwise spend their disposable income on basketball, football, or baseball, seen most obviously in the League’s expansion into areas such as Florida, Southern California, Georgia, and South Carolina. Bruce Kidd has linked this corporatization of hockey with the American influence:

> While the commodification of sports has occurred in many countries, team sports production in its corporate form – with its highly developed player market, cartelization, single-city monopolies, and movable franchises – began as an explicitly American set of practices” (1991: 179).

This American-style ideology subverts hockey’s position in Canada as an icon of our national identity and a focal point of Canadian nationalism and its search for community. From the viewpoint of the Canadian nationalist, then, a major problem of modern professional hockey is Americanization – that hockey is in the midst of ‘drifting off course’ into the American Sunbelt. This point is interesting from a hermeneutic perspective, which asks: what view of the world is necessary in order for these assumptions to make sense? It seems that this view the world highlights the problematic nature of just who is allowed to speak for the sport – whose interpretations matter, in other words. As well, this view promotes the belief that those whose interpretations seem to increasingly matter to the National Hockey League (corporate owners and seasons ticket buyers, American interests, etc.) do not reflect the orientation of its ‘loyal and knowledgeable core audience,’ – whose hermeneutic interpretation of the sport is felt to be more ‘pure.’ This is a tension that is brought to light throughout the work, particularly in terms of the problematic between the mechanisms of progress and cosmopolitanism versus the lure of tradition and history.

Globalization

In reference to professional hockey, the talk that I have just described about ‘Americanization’ is reflective of a particularly Canadian orientation to the world, and certainly the concern over American influences changing (or even ‘corrupting’) ‘our game’ are found throughout Canada, including Toronto and Montreal. However, a more inclusive way of naming (and broadening the idea of) this phenomenon would be to see it as one aspect of the modern wave of *globalization* that is currently reshaping international dynamics in business, political, and social spheres. When I speak of globalization, I am referring to the practices that have emerged in modernity that encourage the growth of transnationalist tendencies in political decision-making practices, economic and manufacturing processes, modern marketing, and “the continuing internalization of Western commercially produced popular culture" (Gruneau and Whitson, 1993: 271-272).

Unlike the concept of Americanization, globalization effects even the United States, and provides a more dialectic relationship with change and growth than does the former concept, because change to the American landscape is necessitated by globalization, although it could be argued that it is on a less dramatic scale than the changes incurred in less powerful parts of the globe. However, in terms of professional hockey, Klein and Reif remind us that American cities, too, face the pressures and challenges of surviving the global economy:

> Canadian fans may rail at the departure of their country's NHL franchises to the States and make it an issue of national identity, but for the fans who loved the [Minnesota] North Stars and the [Hartford] Whalers, just like the fans who fumed and grumbled in Quebec and raged and wept in Winnipeg, the most immediate and inescapable result is just the same – regardless of where their team went, it's not theirs anymore. (1998: 26)

Certainly, though, the term 'Americanization' is very similar to globalization – as Gruneau and Whitson note: "much of what is referred to as 'global culture' really isn't global at all in origin – it originates in Western nations, and especially in the United States" (1993: 271). The issue of globalization and how it is changing the game is a theme that runs throughout this work. Globalization provides the problem of meaning that the citizens in both cities must take on dialectically. In some way, it must be addressed by anyone who wants to talk about hockey in the modern world, and as such provides a thread of talk throughout the discourse. The tension that globalization provides is that while it may seem to make many aspects of modern life easier, faster, more reliable, and more accessible (among other things), its drawbacks include a loss of a sense of community (or 'local culture' as George Grant referred to it), of the uniqueness of place and the particularities of home. This will certainly be seen as we move into our dual case studies of the moves from the Forum to the Bell (*née* Molson) Centre in Montreal, and from Maple Leaf Gardens to Air Canada Centre in Toronto.

Social Theory and the City

I want to turn now to the central focus of my research question: the city. It is the domain of professional hockey, and provides the economic, spatial, and civic support that keeps the corporate game going. Although there is a lot of literature (much of it academic) about the city and, as referenced above, a lot of literature (much of it not academic) about hockey, there is a decided lack of literature on the symbiotic relationship between the two. It is this gap that my own research hopes to bridge. But what of the literature on the city? How has it been theorized by social scientists? The following will not be an exhaustive account of urban/city studies, but rather an overview of the works that have been influential for this particular thesis.

The Political Economy of the City

Much of the sociological literature about the city comes from a more or less explicit position that the city is best understood through the lens of the political economy perspective. The concepts of political economy are rooted in the philosophical writings of Karl Marx, in particular. Marx was the first thinker to propose and deeply theorize the idea that "it was industrial capitalism in particular which imposed great suffering on the majority of the people, diminishing their humanity and distorting their self-understanding" (Zeitlin, 1997: 145). He applied this basic premise to the idea of the city (specifically the urban/rural distinction) in both *The Communist Manifesto* and *The German Ideology* (see Bonner, 1997: 15-19). His works theorized that since the

Industrial Revolution, cities have been the natural environment of industrial capitalism, as it is here that a sufficient number of workers are met with an appropriate level of infrastructure and *materièl*. It seems natural that Marx's work could be applied in greater depth to urban sociology and the concept of space, but in actuality it was not until Henri Lefebvre began his work in the late 1960s that the issue was taken up in any great detail. Lefebvre made the link between space, the city, and Marx's writings explicit; his main point was that "the space of cities under modern capitalism was configured in such a way as to further and advance the purposes of capitalism, [sic] itself" (Orum & Chen, 2003: 34). Lefebvre's work highlights how the city and capitalism seem to have an "elective affinity" for each other, to borrow Weber's famous phrase; also included in this is the idea that capitalism has made over the city in a way that is most useful for its own purposes.

One prominent urban theorist who was heavily influenced by the works of Lefebvre is the Marxist geographer David Harvey. Harvey, like Lefebvre, is interested in the symbiotic relationship of capitalism and the city. In his work, there is much attention focused on Marx's concept of *commodification*. For Harvey, everything in the city can become a commodity in the increasingly competitive international market. Even the city itself (as well as its various sub-communities) can be commodified; as he writes, "Images of knowable and affective communities can also be marketed as commodities" (1989: 233). In terms of my research question, this point becomes useful in that it illustrates one claim about the nature of the 'knowable, affective community' of the professional hockey team and its various hangers-on. As Orum & Chen note, "If…one thinks of the nature of the city in terms of [Marx's concept of] commodities, such as land and houses, one can easily import the nature of the class struggle into urban life, and uncover a host of previously undiscovered tendencies" (2003: 42). Referencing Marx, Harvey argues that the reason that this class struggle is so often reified or generally taken for granted is that citizens who are unknowingly (or thoughtlessly) part of the struggle are the victims of 'false consciousness,' most significantly as a result of the *fetishism* of such things as affective communities, etc. By 'fetishism,' Harvey is pointing to the process by which the alienation of citizens in everyday capitalist society is glossed over and hidden through the reification of more positive (or just accepting) attitudes towards the political economic landscape. This quote from *The Urban Experience* exemplifies this process: "Since every effort is made to conceal the history of commodities behind the mask of fetishism (advertising, for example, rarely indicates any truth as to how commodities are produced) the separation between the two worlds of production and consumption becomes complete" (1989: 232-233). If, as Marx said of his own time, religion is the opiate of the masses, Harvey seems to suggest that modernity has made the fast-paced lifestyle, plethora of choice, and non-stop marketing of entertainment and consumer goods the new consciousness-altering (or falsifying) drug of choice.

Harvey refers to this state as the 'urbanization of consciousness,' which he says "has to be understood in relation to the urbanization of capital" (1989: 231). He discusses the forces that act to create this particular kind of consciousness:

> Curious ways of thinking, seeing and acting arise out of the confusions of that experience. These cannot be interpreted directly by appeal to polarized or even complex class structures. Nor can they be dismissed as false. I shall, however, insist that they are fetishistic; common sense representations of daily experience obscure inner meanings, even though the surface appearance to which they respond is real enough (1989: 230).

Thus, Harvey formulates the city as a vessel for capitalist forces which act to alter the very consciousness of actors in the city. Once this is altered, urbanized consciousness may be taken for granted, but it nonetheless means that citizens will act, much like their city itself, in a way that maintains the capitalist status quo. His work has influenced Scott Allen, who writes, "in contemporary capitalism, the culture-generating capabilities of cities are being harnessed to productive purposes, creating new kind of localized competitive advantages with major employment and income enhancing efforts" (2000: 14). For these theorists, the culture of cities is produced ("generated") in a competitive capitalist environment and as a way of 'enhancing income' of the corporate sector.

On these points, sociologist Saskia Sassen would no doubt be in agreement; however, her work adds another level to the discussion. She focuses on the highly-concentrated element of globalization within the modern city, which she says is present to some extent in virtually every city in the world. However, she says that this element is particularly apparent in what she calls "the global city" – by which she means such transnational megalopolises as New York, London, Tokyo, and Sao Paulo. Sassen summarizes her work on this concept of the global city in this way:

> The point of departure for the present study is that the combination of spatial dispersal and global integration has created a new strategic role for major cities. Beyond their long history as centers for international trade and banking, these cities now function in four new ways: first, as highly concentrated command points in the organization of the world economy; second, as key locations for finance and for specialized service firms, which have replaced manufacturing as the leading economic sectors; third, as sites of production, including the production of innovations, in these leading industries; and fourth, as markets for the products and innovations produced (2001: 3-4).

Thus, Sassen argues that increasing globalization in the modern age has meant that the primary focus of capitalist interests and resources is now in the financial or innovative technological industries, rather than in manufacturing that characterized the focus of capitalist interests during the Industrial Revolution and up until the late 1960s. Scott also comments on the phenomenon of the global city:

> [I]n modern capitalism this symbiosis [of place, culture, and economy] is reemerging in powerful new forms as expressed in the cultural economies of *certain key cities*. At the same time, the more the specific cultural identities and economic order of these cities condense out on the landscape, the more they come to enjoy monopoly powers of place (expressed in place-specific process and product configurations) that enhance their competitive advantages and provide their cultural-products industries with an edge in wider national and international markets. (2000: 4-5; emphasis mine).

Scott's claim is that global cities, through their sheer size and international appeal, have a marked advantage in terms of economic and political power which they can use to further increase that advantage in the global market. In addition, this power becomes a part of the local culture as well as rapidly and completely transforming local space. As Orum and Chen note, "globalization has turned the city's traditional intra-national and local orientations outward to the international economy. Once the city has been to [a] large extent denationalized, it is no longer local in its existence and functions" (2003: 55).

As I mentioned above, Sassen also acknowledges that even cities which cannot [yet] be described as 'global cities' have to deal with the positive and negative effects of globalization. Because of the effects of globalization and international industrialization (etc.), cities have become increasingly important centres for the political economics of the technological, business, and financial worlds, in addition to being the 'home base' for the political organization of a community as they always have been. This means that cities – regardless of whether or not they could be defined as 'global cities' by Sassen – are necessarily emblematic of the processes of globalization that have helped to shape them into their modern form. As Sassen writes, "the last two decades have seen transformations in the composition of the world economy, accompanied by the shift of services and finance, that have renewed the importance of major cities as sites for certain types of activities and functions” (2000: 4). In this sense, *I* would say that all cities are global cities, at least to the extent that virtually none of them are left untouched by the revolutionary changes wrought by the forces of internationalism. The implications of the political economy of the city inform my work greatly and provide me with an impetus for theorizing the city. The tensions within the city that political economic theory makes visible are thematic strands that run throughout my own work, and will be formulated, contested, and, it is hoped, deepened, through the course of my analysis.

Interpreting the City

Although in the following chapter I will get into interpretive theory in much greater detail, here I would like to take a moment to discuss two social theorists who have had an impact on my own interpretive thinking about the city. There is a plethora of interpretive literature about the nature of the city, often delving into the theoretical realm of place and space (which I shall expand upon in later chapters as well), but for this section, I will only address the urban theory of Michel de Certeau and Alan Blum. De Certeau is often cited by urban sociologists, mainly for his postmodernist essay “Walking in the City” (1984), in which he uses the idea of walking down city streets not literally, but as a way to begin to formulate the seemingly hidden symbolic order that resonates with citizens throughout the urban landscape. David Harvey hints at de Certeau’s work in *The Urban Experience*, commenting, “Every time I walk the city, I construct and reconstruct it for myself…” (1989: 248). This is essentially de Certeau’s starting point, although where he goes from here is far different than Harvey’s own theorizing. De Certeau theorizes that the act of walking in the city is one way that the citizen can transcend what he calls the ‘functionalist’ reality of everyday life, subverting and transforming it in such a way that the underlying signifying structures become apparent or visible, if only ephemerally. These symbols or ‘myths’ can be described as “a discourse relative to the place/nowhere (or origin) of concrete existence, a story jerry-built out of elements taken from common sayings, an allusive and fragmentary story whose gaps mesh with the social practices it symbolizes” (1984: 102). In other words, these stories that citizens tell themselves about their city have a subjective and changeable form that exists on a symbolic and somewhat subterranean level, shaping the way the city is viewed. They are elusive, yet fundamentally ‘there’ and form what de Certeau refers to as the stories that permeate an urban space and make it a “habitable city” (1984: 106).

Modernity has had an impact on our ability to fabricate, tell, and believe our own stories and legends, as it has had an impact on everything else in time and space. Out of a desire to establish and define an objective reality, much of the subjective realm human existence is distorted, discounted, or lost. As such, these stories and legends “are the object of a witch-hunt, by the very logic of the techno-structure. But their extermination (like the extermination of trees, forests, and hidden places in which such legends live) makes the city a ‘suspended symbolic order.’ The habitable city is thereby annulled.” (1984: 106). The industrial and ever-increasingly technological nature of the world means that the meaningful myths that make a place ‘habitable’ come under threat – particularly in the city, the political, economic, and cultural centre of such industrialization and technology. De Certeau calls the practice of telling oneself legends about a place the “practices that invent spaces” (1984: 107), and this, I think, is very significant. “Walking in the City” ultimately turns out to be a caution against what Foucault has termed the *Panopticon*, the ‘major effect’ of which Foucault describes as being the ability “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary” (1977: 195-228; quoted in Bonner, 1997: 189). The *Panopticon* is the constraining structural forces (both social institutions and the unwritten rules of a given community) that society creates and then reifies as socially normative. For example, even the architecture of the city may exert a panoptical force over the meaning-making processes of the populace; a city’s power-broker’s will label a building or site in a certain way that may seem to be irresolute. Citizens, however, always have the opportunity to subvert this aspect of the Panopticon by subsuming that meaning and replacing it with another.

De Certeau uses the analogy of walking in the city as a way of subverting this formulation of modern society (and thus the modern city) by using it as one example of an action that citizens undertake in their everyday lives that, through theorizing, can be seen as freeing in the sense that it opens up the avenues (literally and figuratively) to seeing urban space in terms of local legends and a hidden symbolic mythology. By doing so, the actors themselves can be momentarily hidden from the all-seeing ‘Eye’ of modernity (the *Panopticon* or techno-structure). In this manner, they are ‘inventing spaces,’ not in the image of the *Panopticon*, but in a manner that is redolent of the humanity and identity by which true places are, in de Certeau’s terms, ‘haunted.’ As De Certeau writes, “There is no place that is not haunted by many different spirits hidden there in silence, spirits one can 'invoke' or not. Haunted places are the only ones people can live in – and this inverts the schema of the *Panopticon*" (1984: 108). De Certeau's work reminds the urban theorist of the power of myth, symbolism, legend, and memory that works in a sometimes hidden manner throughout even the most thoroughly modern city.

Although Alan Blum's work on the city will be referred to and analyzed throughout this thesis, I want to take a bit of space here to briefly outline a few of his key points. Blum is an interpretive theorist in the analytical/dialectical tradition; in recent years, since his involvement with the Culture of Cities Project, his work has shifted to focus on the problem of interpreting the city. His current book, *The Imaginative Structure of the City* (2003), is a formulation of his conception that "the elementary force of the city is shown in the vitality of this terrain as the ephemera of everyday life discloses anxiety over the uncanny persistence of irresolute meaning and its ambiguity as a locus of collective action" (50). For Blum, the city is a site (itself made up of many sites) that is characterized by the predominance of the ambiguous, contentious, spirited, and lively nature of human existence. This characterization brings Blum's formulation (like that of de Certeau) into conflict with the political economic urban theorists described above, because this formulation takes as its centering point the 'madeness' of urban living rather than the ways in which urban living is made by the forces of capitalism, and in turn shape the symbolic order of city dwellers. He addresses Harvey's concern with the commodified nature of the city by saying: "if the city is a commodity, its fate is to be haunted by indeterminacy, for what it once was is lost and what it will be is incalculable" (67). While Blum acknowledges that the social fact of the capitalist system needs to be taken into consideration in any theorizing of the city, he rejects the notion of such a ‘haunting of indeterminacy’ as the one described above, insisting that the city provides us with spaces that make transcendence possible – or at least makes the possibility of transcendence into a question that requires answering. In his words, “We might say that the existence of the city is inseparably linked to the way it makes the question of ‘sweetness of living’ unavoidable and inescapable through the force of its very ambiguity” (230). It is this question that enlivens Blum’s analysis of the city, providing him with the impetus for his discussion of such core urban themes as cosmopolitanism, materialism, impermanence, and the excitement of the spectacle.

The works discussed in this literature review give me a broad array of claims about both the nature of hockey in Canada, the question of Canadian nationalism in the face of an increasingly global international political and economic environment, and the issues raised in the attempt to theorize the city. Overall, the literature discussed above provides a foundation of claims that provide the grounds – the hermeneutic foundation – of the cases that this thesis examines. The critical occasions in Montreal and Toronto are grounded in a world in which the claims made above can be said to ‘make sense’ – therefore, the literature provides me with a basis of talk to help me to begin to describe the phenomena that will be discussed shortly. However, there is also, as I have said, a gap in this literature – both on hockey, nationalism, and the city – that my own research seeks to begin to close. To return again to my research question, I am interested in what these cases can tell us about the cultures of these cities. This literature review has helped me to establish a foundation of talk upon which to base a reflexive analysis. It is to a discussion of what, precisely, is meant by such an analysis to which the next chapter turns.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND METHOD

Radical Interpretive Sociology

This perspective involves a critical blend of interpretive elements, and, with its dialogical and reflexive nature, is capable of addressing the [inter-]subjective character of my research question. Radical interpretive perspective is integral to my project as a way for me to formulate an analysis of my research question. As its name suggests, it is an interpretive paradigm that will therefore allow me to explore the underlying subjective and socially constructed meanings that have been constructed around the two hockey teams in Montreal and Toronto. Bonner writes, "The radical interpretive perspective is used because of its ability to throw light on the inextricable intertwining of theoretical interests, ethical understanding, and practical action" (1997: 9). This thesis marks my attempt to deeply understand and utilize these three key elements of radical interpretive sociology. A requirement of radical interpretive sociology is that *its theory and its methods are intertwined*, such that the researcher cannot apply a method without using theory and vice versa. There are four interconnected theory/method types that will constitute this inquiry: *semiology*, *phenomenology*, *hermeneutics*, and *analytic theory*. Phenomenology is essential as it will allow me to get at the meaning(s) of the phenomena at hand (at the level of lived experience), while semiology, hermeneutics, and analytic theory will help me access the broader cultural and historical issues embedded within the lived experiences themselves.

Semiology

I am interested in the *meanings* embedded in the speech itself; I want to analyze how the culture of a city can be brought to light in its speech about its sports teams. Thus *semiology* (Barthes, 1972; Blum & McHugh, 1984) becomes a useful theoretical tool. In his book, *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes (1972: 112) calls semiology “a science of forms, since it studies significations apart from their content.” Put simply, semiology is the study of the process by which an object becomes imbued with a particular kind of social significance. It is interested in “the relation between two terms, a signifier and a signified… [as well as] the sign, which is the associative total of the first two terms” (112-113). Using this system, Barthes posits that we can begin to see how certain types of speech are ‘mythological’. This concept of ‘the myth’ is tremendously important in my own work; from Barthes I take this idea that a myth is a particular kind of theme that emerges out of the cultural fabric of everyday life. In this sense, a myth “is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message…[it is] a type of social *usage* which is added to pure matter” (109). The speech [whether such speech is truly spoken or symbolic] surrounding the professional hockey teams in Montreal and Toronto is rife with such a ‘social usage’. It is for this reason that the Stanley Cup, the Montreal Forum and the Maple Leaf Gardens, and names such as Maurice Richard, Howie Morenz, and Bill Barilko resonate in Toronto and Montreal. The physical essence of these things (a silver bowl, a building, a man) becomes superseded by their symbolic meaning (honour, courage, history, pride, tragedy) in the specific setting of the city – this is an example of what Barthes calls “language robbery” – the “[transformation] of language into form” (131). It becomes the job of the sociologist to try to understand the importance of the significations given to a sign in a particular culture.

This thesis, then, is interested in the search for the ‘myths’ surrounding the Maple Leafs and Canadiens in their respective cities. This search is taken seriously as a search for culture, or more precisely for the meanings embedded in this culture. In doing so, we do not take a myth to be empirically correct or incorrect, and in doing so take it as our job to inform the 'myth-makers' of their ill-advised assumptions (or, conversely, their accurate assessments of reality). As such, a myth cannot be said to necessarily have an empirical pattern, but rather can be seen as the way in which history and culture are taken as reality, 'the way things are.' As Barthes says, "myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflexion" (129). A myth, therefore, alters the meaning of a sign in the same way an inflexion in conversational speech alters the meaning of what is spoken. A myth is spoken as a confident assertion; its reality or truth appears natural or obvious in a taken-for-granted manner. Many people in Montreal and Toronto use mythological speech in their claims, which I will get to further on, that the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens have come to have a signification beyond that of 'just a building' – they have come to have a social meaning that goes beyond their physical embodiment. All of this is done 'below the radar' – as we have said before, myths are embedded in a culture, and as such, are generally taken for granted by the society that has created them. This, Barthes said, is

> the very principle of myth: it transforms history into nature. We now understand why, *in the eyes of the myth consumer*, the intention, the adhomination of the concept can remain manifest without however appearing to have an interest in the matter: what causes mythical speech to be uttered is perfectly explicit, but it is immediately frozen into something natural; it is not read as a motive, but as a reason. (129)

In phenomenological literature, this process of 'transforming history into nature' is referred to as "reification" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 89-92), which can be defined as "the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something else than human products – such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will." The implication of such reifying myths is that, as Berger and Luckmann continue, “man is capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world, and further, that the dialectic between man, the producer, and his products is lost to consciousness” (*ibid*: 89). The ‘naturalizing’ or ‘reifying’ effect of mythologies can be seen in a quote from Gruneau and Whitson (1993: 136) in regards to the choices hockey fans make about which team favour in differing situations: “it was easy to interpret games between the Toronto Maple Leafs and Montreal Canadiens as a dramatization of anglo versus francophone hopes and aspirations and cheer accordingly. Or, when listening to the Leafs or Canadiens play New York or Chicago a fan might pull for the Canadian rather than the U.S. team.” For such fans, the decision over who to cheer for is “perfectly explicit,” as Barthes said – the teams are mythological symbols (in the Barthesian sense) of where their allegiance ‘should’ rest, i.e. with their linguistic or national community.

Thus, from the semiological perspective of Barthes, such culturally-created myths are not, as I said, a ‘lie’, but are rather a shared or common understanding that has a hold on the collective imagination of a population. These myths are generally deeply embedded within the consciousness of a community, often on the taken-for-granted level. With this knowledge, I am able to take the next step of determining which myths are seen repeatedly within the speech of the population of each city. This is an important step; as Barthes says, “This repetition of the concept through different forms is precious to the mythologist, it allows him to decipher the myth: it is the insistence of a kind of behaviour which reveals its intentions” (120). Semiology is one theoretical tool that I use in the analysis of my question; specifically, it allows me to identify where myths are repeated throughout the city. In distinguishing such patterns I can begin to formulate the distinctive elements of each city’s culture. Thinking semiologically is one way that I can get at the myths or underlying themes that are particularly resonant to each city individually, and in this way helps me to bring to light in what ways Montreal and Toronto make evident their specificity and their difference.

Phenomenology

As I noted above, semiology shares several theoretical concepts with the interpretive schema of phenomenology, which is itself a major foundation of radical interpretive sociology. Both perspectives are interested in the myriad ways in which individuals construct meaning out of their social reality. However, while semiology is concerned with the cultural foundation of signs and signifiers, phenomenology is more interested in the constitution of everyday life by actors. It therefore seeks to give "an accurate description of a given phenomenon as it presents itself in one's own experience" (Casey, 2000: 9). In the words of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "phenomenology is a philosophy for which the world is always 'already there' before reflection begins – as an inalienable presence; and all its efforts are concentrated upon reachieving [sic] a direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing that contact with a philosophical status" (quoted in Casey, 1997: 238). This 'already there' world of everyday life, as theorized by phenomenologists such as Berger and Luckmann (1966), is made up of socially created and negotiated rules and norms, the creation and negotiation of which are thereupon forgotten (taken-for-granted) by the society in which they were formed. In this way the "reality" of the everyday is created, what Edmund Husserl termed the "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*). Max van Manen has written that phenomenological research "always begins in the lifeworld. This is the world of the natural attitude of everyday life which Husserl described as the original, pre-reflective, pre-theoretical attitude" (1990: 7).

This emphasis on lived experience means that phenomenology is deeply concerned with how such everyday reality is *embodied* (i.e. a phenomenon). In this concern, the phenomenologist asks the question, 'What is this experience like?' The challenge is to be able to describe accurately and deeply the process of life as it is lived and experienced – a challenge because as both Schutz (1967) and Dilthey (1985) remind us, while all human beings are ensconced in the lifeworld, such lived experience cannot be reflected upon without changing the very nature of what is being experienced. Van Manen credits Dilthey with the idea that "lived experience involves our immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life: a reflexive or self-given awareness which is, as awareness, unaware of itself" (1990: 35). This lack of awareness – the very taken-for-granted nature of much of human existence itself – can only be made a kind of 'objective' experience through the conscious act of reflection. In Dilthey's words, "Only in thought does [lived experience] become objective" (1985: 223, quoted in Van Manen, 1990: 35). Phenomenology seeks to investigate this connection between the taken-for-granted (and therefore "mythological") orientation to the lifeworld that characterizes much of our everyday lived experience and the complementary act of reflection upon this lived experience which gives meaning to the act that has already been lived out.

While phenomenology is an interpretive theory that highlights the subjective meanings that an actor attributes to his or her surroundings, it recognizes at the same time that there is an outward or objective reality that acts upon the actor – in Berger's (1963) terms, while man is in the world, the world is yet in man [sic]. It is this outward reality (or rather, the perception thereof) that gives shape to the reflective gaze upon lived experience which was discussed above. Phenomenological theorists see objective and subjective reality as having a dialectical relationship to each other wherein, as Stephen Ainley writes about Peter Berger's sociology, there is an attempt to "balance the power of society over its participants with the power of the individual to create the world" (Hunter & Ainley, 1986: 36). Theoretically, this is useful inasmuch as it allows the sociologist to acknowledge an actor's *agency* - for example, in the meaning-making power of language that Barthes discusses – while at the same time recognizing that a person is born into the fully-formed time and space of a cultural world already in progress, a world that he or she must be socialized to understand. Berger has commented that this concept of agency or freedom may seem elusive from a modern, empirical point of view (i.e. the view that the *Panopticon* promotes), because it does not seem to us to be scientifically available to study. Yet, phenomenology insists that it must be taken into account, for, as Berger puts it, "freedom may be mysterious, but the mystery is encountered every day" (1963: 122). Thus, the epistemological and ontological assumptions of phenomenology become helpful in an attempt to recover this fundamental aspect of our existence. An emphasis on agency is important in my project because it will allow me to get at how actors create varied and changeable meanings out of the city, which may seem to be so powerful that only it can exert influence on those within, not the other way around.

Hermeneutics

Radical interpretive sociology also (and more significantly) incorporates hermeneutics, a theoretical orientation that is in agreement with phenomenology that society is made up of taken-for-granted assumptions that construct the fabric of everyday life. Hermeneutics is "eminently phenomenological: [its purpose is] to have the being or thing encountered reveal itself" (Palmer, 1969: 166). It differs from phenomenology, however, in that it places a greater emphasis on reflection and a methodological kind of understanding ("hermeneutic") in order for the sociologist to get at that social reality. Palmer (1969: 215), in his discussion of Gadamer, says that "hermeneutics is the ontology and phenomenology of understanding" – at its core is a basic curiosity about how people understand the world and, ultimately, how they belong to it. Van Manen says that "lived experiences gather hermeneutic significance as we (reflectively) gather them by giving memory to them… [In this way] we assign meaning to the phenomena of everyday life" (1990: 37). To Gadamer, this act of assigning meaning to the mythological essence of lived experience transforms "lived experience" into "experience," giving it "the unity of a significant whole" (1975: 60; quoted in Van Manen, 1990: 37). If, as I have said, phenomenology asks the question, 'What is this experience like?' hermeneutics requires that we ask, 'Why do we see it that way?' At the core, this question is fundamentally an issue of *language*. Palmer explains that the history, tradition, and heritage from which the above question of hermeneutics arises (i.e. what we experience, reflect upon, and take for granted) is "an intrinsically linguistic experience" (1969: 197). It is only through language, as Gadamer asserts, that the world can be experienced in any tangible or knowable way; language exists *prima facae*, before we as actors have 'come on the scene,' and our lifeworlds flow from its meaning, a meaning which existed before us and will continue after we are gone. According to Palmer, "The nature of experience is not a nonlinguistic datum for which one subsequently, through a reflective act, finds words; experience, thinking, and understanding are linguistic through and through, and in formulating an assertion one only uses the words already belonging to the situation" (1969: 203).

Hermeneutics takes seriously Weber's famous concept that the subject matter of sociology is "the interpretative understanding of social action […which] because of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals)… takes into account the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course" (Weber, 1947: 88; quoted in Bonner, 2001: 268). The aim is not to prove empirically that what the sociologist says is empirically provable from the position of positivism (see Bonner, 1994; Bonner, 1997; Bonner, 2001), but rather that the sociologist can both say something meaningful about the phenomenon of interest and take responsibility for that talk (Bonner, 1997). Palmer writes that hermeneutics, through the work of Husserl's student, Martin Heidegger,

> constituted an effort to move away from transcendental subjectivity [i.e. the kind professed by phenomenologists such as Husserl] to a kind of objectivity which stands outside the subject-object distinction, an objectivity which takes the 'facticity' of human existence as its ultimate point of reference… It is the objectivity of allowing the thing that appears to be as it really is for us.
> (1969: 179).

We can therefore see hermeneutics not as a way of verifying or proving the factors of social phenomenon, but as a method for the sociologist (and other social scientists) to reach a deeper level of *understanding* - to 'allow the thing to appear as it really is'. An extension of the different kind of objectivity that hermeneutics is interested in is its emphasis not on exactly what is said in a positivistic sense, but on what was meant. Bonner (1994: 234) makes this point by quoting Gadamer (1989: 118): "the art of nailing someone down to something he or she said is not hermeneutics. Rather hermeneutics is the art of grasping what someone has really wanted to say." In this way, we can see that, in Palmer's words, "the task of hermeneutics is essentially to understand the text, not the author" (1969: 185).

Following Heidegger, hermeneutical phenomenology is rooted in the belief that "'understanding' and 'interpretation' are foundational modes of man's being" (Palmer, 1969: 42). This emphasis on understanding results in a sociology that does not place importance on the researcher standing above or apart from what he or she is researching, but rather one that recognizes the importance of the interpretive dialogue between the researcher's presuppositions and other possibilities, what Bonner (1997: 67) refers to as the "to and fro movement" of interpretive sociology. Thus, the hermeneutic aspect of radical interpretive sociology stresses the significance of *reflection* as the major part of the sociologist's work. The hermeneutic tradition highlights the necessity for a reflexive kind of understanding of how we make sense of the lifeworld or everyday reality. Reflection, in the hermeneutic sense, is not only a theoretical tenet, but a method – a way for the social researcher to come to a deep form of understanding about the social phenomenon he or she is interested in while still remaining faithful to the philosophical underpinnings of interpretive sociology (and the lifeworld itself). It is in this way, as I mentioned above, that radical interpretive sociology requires the intertwining of theory and method. Reflexivity as a method will be discussed further below.

The reflexive nature of hermeneutics (and radical interpretive sociology) manifests itself in its interest in and insistence upon *dialectic* as a methodological feature. What is required is a deep dialogical engagement with the phenomenon that "is both particular and general" (Bonner, 2001: 267). Dialectic conversation takes the researcher (in the 'to and fro' movement discussed above) from the familiar to the strange, from the known to the unknown, from what we think we understand (i.e. take for granted) to what must be questioned and is therefore questionable. Gadamer theorizes that this is the way of the social world, as well – particularly in his emphasis on the historical nature of reality:

> A placement between strangeness and familiarity exists between the historically intended, distanced objectivity of the heritage and our belongingness to a tradition. In this 'between' is the true place of hermeneutics. (1975: 279; quoted in Palmer, 1969: 184).

Heidegger speaks of reflection as "the courage to make the truth of our own presuppositions and the realm of our own goals into the things that most deserve to be called into question" (quoted in Bonner, 1997: 9). Reflection requires courage because it necessitates a willingness to look beyond the answers that the everyday reality of the *Lebenswelt* gives us, and means that we must face the confusion and fear of *aporia* ("the shock…that an understanding of the truth of the real requires" [Bonner, 1997: 89]). Included in this risk of *aporia* is the disturbance that comes from opposing the normative order of the modern scientific outlook itself: as discussed above, the classical science assumption of 'objectivity' "is not a very useful construct for the interpreter… Rather, the criterion of adequacy is *value* or *worth*" (Bonner, 1994: 230). Frequently, as my own research experience has proven, the very taken-for-granted nature of scientific objectivity intrudes on the researcher's desire to follow a different 'criterion of adequacy.' The confusion and fear is made even more urgent because the researcher risks not only the transformation of his or her understanding of the social world, but also more fundamentally of the self. However, it is only through the understanding that methodological reflection offers that the researcher can uncover the meaning of a social experience or reality.

Analytic Theory

Kieran Bonner writes, “Two principles inspire radical interpretive research. Human experience is fundamentally the ‘experience of human finitude’ (Gadamer, 1975: 310-25) and the researcher’s recognition that to seek the truth is to accept the deep need for discourse (Blum and McHugh, 1984: 123-51)” (1997: 145). Analytic theory (also known as dialectical analysis or simply analysis) hinges on the second principle. It was developed primarily in the (often mutually collaborative) works of Alan Blum and Peter McHugh, and shares many of the basic premises of the interpretive theories mentioned above. However, its emphasis on this ‘deep need for discourse’ sets it apart in the specific way that it makes everyday indications into problems that need to be reflexively questioned through a dialectic process of collaboration or conversation. This thesis borrows from analytic theory the fundamental preposition that “life is… not a phenomenon but an impetus; it provides the practical and concrete incentive for reflexive inquiry… [It is] a reminder of the way in which the ordinary has become forgetful of its history” (McHugh et al., 1974: 11). It is thus this social-world-as-impetus which has the need for the deep reflexivity that analytic theory requires of the social theorist.

In this way, it forms a portion of my own theoretical outlook, for as Bonner notes, “The radical (i.e. rooted) position of radical interpretive sociology is that all research findings are forms of interpretation and that accepting certain conclusions is a simultaneous acceptance of a way of relating to the world” (1997: 148). It is this principle that allows me to search for ‘myths’ or themes of discourse within the particular cases at hand. Blum and McHugh (1974; 1984) refer to this culture of myths, or this ‘acceptance of a way of relating to the world,’ as the *grammar* of a situation, in a manner similar to Barthes' use of the linguistic concept of inflexion. I have said that the taken-for-granted myth embedded into the specificity of a culture is like an inflexion in conversation that alters the meaning of what is spoken. If I may stretch the simile further, I can now say that the grammar of a social setting is this aforementioned specificity of a culture itself. Included in this concept of grammar is the idea that it must be questioned, and that doing so requires a specific and strenuous type of [self-] reflection from the theorist. The grammar is what is 'ordinary' – it is that which must be reminded of its history. This dialectical analysis of this history necessarily includes "theoretical interests, ethical understanding, and practical action" (Bonner, 1997: 9), the fundamental elements of radical interpretive sociology that I have already mentioned. Because of this, analytic theory is able to take a broad view of a cultural setting while reflecting on what can seem like the minutiae of everyday life (for example, in McHugh et al.'s *On The Beginning of Social Inquiry* [1974], chapters are devoted to "Snubs," "Motives," "Travel," etc.). However, it is through such minutiae that the complex and deeply-embedded grammar of everyday life can be teased out while at the same being mindful (reflexive, dialectical) of the nature of such teasing out. Bonner writes, "The Analytic element of all social inquiry includes an examination of the ethical and political implications built into assumptions while simultaneously raising for reflection the ethical and political implications built into its own assumptions" (Bonner, 2001: 288). The theoretical purpose of analytic theory in this thesis is to make (and keep) me aware of the ethical and political implications built into my question, as well as to give me the means to understand and question them.

Data Collection

Phenomenological research of any kind requires an interpretive methodology that can "[enable] the researcher to recover the work of reflection built into any and all self-understanding" (Bonner, 1997: 109). It is important to note that radical interpretive perspective involves the intertwining of theory and method. Thus, it has a particular methodology that does not place an emphasis on specific methods *per se*, but rather encourages a specific kind of relationship to the methods used in which what they reveal is placed in a dialectic (dialectic analysis itself being a kind of method). Max van Manen notes the difficulties of identifying in a very specific way the precise methods of interpretive or human sciences. He writes, "It should be clear already that the notion of 'data' is ambiguous within the human science perspective" (1990: 53). In spite of this, he notes that although the type of 'data' used in hermeneutical work, while not so-called 'hard evidence,' is still material: "When someone has related a valuable experience to me then I have indeed gained something, even though the 'thing' gained is not a quantifiable entity" (*ibid*.). This work hinges upon this particular kind of 'something' that can be gained from accounts of lived experience. For this research project, there are some interpretive methods that I have chosen to help me access the experiential resonance of the phenomena I am interested in.

The Use of Case

As I have previously discussed, this thesis addresses the specific cases of the moves to new professional hockey arenas in both Montreal and Toronto. My decision to use these cases was extremely useful for me as I went about trying to explicate (or excavate?) the underlying myths or themes that are taken for granted in the particular discourses surrounding hockey in the two cities. My decision to use a specific case came about gradually, as a result of my ruminations on the nature of the meaning that these two cities make out of their culture of professional hockey. It became clear, after much thought, that a case was needed as a way to help me crystallize the debates that swirl around the teams but are often not brought to light, debated, or discussed in any great detail. In Feagin et al.'s (1991: 6-7) defense of the case, they note,

> There are several fundamental lessons that can be conveyed by the case study:
>
> 1. It permits the grounding of observations and concepts about social action and social structures in natural settings studied at close hand.
> 2. It provides information from a number of sources and over a period of time, thus permitting a more holistic study of complex social networks and of complexes of social action and social meanings.
> 3. It can furnish the dimensions of time and history to the study of social life, thereby enabling the investigator to examine continuity and change in lifeworld patterns.
> 4. It encourages and facilitates, in practice, theoretical innovation and generalization.

These 'lessons' all factored into my work in some way, particularly the latter two, which connect quite strongly to the goals of the Culture of Cities Project. One of the aims of the Culture of Cities has been to work out how the small details of urban existence – particularly 'sites of contestation' as Blum calls them – can point the theorist to both the greater questions that need to be asked, as well as some of the answers to those questions. The methodological tool of the case is useful here, because the cases that I am addressing served, in both the cities, as an area of contestation – an issue that members of the community disagreed over, and in so doing, made visible or material the dialectical struggle for meaning that occurs in all arenas of human action, and which occurs in a particularly strong way in the city, that place of concentrated social activity, and of heightened cultural heterogeneity. As Blum notes, "Cases function as critical occasions for bringing to view collective problem-solving and its invariable ethical character in ways that are both exemplary and illustrative" (2003: 18). It is this capacity for cases to illustrate 'collective problem-solving' that allows me to theoretically develop the particular ways in which these cities address the problem of their mythologies, what Blum calls the "question of the common bond of the city" (2003: 31).

Lived Experience, Archive Research, and Phenomenological Methods

The methodology that follows from radical interpretive sociology focuses heavily on the meaning-structures which actors intersubjectively create in everyday life (phenomenology). As Bonner says, "the subjective element, the meaning of the claim for human action, is precisely what has to be developed, examined, and transformed rather than eliminated" (1997: 95). This claim is, admittedly, extremely contentious within mainstream sociology, which sees such a focus on 'the subjective element' as problematically unscientific and unverifiable. Radical interpretive sociology has addressed this issue; it sees scientific or objective knowledge as being grounded in the subjective and intersubjective realms of culture and history (in other words, the realm of lived experience), and as such as available for reflexive analysis as any other cultural object (see Bonner, 2001; Bonner 1994, Taylor, 1977). For radical interpretive sociology, then, a primary (and necessary) interest for analysis is lived experience. Max van Manen advises the phenomenological researcher to begin "using personal experience as a starting point" (1997: 55), but also notes, "the point of phenomenological research is to 'borrow' other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences in order to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience in the context of the whole of human experience" (62). Such borrowing, he says, may take the form of lived-experience descriptions, interviews, observations, experiential descriptions in literature, biographies or diaries, or art (63-74).

The main source for the aforementioned problematic collection of data for this thesis has been archival research. Such research has helped me to get at the lived experiences of actors from different lifeworlds, focusing particular attention on newspaper accounts of professional hockey in Toronto and Montreal. Specifically, I conducted a comprehensive search for articles pertaining to the moves (organizing the data temporally: before, during, and after the moves) within the archives *The Toronto Star*, *The Montreal Gazette*, and *La Presse*. The newspaper articles act as my primary source of data, providing me not only with the information crucial to understanding the cases as historical events, but also the opinions, remembrances, and emotions that the cases brought forth from various columnists. I also accessed the popular literature discussed previously in the literature review. This I have done in order to put the newspaper articles in a broader historical and social context, thus giving me a clearer picture of the particular cultural milieus to which columnists and journalists in both cities belong. This literature includes, as I have stated, both remembered and fictional narratives. Van Manen speaks to the importance of such narrative voices in phenomenological research:

> [T]he human scientist likes to make use of the works of poets, authors, artists, cinematographers [etcetera] – because it is in this material that the human being can be found as a *situated person*, and it is in this work that the variety and possibility of human experience may be found in condensed and transcended form. (1997: 19)

For this work, gaining an understanding of the perspective of the situated person is especially important, as it is through such an understanding that I can begin to uncover the ground upon which our taken-for-granted assumptions rest.

These sources provide me with access to a rich discourse that reflects the complexity of the relation between a team and its city within the specific case that I am interested in. This discourse can be put in conversation with the theories I have discussed above, and with each other, in an attempt to bring out their taken-for-granted assumptions regarding the relation between the city and its team. This research seeks to use reflective practices to access the "grounds" of the claims of the text. By grounds, I mean the significance that a society gives to a thing, object, or action, a significance that is grounded in a specific social setting but which is then taken for granted as normal or natural. In this, we would agree with (and borrow from) McHugh et al.: "To analyze is… to address the possibility of *any* finding, puzzle, sense, resolution, answer, interest, location, phenomenon, etcetera, etcetera. Analysis is the concern not with anything said or written but with the grounds of whatever is said – the foundations that make what is said possible, sensible, conceivable" (1974: 2).

Thus, the interwoven theory and methodology of radical interpretive sociology requires of the researcher a kind of openness to the possibilities of the social world, a willingness to challenge all assumptions, no matter how dearly they are held by the researcher or the community he or she is researching. Following the reflexive methods of Gadamer, "the methodological discipline is one designed to restrain his [the researcher's] will to master. He is not so much a knower as an experiencer; the encounter is not a conceptual grasping of something but an event in which a world opens itself up to him" (Palmer, 1969: 209). It is in this respect that the researcher must face a challenge to the self – and be willing to affect a change within the self – through the practices of radical interpretive sociology. We see in Palmer's stressing of the words 'experiencer' and ‘event’ the importance of the lived experience of the researcher has in hermeneutical phenomenology, because it is this that allows the researcher to reflexively question the issues at hand. This type of analysis brings us back to the interwoven theories of semiology, phenomenology, and hermeneutics which are placed in dialogue with the claims of political economy (et cetera) in order to develop, analyze, and deepen the myths and themes that can be uncovered.

Related to this is the practice of writing and rewriting in this kind of research. This is a key aspect of the radical interpretive methodology because it is this practice that aids the researcher in being reflexive. To use the terminology of McHugh et al. (1974), it is through the process of writing and rewriting that the researcher has the opportunity to be “collaborative.” Once written, the work becomes a text like any other that can be analyzed as to its assumptions, weaknesses, and strengths. As Max van Manen says, “to be able to do justice to the fullness and ambiguity of the experience of the lifeworld, writing may turn into a complex process of rewriting (re-thinking, re-flecting, re-cognizing)” (1997: 131). This thesis is thus a culmination of this collaborative process of writing and re-writing (collaborative in the sense that once a text is originally written, it is possible for it to then become the interlocutor which requires further inquiry and analysis).   Ultimately, through the use of this reflexive theory/methodology, it has been my goal to be able to uncover what it is that grounds the way that hockey is discussed and thought about in each city, i.e., to uncover what is resonant to each particular urban climate and which colours the way both understand and create a specific professional hockey culture. Methodologically speaking, it has been through my use of case and the interpretive tenets of reflexivity, lived experience, collaboration, and writing/re-writing that I have been able to make this attempt at following Bonner’s advice (2001: 267); that is, of saying something meaningful while at the same time being mindful of taking responsibility for my own talk.

CHAPTER FOUR: BEFORE THE MOVES

The Cases: Montreal (1989-1996) and Toronto (1995-1999)

Montreal

When the first announcement came on August 24, 1989 that the Montreal Canadiens' ownership had decided that renovating the Forum was not feasible, and that new accommodations would have to be found for the team, it would not be true to say that the reaction – from either the public or the media, specifically – was very shocked, outraged, or in any way dramatic. The fact was, most of the Original Six arenas – Chicago Stadium and Madison Square Gardens, for example – were already defunct, their teams having moved on to newer and more spacious arenas. Montreal management, led by club president Richard Corey, managed to defuse most of the potential criticism of the plan by instigating feasibility studies two years prior to this date which looked at the possibility of saving the Forum by upgrading its interior – notably by installing additional and more comfortable seating and particularly expanding upon the number of lucrative luxury boxes. Thus, the nearly seven years leading up to the last game in the Forum passed by with relatively little dissension from those in the city. The attitude was instead largely one of acceptance, observation and/or a growing excitement about the new 'world-class' facility that would soon be opening its doors at 1000 de la Gauchetière.

Toronto

In Toronto, rumblings about the construction of a new hockey arena to replace Maple Leaf Gardens began not too long before the 1996 grand opening of what Montrealers [naively?] referred to as the "New Forum" or "Forum II" for the years leading up to its inception until it was revealed that it was to be called instead the Molson

Centre. Cliff Fletcher hinted at the likelihood of such construction in July of 1991 when he took over as the Maple Leafs' team president; as he put it, "The facts of life… are that we have to provide our fans with the same amenities as fans are getting in other North American cities with new facilities. Sports fans pay top dollar and expect all the comforts available to them in the new arenas" (quoted in the *Toronto Star*; February 25, 1995; A2). By 1996, the organization was actively seeking a location for the new building. It was this aspect – location – that created the most debate in the city and for the hockey club. From the start, the Leafs rejected the idea of joining with Toronto's professional basketball team, the Raptors, in their construction of the Air Canada Centre. Instead, they began plans to build the new arena about a block north, at Union Station, which was (and is) owned by the City of Toronto. This site was attractive because of its centrality of place and the ease of transportation to and from games, concerts, etc. Also, as a familiar and 'place-able' city landmark, "reinventing the Gardens," as journalist Mitch Potter put it (*Toronto Star*; August 16, 1997; L3), seemed to be a strong possibility because of the potential to transplant the particular identity and mystique that people associated with the Gardens into a new space that was still familiar and meaningful to the community. However, this plan fell apart along with the talks between the Maple Leafs and the city on July 19, 1997 – the two sides were reportedly still $40 million apart when discussion was halted for the last time.

In the fall of that same year, the Leafs looked seriously at building the stadium at Toronto's Exhibition Place, or the site of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE). This would infuse life into the somewhat stagnant "Ex," as it is known, and bring revenues and (most importantly) people to its location on the edge of the Toronto city limits. But the idea drew criticism from both the media and the public – it was thought to be too far removed from the city's downtown, that transportation would be too costly and too difficult to procure, and that the Ex lacked the spatial and mythological (in the Barthesian sense) identifying presence to be a suitable replacement for the Gardens. The Leafs were thus left with their options rapidly running out, and with the Raptors' Air Canada Centre going up at a pace that would soon make it impossible for the hockey team to make its construction a joint effort.

And so, on February 16, 1998, the announcement was made that the Leafs were going to join the Raptors in the ACC, in spite of their previous assertions to the contrary. This deal came about in a particularly convoluted manner. As the *Toronto Star* ("New empire on Bay St. needs CEO," March 4, 1998; Sports[5]) reported later, the "Leaf-Raptor deal was constructed not by… [Maple Leafs and Maple Leaf Gardens' chairman] Steve Stavro but by Leaf minority owner Larry Tanenbaum and by those providing the bulk of the financing, the [Ontario teachers pension fund] and the TD Bank, both of which, according to multiple sources, had rejected the Leafs' much-ballyhooed arena plan [at the Canadian National Exhibition], leading to the final deal." The agreement reached involved a takeover of the Raptors and the Air Canada Centre by the Leafs' organization, thus forming a new corporation, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Ltd. As well, it involved (in a somewhat ironic turn of events) the acquisition of the rights to the previously mentioned Union Station from the owners of the station, the Toronto Terminal Railways Company (itself jointly owned by Canadian National and Canadian Pacific). Additionally, a deal had to be reached with the City of Toronto, which owned two-thirds of the land the Station was built upon. The acquisition of Union Station was important to the Leafs/Raptors alliance because it provided them with the opportunity to construct, first, a 'gateway' to the ACC and the waterfront commercial sector, and secondly, possible future corporate spaces, such as office towers and hotels. This was something that the acquisition of the ACC alone would not have allowed the Maple Leaf corporation to do. With this complex web of corporate deal-making finished, the Leafs were finally able to say that they would move to their new arena at the same time that the ACC was originally slated to be opened, in February of 1999.

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[5] In some cases where newspaper articles were found online, page numbers were omitted. In this event, I include the title of the article in lieu of the page number.

Gadamer's Conception of "The Game"

Much of what is written about the social issues surrounding professional hockey seems to take for granted the fundamental nature that hockey itself plays in the cultural dialogue it creates. From a hermeneutical perspective, this contradicts the concept of *Dasein* or "Being"; that is, it neglects the important sociological duty of "having the being or thing encountered reveal itself" (Palmer, 1969: 166) rather than imposing upon it a purely subjective social meaning (i.e. a meaning that takes the subjectivity of the experience as primary, rather than the experience in and of itself). A hermeneutical approach reminds us that hockey must not be taken for granted in our discourse on historical buildings, moving, and the city, but instead treated as its own subject that can offer us insight and understanding for the remaining objects of study. In this way, we treat hockey as analogous to Gadamer's (1985: 92) conception of a piece of artwork (as Gadamer himself did in his formulation of 'the game' as 'the aesthetic'). He writes, "the work of art has its true being in the fact that it becomes an experience changing the person experiencing it. The 'subject' of the experience of art, that which remains and endures, is not the subjectivity of the person who experiences it, but the work itself." The game – like the work of art - has a reality of its own, independent of who is viewing it, yet intrinsically connected to those viewers, as it is only through their experience of the game that it can exist at all. Palmer (1969: 172) elaborates on this point:

> When we take the game and not human subjectivity as our starting point, then it takes on a different aspect. A game is only a game as it comes to pass, yet while it is being played it is master. The fascination of the game casts a spell over us and draws us into it; it is truly the master over the player. The game has its own special spirit.

It is this spirit, this masterful quality, which needs to be at the centre of this research – in doing so, the work retains a mindfulness about the 'game-ness' of hockey, as it is encountered and experienced in the world, by both the players and others associated with the game. Peter Gzowski has articulated some of the lingering spell that hockey can have for its players. He writes, "what brought us to the game remains: the speed, the grace, the kaleidoscope patterns, the feel of the wind through your hair or billowing your sweater, the crunch of skates against ice, the thud of the puck" (1998: xii). What he is talking about may, to some (particularly in the mainstream social sciences), seem like the ephemera of the game, far less important than the million-dollar contracts, rapidly expanding league, controversial rule changes, and international play. However, it is precisely this ephemera that becomes interesting when we do as Palmer suggests, taking 'the game and not human subjectivity' as our primary interest. In doing so, Gzowski's comment becomes not just sentimentality; it shows us that there is, as Gadamer noted, a power in the game that commands attention. Hockey, as a game and as a phenomenological experience, is something that can be entered into, that one can lose one's self in. In fact, it is required of those who enter into the game that they *do* lose themselves within the game's specific reality; Palmer says that failing to do this is tantamount to ruining the ‘game’ experience altogether: “A game is ‘only a game’ and not ‘serious’; as a game, however – starting with the game itself now – it has a holy kind of seriousness. Indeed, someone who does not take it seriously ‘spoils the game.’” (Palmer, 1969: 172).

What does this matter for the question we are addressing? How is it related to our issue of two professional hockey teams moving from their old buildings to new ones? Preliminarily, it reminds us that the experience of hockey as a game, though it may be obscured by other related cultural issues (issues of money, corporate power, elitism, civic pride, community boosterism, etc.), is always at the centre of the discourse; without its sturdy phenomenological reality, any further socio-cultural discussion would collapse (or, more correctly, reorganize itself around some other centering issue). Thus far, I have discussed Gadamer’s analogy of the game only in relation to the players who experience its spell. But what of the vast majority of people who occupy the buildings that interest me – the fans themselves? Can we say that they experience the game as the players do? Certainly they have a phenomenologically and objectively different experience of the game than do the players. But I would argue that they do have a similar *kind* of experience in that, for them, too, the game – in their enjoyment of it as an experience of the aesthetic as in Gadamer’s analogy – is a phenomenon that can hold them in thrall, into which they can descend, their consciousness immersed in its ‘holy kind of seriousness.’ Gadamer says as much in *Truth and Method*; in his words, “When a play activity becomes a play in the theatre a total switch takes place. It puts the spectator in the place of the player” (1975: 99). Here, of course, Gadamer is describing the meanings that both players and spectators can ascribe, and the transformation of consciousness that can occur in these particular times and places of ‘holy seriousness.’ This special consciousness that envelopes the spectator as well as the player is a traditional hallmark of hockey fandom in both Toronto and Montreal. Doug Harvey, captain of the Canadiens in the 1950s and ‘60s, commented on this kind of seriousness in Montreal in a 1960 interview with Trent Frayne of *Maclean’s* magazine. Frayne writes,

> Harvey… says the Montreal fans have a good deal to do with the team’s urge to win, though not necessarily the fans who comprise the idolatrous Forum legion and shower down their teeming support. ‘The boys are pretty well known in Montreal,’ he says of the players. ‘Any time we lost a game, even on the road, people on the street want to know what the hell happened – in two languages. It’s the same all summer; you can have a pretty good summer when you win in the spring.’ (1998: 7)

The same is true for Toronto fans and players; in that city, as Gzowski puts it in a 1964 *Maclean’s* article, “The Leafs are a part of the community, recognized everywhere, and carry the reputation and tradition of their team with them wherever they go” (1998: 20). In both cities, hockey is taken seriously by fans as a game; more to the point, they see it as a game that says something about their respective city. To use the terminology of Blum and McHugh and their associates (1974; 1984), hockey is part of the *grammar* of Toronto and Montreal. An article in the *Toronto Star* (December 15, 1997; E1) touches on this in its commentary on Leaf management’s consideration of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) as a possible site for the ‘new Gardens.’ The Ex, as it is called, is near the edge of the city, and

> from its inception… has been a place set apart… It couldn’t be like everyday life and never was. Though the CNE has lost much of its appeal in recent years, it retains the carnival aura that distinguishes it from the surrounding city.
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> Hockey, by contrast, is part of the daily life of Toronto, an abiding obsession that has helped us through many long, dark winters.

For this writer, then, hockey (particularly Maple Leaf hockey) does not share in and would not benefit from a ‘carnival aura’ that characterizes the Ex. It is a ‘part of daily life,' a kind of common denominator that adds rhythm to the everyday. This way of thinking about the game, its players, and its fans allows us to look beyond the immediate, purely empirical aspect of the issues involved (for example, how many fans experience the game as Gadamer theorizes it? How many do not? What kinds of people are these?) in such a way that the being of the game can reveal itself to us without having to rely on purely subjective opinions or what 'objective evidence' we can glean (or create) from the situation. By seeing the issue in this way, we are able to begin to get beyond the particularities of the case and see in what way the 'spirit' of this issue is deeply embedded in the generalities of the social world.

A corollary of Gadamer's concept of the game is that there is a certain fragility to its essence, an ever-present possibility that its very 'game-ness' may at any moment be lost to the self-consciousness of those involved, thereby losing its 'holy seriousness.' As I have said, the game – in order for it to be a true game – must be played unselfconsciously, without reflection on the viewer and what his or her view might be about the play in question. (I am including the fan in this discussion of 'play'.) It is not that the game itself is in danger of being lost entirely; as Palmer tells us, "The game… has its own nature independent of the consciousness of those who play it" (1969: 174). The danger lies in the fact that the people involved in its play may become forgetful of this independent nature or focus instead on some aspect outside the seriousness of the game. In doing so, they change the nature or the aesthetic appeal (in Gadamer's sense) of the very game that had previously been their unreflective focus. In this event, the inherent spirit of the game winks out of existence. This inherent spirit had previously been instantly recognizable (as Gadamer reminds us, "The joy of recognition [i.e. of recognizing the game as game] is rather that more becomes known than is already known. In recognition what we know emerges, as if through an illumination, from all the chance and variable circumstances that condition it and is grasped in its essences" [1985: 102]). When the focus is removed from the game as game, it loses its game-ness and becomes an unrecognizable imitation – in other words, it is 'spoiled.' To quote Palmer (1969: 172), "when a sport becomes primarily something for viewers, it may become distorted and lose its character as a game."

We see this tension – the fragility of essential spirit (and spiritedness of) 'the game'– as a part of the critical occasions I am interested in. Both the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens were designed as places for entertainment, where hockey fans could lose themselves (phenomenologically) in the spirit of the game. But because they were developed for 'entertainment' the two arenas could also be characterized as spaces which were not necessarily about the game at all – from a more political economy perspective, they could be seen as constructed by the teams' owners with profit in mind, not whether or not the fans were there to experience the game as a game, or if they were there for the spectacle, or just 'to be seen'. This perspective points out that the very purpose of the construction of these arenas was for the commodified viewing of hockey-as-entertainment. For some, this makes the idea that the buildings may be part of the special energy of 'the game' as Gadamer formulated it overly sentimental or romantic. For example, in a 1994 interview, anthropologist David Howes observed:

> In our unreflective moments, we get caught up in the game and think we're having a spontaneous experience. But not only are there the overlays of commercialism; we also have to remember that this is all part of a constructed experience, one that is very carefully orchestrated and rule-bound" (The Record [Waterloo Region]; January 29, 1994; A9).

Howes' quote reminds us that we need to be circumspect about any attitude of reverence or simplicity we may find in the discussion over hockey in Montreal and Toronto, and particularly the moves from the original venues. He points out that there is a danger in the 'unreflective' kind of action that Gadamer speaks about as essential to appreciating a game without spoiling it. In doing so, we may 'think we're having a spontaneous experience' when in actuality, we are being manipulated by the 'carefully-orchestrated' corporate machine.

Howes' remark seems to say that the only way (or perhaps just the 'best way') to be a fan of professional hockey while avoiding the trap of being misled or 'caught up' in something that isn't real is to be carefully reflective of the experience. Referring back once more to Gadamer, we understand that this inevitably 'spoils the game,' in the sense that it turns it into something it was not meant to be. It seems, then, that the modern fan is caught up in a paradox: the only way to be a fan of a professional team, yet not be manipulated by the powerful corporate bodies of the NHL, is to not be a fan of the game of hockey since it will be spoiled by the kind of reflexivity required by Howes. This is reminiscent of what Blum has written about Bélanger's aforementioned work on the move from the Forum to the Molson Centre: "The modern subject [i.e. the kind of subject referenced by Howes] is at worst a victim and at best (reflectively) a critic who knows which way the wind is blowing" (2001: 5). This kind of subject is hopelessly mired in a Catch-22 situation – either trapped into the pointless continuity of action created by false consciousness, or 'freed' by the cynical understanding of how the world really works.

In spite of this Maple Leaf Gardens and the Forum both became linked to a kind of mystique that could be seen as antithetical to the kind of image of hockey viewing that

Howes gives us. That the buildings were a part of two similar corporate entities did not preclude them from becoming important social spaces independent from their identities as mere commodities. Anouk Bélanger notes, “The Forum had emerged as a vital public space in Montreal. It was a commercial space, of course, but ‘the people’ had claimed the building symbolically over the years” (Bélanger, 2002: 71). Both the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens became more than just vessels into which the raw materials for professional hockey could be poured. They both attained a special kind of power for hockey fans as the places specific to their cities where the ‘holy seriousness’ of hockey could be acted out. How are we to reconcile this special meaning with Howes’ warning? Have these fans indeed been brainwashed entirely by capitalist ideology? To do so implies that their agency is severely threatened by the forces of capitalism, to the extent that virtually no decision or commitment can be seen as independent from corporate interests. This explains Howes’ emphasis on the need to be reflexive about what we are ‘really’ getting when we buy into hockey-entertainment. Yet Blum reminds us, “We cannot *start* by treating what is popular as false” (2001:7). Doing so would make us forgetful of the intricacies of human experience, and the ways in which citizens of an urban space do have agency in shaping the identities of their surroundings. Following Gadamer, “Any full understanding of a phenomenon has to include the way community, history, and culture operate in such an understanding, even (and most especially) in the kind of understanding that specifically seeks to exclude these features” (Bonner, 1998: 40). To discount the Montreal and Toronto connection to their old arenas and to their hockey teams would not recall the ways in which these cities’ ‘communities, histories, and cultures’ provided an aura of civic identity from which the meanings of the buildings could emerge. Saying that these communities, histories, and cultures stand outside the political economic spectrum would not be true; yet neither is it fair to say that the capitalist system formulates their being entirely.

Hockey Arena Mystique

What has not been reflected upon thus far in this work is the question: why does it matter where the Maple Leafs or the Canadiens play hockey? How can these two moves be such ‘critical occasions’ in the lives of these cities? I have said that the two arenas had developed a special kind of power over the citizens of their respective cities over the decades that they housed their professional hockey teams, acted as concert halls, and served as public spaces for political debates, among other things. But what does this ‘special power’ mean, and how can I say that these buildings have them? There is a sense, as I read through the literature, that the mystique that the arenas had in their cities was taken for granted, i.e. seen as a social fact. They are repeatedly (and almost casually) referred to as ‘shrines,’ ‘cathedrals,’ and ‘temples’ by sportswriters, team management, and fans alike. The aura that these buildings had in their cities was often commented on in the press. For example, *Hockey Night in Canada* announcers and co-authors Chris Cuthbert and Scott Russell write the following about the Montreal Forum in *The Rink,* their book on hockey arenas around Canada:

> We became convinced that this was the perfect rink in a city devoted to hockey… we could not deny the fact that the Forum was someplace special, almost magical, and it captured our attention, not to mention our respect, immediately… The Forum was a place that hockey players aspired to. They held tremendous regard for the building and what it meant to the game. (1997: xii)

Again, this reminds us of the claim of the ‘special significance’ that the Forum has both in Montreal as a city (“a city devoted to hockey”), to hockey players, and to fans of the game. In the Barthesian sense, this arena was mythological; its presence was a sign, a signification of a long and storied history, a powerful and unique tradition, and a multitude of heroic efforts of legendary status. The city made the Forum significant, because its very architecture symbolized, through many years, all the principles and particularities that Montrealers could take as their own. The legendary qualities of the Forum are reminiscent of what de Certeau said about the city – that stories and legends are required in any urban landscape; they are what make a place ‘haunted’, and therefore inhabitable: “There is no place that is not haunted by many different spirits hidden there in silence, spirits one can ‘invoke’ or not. Haunted places are the only ones people can live in” (1984: 108). Certainly, similar claims could be and have been made about Maple Leaf Gardens; it too had its share of glory and heroism. As in Montreal, its walls stood for something more than just its everyday purpose as a hockey arena and concert hall – it, too, was a sign of Toronto’s hopes and desires for identity and meaning for their city as a special kind of place – not just a place like any other. Although I will discuss such issues of place and emplacement further in the following chapter, it is important to recognize here their importance in this brief discussion of the symbolic and mythological significance of these two arenas.

In spite of this special significance, as I have alluded to above, there was no particular outcry or great outrage when the announcements regarding the respective moves came in either Montreal or Toronto. As Michael Farber writes of Montreal:

> The Canadiens – one of nine National Hockey League teams who were at one time pondering new rinks and the revenues attached to them – braced for an outcry over the desecration of a shrine and the other overheated language that surrounds The World’s Most Serious Hockey Team. It never came.
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> “Not one letter,’ said Francois Seigneur, the Canadiens’ marketing consultant. ‘Maybe Ronald (Corey) got one, but I don’t think so” (*The Montreal Gazette*; April 4, 1991; F1).

Neither was their any special public pressure against the move in Toronto, although opinions towards the move were quite mixed:

> Leafs project manager Tom Anselmi said surveys of Leaf fans show even though many express dissatisfaction with the existing site, a solid 25 percent don't want the team to move at all.
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> "There is no public pressure for us to move. In fact, the pressure is if anything in the other direction," [Toronto city councilor Rob] Maxwell said. (*The Toronto Star*; July 15, 1997; A6).

In spite of this ambiguity, however, *The Toronto Star* reported little outright dissension, and some articles highlighted the 'necessity' of a move, as Garth Woolsey does in the following quote:

> Sacrilegious as it may sound, it's high time they tore down Maple Leaf Gardens; time the Toronto Maple Leafs moved into a new building and with it, a new era (*The Toronto Star*; February 25, 1995; A2).

We might surmise that it follows from the above discussion that these buildings were an integral part of the city's identity, so much so that their loss – at least 'loss' in the sense of them losing their former purpose – would be the cause of at least some public consternation. However, both Toronto and Montreal, as Saskia Sassen might point out, are "un/willing participants" (Bonner, 2002: 5) in the 'spectacular' (Bélanger, 2002) capacities of globalization and its concomitant characteristics of human productivity, consumption, and progressive spatial transformation. In this sense, the tenets of globalization are very much taken for granted in a modern urban society such as the ones in Toronto and Montreal. Therefore globalization, as one result of the triumph of instrumental or formal reason and rationality in modernity, privileges a certain kind of lifeworld. A part of this lifeworld is that the world itself will change in more or less a progressive manner – that progress (generally understood to mean 'towards a positive change') is one inevitable and understandable part of the nature of society. It is this that

Woolsey was alluding to above in his exhortation that Toronto and the Maple Leafs needed to change venues in order to move into 'a new era.' As such, the announcements that the mythological, traditional hockey venues in Montreal and Toronto were going to change was not shocking, but could be explicable through the idea of progressive society – and in this sense, the moves themselves exuded an aura of inevitability.

Linked to this idea of progress is the notion that change and especially growth (either spatially or through intrinsic improvement) was an essential – and generally admirable – part of the cosmopolitan city. A city which espouses and exemplifies the ideal of cosmopolitanism is one in which progress finds a home. The cosmopolitan city may be described with many adjectives; it is modern, worldly in the deepest sense of the term; forward-thinking, accepting of many cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs. In Blum's terminology (2003: 115-140), it is 'hospitable to foreign influences'; it is 'up-to-date.' Cosmopolitanism is closely related to globalization, but it seems as well to indicate elements of refinement and culture that the term 'globalization' does not necessarily include. Cities that are cosmopolitan may proudly consider themselves "open…not just to global guests but to the very idea of openness. This vision of emplacement as hospitality to foreign influence marks cities as either cosmopolitan or rude" (Blum, 2003: 123). The opposite, then of cosmopolitanism, is 'rudeness' – a word that implies a lack of sophistication, modernity, a 'backwoods' quality, if I may use such a term here. In the article I mention above by Garth Woolsey, the concept of cosmopolitanism is a major part of his argument in favour of moving the Maple Leafs to a more modern venue. He gives two reasons why the trend in the NHL has been toward building new arenas. In the first, he agrees with Harvey: "new buildings are fountains of new revenues." The second reason links to the present discussion, as he continues, “But also because the old ones do not meet the demands of a ticket-buying public moving into the 21st century” (*Toronto Star*; February 25, 1995; A2). His argument is that although Maple Leaf Gardens does hold a ‘special significance’ in Toronto, and is seen as notably symbolic of a specific part of the city’s heritage and tradition, this does not preclude the desire for a new venue – one which has a more cosmopolitan appeal. This statement is mirrored by a similar one from Montreal Gazette writer Jack Todd:

> Before every tavern-fly in town starts crying into his stein about the loss of the place where Frank Selke and Toe Blake and Maurice Richard and Jean Beliveau plied their trade, however, it must be said that the move is probably necessary. [He continues,] Compared with such sites as Calgary’s Saddledome, the Forum is already too small, and the constant demand for more seating left [Club President Richard] Corey with no choice but to renovate or move (August 25, 1989; A3).

This quote draws attention to the cosmopolitan antithesis, ‘rudeness,’ in Todd’s pejorative use of the image of the ‘tavern-fly crying into his stein.’ As well, the move to a more cosmopolitan ideal is voted ‘necessary’ because the Forum could no longer measure up to modern standards. This corresponds with the desires of a modern society: a public ‘moving into the 21st century’ is more likely to demand up-to-date amenities and luxuries. Part of the lure of cosmopolitanism is that it affords the temptation and possibility of giving the city a building (etc.) that is the newest and, therefore, best in cosmopolitan terms. The cosmopolitanism of a city *vis à vis* the globalization of our times thus seems to accept and in many cases to glorify both newness and difference, making ‘objects of desire’ (Blum, 2003) out of new technologies, ‘better’ ways of living, heterogeneity of culture and lifestyle, etc., as well as the city’s tenacious ability to capture, create, and concentrate such cosmopolitan elements.

However, as we moderns all know and have experienced, the lures and promise of cosmopolitanism is always problematic; its gifts to us often seem to contain as well some painful tradeoffs. David Harvey warns us that this cosmopolitan desire for what he calls 'spatial transformation' may have more complex, negative consequences:

> Spatial transformations… have to be understood in terms of the expansionary thrust of capital accumulation. Such transformations are wrought through the 'creative destruction' of the landscapes that went before. The tensions and contradictions entailed in the continuous pressure to reorganize the city's spaces make for complex and unpredictable interactions. This becomes all the more evident when fetishistic readings of the city's spaces take hold. Fierce loyalties to this or that place within the city's spaces (the place of community, of commodity exchange, of state symbolism, or whatever) become barriers to spatial transformation. Curiously, capitalism creates conditions in which the spaces of the city are almost certain to be fetished in this way at the same time as it sets in motion processes of creative destruction which reveal all too clearly what the hidden historical hand is made of (1989: 250).

Harvey here is establishing the peculiar relationship towards space and spatial transformation that he says was shaped by the modern forces of capitalism. He tells us that capitalism requires the transformation of space because through such transformation, a greater accumulation of wealth can be achieved. However, capitalism also creates a curious opposite effect in that it works to 'fetish' or manufacture 'fierce loyalties' out of anything it markets; this includes those old spaces that are no longer necessary from a financial standpoint. Here again, we have a reformulation of the warning that the anthropologist David Howes gave us above: that the very strong and ever-present hand of modern capitalism makes us grow attached to (i.e. fetish) what is being sold, and it does this through the corresponding manufacturing of our own false consciousness. This quote from Harvey may help us explicate the curious emotional ambiguity over the moves in Toronto and Montreal. He points us to a tension, one he says is wrought generally by capitalism and the politics of accumulation: these factors create an environment in which reaching ever-higher cosmopolitan goals (through the progressive processes of gentrification, renovation, suburbanization, etc.) is very seductive. On the other hand, they also create the fierce loyalties and fetishistic sentiments that he says are what make giving up 'the old,' as Blum would call it, so difficult within a society.

Harvey here draws our attention to the necessity for us to maintain suspicion to that which we long to give our commitment. Note how this subverts de Certeau's concept of 'haunted places' by making their haunting a result of the careful manipulation of our desire for meaning and objects upon which to bestow our 'fierce loyalties' by the same system that created these objects in the first place. De Certeau, you will remember, claimed that "haunted places are the only ones people can live in" (1984: 108), and that such haunting is omnipresent in any place because it is part of the human condition to create what he might term 'palimpsests of meaning' – meaning overwriting meaning through history and space. If we agree with Harvey in saying that such hauntings are fetishistic and cannot be trusted, what does this mean for the habitability of the city? Could we see another formulation that allows for meanings to be formed that, while not entirely escaping from the market forces which guide all of Western society, allow for a popular (in the sense of 'public') mythology to emerge that lets people *live* in the city in de Certeau's sense?

In his own way, Alan Blum formulates a similar kind of tension as does Harvey; a tension which, he says, is omnipresent in the modern urban environment. He writes,

> The cosmopolitan city, hospitable at its core to influences of all sort [sic], including the movement of people who come to it for freedom and opportunity, retains an enmity in its parochial ways and means towards the very influences it attracts. (2003: 125).

Blum later notes that this 'enmity' is a kind of skepticism towards the lure of cosmopolitanism; it is a questioning of this allure, about whether it can really deliver all that it seems to promise. This is reminiscent of Harvey's implicit warning about the dangers of fetishism (false consciousness, succumbing to corporate ideologies, etc.). But Blum's quote also focuses our attention on the very real tendency for cities to be attached to their 'parochial ways' in spite of their cosmopolitanism. It is the insistence on this attachment to locality which is at the heart of the tension – the lure of cosmopolitanism is strong, and has many positive aspects for the growth and continuing health of the modern city; however, there remains the feeling that cosmopolitanism in its extreme form can breed nothing but alienation, anomie, and lack of place because it neglects to maintain a relationship with what it is that makes the city-as-place unique, different, a 'place like no other.' Kieran Bonner tells us that there is always a dialectic conversation taking place in the city involving "the tension between the city as a stable home which enables a meaningful connection between past deeds and future renewal, and the city as an un/willing participant in the celebration of constant change and consumerism" (2002: 5). Because this tension is dialectically engaged, by its very nature it cannot be 'solved' – there is no one 'right answer' for the city that, if come to, would create a utopia. Instead, it is carried out as is the rest of human existence as a conversation, and in the grey areas. That there is a necessity for this dialogue – that both locality and cosmopolitanism must be a part of the conversation – means that the city is committed to both in some way. This commitment acknowledges the significance of the new, the modern, the up-to-date, and the different, while still maintaining that there is worth in the old, traditional, and familiar. This is the only way in which people can live, to paraphrase de Certeau; it is what makes a city livable. In Blum's terms, this tension is a 'site of contestation' in the city, and the cases at hand help to make this contestation explicit.

We can now see that those ‘fierce loyalties’ over space and its transformation that Harvey discusses as ‘fetishistic’ are one aspect of this tension – they insist upon meaningful connections to place in spite of its ir/rationality or even potential wrong-headedness. This is ironic because, as Blum says, “The ambiguity integral to cosmopolitanism can be noted in the fact that both corporate capitalism and socialism could treat the commitment to locality as a seat of prejudice, whether stubborn or mythic, that is, as reactionary in our present moment” (2003: 138). In this aspect, Harvey is theoretically akin to his interlocutor, the ideology of modern capitalism, in treating the loyalties of locality as fetishistic or ‘reactionary’ (although certainly it must be remembered that corporate capitalism may indeed see such sentimental or prejudiced reactions as an opportunity for commercialism/consumerism). Radical interpretive sociology reminds us that we must reclaim this part of the tension – the engagement with the local - in order to place the phenomena at hand more firmly in the centre of our theorizing. Again, in Blum’s words, “if loving one’s own and what is near is done as part of collective life, even if it seems to us to be in error, it still needs to be the starting point for any phenomenological approach to culture because we understand a people through its errors every bit as much as through the truths with which we agree” (2003: 138).

We are now able to formulate the ambiguous nature of the reactions by the citizens of Toronto and Montreal to the announcements of the moves as indicative of the ever present tension between ‘past deeds and future renewal.’ Before I move on from this chapter, I want first to briefly discuss the particularity that each city brought to this tension. Both are ‘global cities,’ as Sassen would assert, and therefore both cities face many of the same social forces and challenges. Both faced issues of the loss of a traditional space, questions of identity and meaning, and had to deal with the importance of location in the hopes of re-creating what magic they could in the new space. But can we say anything is particularly distinctive within these cases about these cities on a cultural level? During my research, I did note that the Montreal public and media were more likely to comment on the continuation of tradition through the game. For example, Jack Todd quotes his colleague, Red Fisher:

> I don't like to look back. I've spent half my life in the Forum, but that's past. The good things that happened there won't go away because they move. Big business means earning the maximum dollar. Maybe it's a terrible thing to have to leave the temple, but you just build a bigger temple. What's happened at the Forum can't be taken away from there. The Canadiens matter, but I don't think it matters a hoot where they play (*The Montreal Gazette*, August 25, 1989; A3).

And, as Michael Farber wrote following the ground-breaking ceremony for the Molson Centre:

> Of course, it will still be the Forum. Madison Square Garden in New York is still the Garden even though there have been four buildings on three sites during its 112 years, because a great building is more than steel and brick. A classic arena is like a home, to be treasured for what transpired there, for what it represents. The Forum was no Coliseum, not Parthenon, no Wrigley Field. Other than those loopy crossed hockey sticks on the lighted escalators, the Forum is about as distinguished architecturally as an M Store. But Forum I was special because 22 of the Canadiens' 23 Stanley Cups were won there, because for 67 years. Howie Morenz and Rocket Richard and Jean Beliveau, and Guy Lafleur turned it into a spectacular place.
>
> A city is a living thing, and evolution is not merely good but necessary. Molson opened a window and displayed a mock up of the 21st century yesterday. You couldn't hate it (*The Montreal Gazette*, August 4, 1991; F1).

Two years later, he writes,

> The ghosts of 24 Stanley Cups surely will be moved, too, when the time comes during or after the 1995-96 season. If you accept the notion of a city as something that evolves, then ghosts can haunt more than one house. Other than the crossed hockey sticks for escalators and the fabulous sight lines, the Forum was nothing much to see. What made it special were the achievements that it witnessed, the greatness for which it was a show case.
>
> The people made the Forum; the Forum didn't make the people. Just call the movers, stamp the ghosts "Fragile" and get on with it (*The Montreal Gazette*; June 23, 1993; A1/A2).

These quotes bring us back to our original discussion of Gadamer's concept of 'the game.' These speakers are formulating the move not as a tragedy (although they do see it as being sad in a nostalgic sense), but as a way to highlight Montreal's special relation to its hockey team. They point out that it is the game itself that brought the 'holy kind of seriousness' to the Forum in the first place, and the game, they argue, remains and will continue. And just as hockey made the Forum, so did 'the people' – it is through their process of attaching mythical symbolism to the space (as the site of 'their' triumph) that the Forum was made great. In this, the people share in the holy seriousness of the game of hockey; their meaning-creating actions make visible their belief that hockey does have a seriousness, an import, some special quality that belongs inherently to Montreal that makes it possible for them to turn their own venue for hockey into an important space for their city's identity. This staunch belief, a theme that runs particularly strongly through the Montreal case, highlights the special relationship that Montreal has to hockey (and vice versa) in that it draws attention to that quality about Montreal that made Michael Farber refer to the Canadiens (somewhat stingingly) as "The World's Most Serious Hockey Team" (*The Montreal Gazette*; April 4, 1991; F1). The Canadiens have a history in Montreal that transcends hockey; or rather, it makes a symbol or sign of hockey in a semiological sense in a way that is particular to the city and its surrounding culture. Belanger tells us that the Canadiens have "served to champion both Montreal's civic identity and Québécois cultural identities for nearly a century" (2002: 70). In Montreal, the people tend to be serious about hockey because of the seriousness of what it has stood for in the past, and, as some undoubtedly feel, continues to stand for – the potential for a strong and autonomous Quebecois society in spite of external Anglo pressures, and its victory in the face of such adversity (see Salutin, 1977; Gruneau & Whitson, 1993: 101; Belanger, 2002). This case makes visible that need to validate the 'holy seriousness' of the Canadiens in Montreal and, highlights the city's desire to ensure that the Canadiens continue to matter in spite of modern difficulties.

The Toronto example brings our attention to another issue: the question of location. The main source of dissent in Toronto was over the issue of where the team's management was going to be able to build the new arena. The team's management itself understood the necessity for a good location, as Larry Tanenbaum illustrates in the following statement:

> In a recent interview, Leafs' director Larry Tanenbaum said the team must choose a top-notch site for a new home acceptable to fans who maintain a strong attachment to Maple Leafs [sic] Gardens, at Carlton and Church Sts.
>
> 'If we go down-market, we're going to get slaughtered,' Tanenbaum said.
>
> 'For hockey, it (Air Canada Centre) is just another four walls and a roof. People will said, 'Why… did they (Leafs) ever leave Maple Leaf Gardens for a site on the other side of the railway tracks?' (*Toronto Star*; July 15, 1997; A6).

Toronto citizen Dave Errington, in a comment for a *Toronto Star* column, also shared his concern that the 'new Gardens' be built downtown:

> 'I'd like to see it stay downtown. The Leafs are part of downtown. It would be better if they could find a site near the old Gardens so the tradition of College and Yonge could continue.' (*Toronto Star*; November 23, 1997; p?).

A December 15, 1997 article agreed:

> From the city's point of view, anything that would bring life to Exhibition Place is desirable. But the key to developing the site lies in transportation, not a series of ad hoc projects, no matter how spectacular. The best thing about the existing Gardens has always been its location, after all, not its amenities, its comforts and certainly not its architecture (*Toronto Star*; E1).

The issue here seems to be one of centrality; these statements draw our attention to the particular place of the Maple Leafs within the culture of Toronto. To the public, especially, the Leafs as a team are not part of the cosmopolitan desire for the new or up-to-date. Instead, they are comfortable, familiar; as I quoted above, the team is "part of the daily life of Toronto, an abiding obsession that has helped us through many long, dark winters" (*Toronto Star*, December 15, 1997; E1). The general consensus in Toronto seemed to be that the Leafs should not be relegated to an arena – no matter how fabulously cosmopolitan – that could not, through dint of geography and/or location make it more difficult for the continuation of the everyday quality that is emblematic of the culture of hockey in Toronto.

Much of Toronto's particular culture lies in its self-identification with size, power, and difference. It touts itself as the most cosmopolitan city in Canada; it is the Canadian hub of the business world and is one of the most multicultural areas in the country, something it takes pride in. In this, it necessarily displays a particular relationship towards the tension between past and future that I have already discussed. While some outsiders might formulate Toronto as having swung too far towards globalization on the locality/globalization continuum, this case illustrates how certain critical occasions bring to light instances where this is not the case, or is meeting up against an interlocutor. The travel writer Jan Morris asks of this question about the essential nature of this city: "Could it be the permanent compromise of Toronto, neither quite this or [sic] altogether that, capitalist but compassionate, American but royalist, multicultural but traditional?" (1997: 97; cited in Bonner, July, 2003: 19). Perhaps it is that this case brings to light the citizens' (subconscious?) understanding of their city's state of ‘permanent compromise,’ and that, for this reason, feel so compelled to vocalize the essentiality of the new venue’s location. In a city where cosmopolitan values are largely taken for granted, and the desires of capitalism are mainly satisfied, it would be quite possible for the team’s management to move the team anywhere, and for this to be understandable, if not desirable, as necessary from a business standpoint. As actors accustomed to cooperating in the state of permanent compromise of their city, the management must have been implicitly aware that their fan base would not abandon their team altogether. Yet the urgency with which some in the public urged the Leafs organization to make the new venue central (and the team management’s apparent desire to listen), so as to continue the Maple Leafs’ centrality in their everyday lives, indicates a desire for continuity, for tradition – for a sense of home, one might say. In this, Torontonians displayed a commitment to the continuation of ‘past deeds’ that they are not generally known for, and in doing so perpetuated that dialogue that Bonner (2002: 5) spoke of above that is what makes a city livable.

CHAPTER FIVE: MOVING CEREMONIES

Outlining the Cases

Montreal

In this chapter, the ceremonies, rituals, and commemorative events that surrounded the moves from the original arenas to the new ones in Toronto and Montreal will be discussed and analyzed in depth. Both cities took a very similar approach to commemorating their old rinks and celebrating the new, and yet, as we shall see, there were key differences that I will analyze as the illumination of the unique 'mythologies' (in Barthes' sense) manifested in each city. As noted in previous chapters, Montreal was the first Original Six Canadian city to leave its original arena in March, 1996. The festivities lasted over a week, and began on March 10 with an old-timers game that featured retired former Canadiens against retired players drawn from the rest of the League. The next night was the last game played at the Forum. This night was tremendously nostalgic – and tremendously popular, with every seat sold and scalpers getting hundreds of dollars per ticket as the game neared. Following the game, a ceremony was held to honour the closing of the building. This ceremony "included various stars, politicians, hockey legends, and others who had performed on the ice prior to this final game" (Belanger, 2002: 76). This night was perhaps most remembered for the notably long ovation given to Maurice "Rocket" Richard when it was his turn to step onto the ice and take the torch that was being handed from captain to captain in what was a veritable materialization of the John McCrae line adorning the Canadiens' dressing room wall:

> To you from failing hands we throw the torch
> Be yours to hold it high.

The following day, in what would be both a highly contested and extremely popular part of the week's 'festivities,' an auction was held in which Molson and the Canadiens sold off what they could from the Forum – including popcorn makers, the organ, penalty boxes, seats (the seat that Clarence Campbell sat in the night of the Richard Riot went for a particularly high price), and most contentiously, the twenty-four Stanley Cup banners that the team had accumulated over the years (Molson said these banners would be too small and lacked the appropriate aesthetic appeal for the new space). The rest of the week featured, first, "*le Grand Déménagement*" – the Big Move Parade – on March 15 that "was designed to literally move the team – and the ghosts, the memories, the Stanley Cup banners, and some living legends – from the old to the new arena" (Bélanger, 2002: 77). The next day, the Canadiens ceremonially opened the Molson Centre in a game against the New York Rangers, and invited their fans back the day after for an Open House to introduce and orient them to the new building and officially closing out the week's moving ceremonies.

Toronto

When its turn to move from the old arena to the new came, Toronto followed Montreal's ceremonial recipe nearly to a 'T'. They, too, had an emotional closing ceremony following their final game in the Maple Leaf Gardens on February 13, 1999 – although the press reaction to this ceremony (more negative than the proudly nostalgic reaction in Montreal) makes for an interesting 'critical occasion,' as we shall see below. The Maple Leafs followed this game with an open house at the Air Canada Centre the next day as well as a $500-per-plate opening gala in the new venue in support of the Maple Leafs Community Fund and Raptors Foundation on February 18. Like the

Canadiens, The Maple Leafs held a public parade to literally and figuratively move their 67 years of accumulated history, tradition, memories, and objects from the old building to the new. As in Montreal, former and current players were the main attraction in a parade that featured the 48th Highlander bagpipers (Toronto's backup goalie, Glenn Healey, surprised and amused all when he eschewed the Cadillacs and Mustangs that carried his teammates and predecessors, choosing instead to don a kilt and join the Highlanders in their piping), the display of the team's old Stanley Cup banners and other memorabilia, and the Stanley Cup itself, on loan from the Hockey Hall of Fame. The parade ended at the Air Canada Centre, as "the cornerstone was unveiled and a blessing/benediction/dedication was performed – involving just about every religious denomination short of the Wiccans" ("Goofy parade had a special charm," *Toronto Star*, February 20, 1999). Finally, the Leafs formally opened their new arena for hockey for Saturday's Hockey Night in Canada broadcast on February 20, an occasion which also necessitated additional ceremonies. And, like the Canadiens, the Leafs' management sold off Maple Leaf Gardens' paraphernalia to the highest bidder in what was a highly-attended and well-received auction that turned many of the Leafs' historical objects into valuable memorabilia.

Ceremonies and Rituals

The Political Economy of Ceremony

What can we say about the ceremonialization of these moves? Why was the amount of pomp and circumstance described above deemed necessary at all? Anouk Bélanger (2002), in writing about the Montreal case, says that the opening and closing ceremonies (etc.) were an integral part of the team's management's attempt at convincing the people of Montreal that the move was a good thing for the city. In her analysis, she addresses the tension that this created for the management, who had to celebrate the people's connection to the Forum – and the team whose play the management was selling – while attempting to convince them that a move was necessary, good, and right. As she writes,

> Acknowledging strong attachments to the Forum, Molson had to insist and persuade Montrealers that popular memories and traditions could, in fact, be effectively transported from the old venue to the new one. In this regard, the company orchestrated a dramatic marketing campaign surrounding the move, striving to maintain close ties with the history and legends of Les Canadiens, and criticizing a 'conservative romanticism' that blinded people to new possibilities for tradition-making in the future. (75)

Such a 'dramatic marketing campaign' was essential in the type of environment the National Hockey League was presenting the time. By 1996 (and even more so by 1999), examples abounded of arenas throughout the NHL that couldn't preserve the mythic atmosphere of their predecessors. Fans knew that their teams were in danger of playing "in enormous, sterile new arenas, buildings with the ambience of an aircraft hangar, which have replaced hockey's quirky, tradition-rich ancient cathedrals and the fond memories they once held" (Klein and Reif, 1998: 10). An important element of this marketing – which was to be mirrored later in Toronto as well – were the ceremonies that book-ended the move.

From this perspective, the instigation of ceremonies and rituals surrounding the move can be seen as a manipulative, capitalist ploy acting as a façade to divert the attention of fans and citizens from the issue of their manipulation. Certainly, this point of view asserted, there was cause to be concern that such a façade could exist. Klein and Reif allude to the tension that Bélanger mentions, pointing out the temptations and pitfalls of believing the teams' marketing:

> Upon securing their new stadium deals, ownership in Chicago and Montreal did an abrupt about-face and pushed the nostalgia button, promoting the hell out of their old arenas as the setting for noble scenes of joy and glory. This late-found appreciation for the old buildings almost made the owners seem human, until you realized it was all meant only to ensure sell-out crowds over the arenas' final year and flog all sorts of newly minted nostalgia-themed merchandise (1998: 73-74).

As models of corporate capitalism, both the Canadiens and the Maple Leafs are ultimately interested in what in the common vernacular is 'the bottom line' the acquisition of capital (money) and the potential to make more. There is no reason to believe that they would act in such a way as to perpetuate any traditions meaningful to the city unless it helped them to achieve economic preservation and success. David Harvey has discussed how money leads to the homogenizing of human meaning-making, particularly in urban settings. In his words, "Money…functions as a concrete abstraction, imposing external and homogeneous measures of value on all aspects of human life, reducing infinite diversity to a single comparable dimension, and masking subjective human relations by objective market exchanges" (1989: 232). Thus, the events and debate surrounding the moves in Toronto and Montreal was limited from the potential for the 'infinite diversity' afforded by human subjectivity to a narrow range of possible formulations of meaning due to the powerful ideology of the moneyed economy. This would explain why, as Bélanger claims, "[Molson's] campaign was quite successful in constructing a hegemonic discourse around the eminence of change, the necessity of progress and the importance of companies such as Molson to Montreal's civic and cultural life." (2002: 75).

The ceremonies and rituals surroundings the moves at this point have been discussed as part of a successful capitalist marketing campaign. Is this the strongest formulation that we can give? At this point, we must ask what the role of social actors is in the above scenario. From this discussion, the actors are either disillusioned (they 'know which way the wind blows'), as we can imagine Jeff Klein and Karl-Eric Reif to be, sitting in the reds in a modern arena, which they have labeled as having 'the ambience of an airplane hanger,' lamenting what was. Or, actors can be seen as having been seduced by the broken promise of continuing tradition, the victims of a trick perpetrated by the teams with the sole intention of increasing profits. While certainly these are two dangerous extremes that exist in modernity, I would argue that such a formulation of human action is neglectful of the human capacity for, in de Certeau's language, making a city habitable. As well, this formulation forgets that the very tradition lamented by both kinds of actors – and the ceremonies they either derided or participated in with good faith - was created out of similar capitalist forces that were present in these particular cases. Does this not nullify such lamentation, making it the misguided, wistful mourning (or what Belanger cites above as the "conservative romanticism") of the 'mere nostalgic' (Smith, 2000)? I have already argued against this type of formulation, as the interpretive tradition has pointed out that it neglects the range of human agency and potential for meaning-making, even within the problematic structure of the modern Western (i.e. corporate, capitalist, etc.) lifeworld.

The Hockey Scene

Perhaps here we should interject a new concept into the discussion at hand. This is Alan Blum's concept of 'the scene.' Blum (2003) says that scenes – such as the rave scene, the music scene, the club scene, the art scene, or the gay scene – are an important element in the spirited, meaningful life of the city. Scenes celebrate the heterogeneous nature of city dwelling, springing up where there is a desire for the sharing of a specific collective experience, centering on some particular kind of living, or even ‘lifestyle.’ In Blum’s words, “the scene is the city’s way of demonstrating the vitality of intimacy, of showing that its ‘lived experience’ of sharing and being shared can be seen and oriented to as its own specific form of creativity. Is the scene not the city’s way of making a place for intimacy in collective life?” (179). Thus, the scene, through its propensity towards community, something which is linked with both its ‘vitality,’ and the potential that this vitality could be ephemeral, is an important part of the subcultural world of the city. I see the world of the fans of the Canadiens and the Maple Leafs as ‘scenes’ – the hockey scene of each city – which city members can choose to belong to or not. For if, as I (following Blum) have said, hockey is part of the grammar or instilled as a mythology of these cities then this social understanding is a part of the ‘specific form of creativity’ required by this particular scene, i.e. the hockey scene. That hockey is, as Jack Todd put it about Montreal, “part of the fabric of this city, and so is the Forum,” (*The Gazette*, March 11, 1996, A1/A2) means that people have come together over the years (is this not one of the essences of tradition, or meaningful history?) to actively create this scene in a particular way, in a particular *place*, even, and to respond to this creation. The ceremonies, then, become a part of the scene, another way that members of the hockey scene create and concretize the ‘intimacy’ of their ‘collective life.’

Blum acknowledges that the political economy discussed in the work of Bélanger (and, in a taken-for-granted way, Klein and Reif) has an impact on the feasibility and form of scenes; in fact, in Blum’s writing, scene and political economy take on a kind of elective affinity: “Scenes are calculated and reconfigured as opportune occasions for investment and the creation of consumers. Scenes are made and unmade under the insatiable drive for maximizing profit and minimizing loss, the drive of the logic of restricted economy" (182). Thus scenes are here described as extremely mortal, always in the process of testing their desirability against their potential to be maintained in a consumer society. In this sense, the political and economic reality of the city functions as a kind of collaborator in the meaning that springs up around each scene; however, it is not the only collaborator in the urban dialectic that is the scene. As such, there is a certain precariousness to the scene due to the many alternatives to it to which the city gives life. This is one of the consequences of the cosmopolitan, global city.

The scene, then, requires the active participation (*vis à vis* meaning-making, 'doing' the scene, etc.) of its members in order for it to be viable. It requires that its members treat it with the kind of seriousness that, as we discussed in our Chapter Four discussion of 'the game,' makes it 'real' in the sense that the experience of it has not being 'spoiled' (Gadamer, 1975; Palmer, 1969). Of this, Blum writes, "The scene often appears sacred because the practices it cultivates could be interrupted by interests that do not engage it with the gravity it thinks it requires" (167). This emphasis on the sacred character of scenes is interesting in relation to our present cases in Toronto and Montreal. Blum's use of the term 'sacred' was not necessarily meant to be taken literally, of course; but in this case, the emphasis on the importance of the hockey scene to the city in both cities has taken on the (sometimes ironic) strains of worshipful religious devotion. Popular hockey literature and newspaper articles on professional hockey in these cities – and particularly about the traditional rinks themselves – are redolent with the vocabulary of religion. For example, social theologian William Kilbourn famously introduced his *Religion in Canada* (1968: 2) by saying "If I were asked by some stranger to North

American culture to show him the most important religious building in Canada, I would take him to Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens." Both the Forum and the Maple Leaf Gardens are frequently referred to in the literature as "shrines," "temples," "cathedrals," etc. Blum's statement illuminates how this type of language usage (and the metaphorical understandings on the level of meaning that typically follow from it) is meant as a way to diminish those social forces and interests which do not focus on the hockey scenes in Toronto and Montreal 'with the gravity they think they require.' As such, the vocabulary of sacredness that is frequently bandied about in these cities is a kind of barrier erected to preserve and continue the special relationship they have between hockey and identity, to maintain its 'holy seriousness' in spite of other dissenting voices.

This almost self-consciously metaphorical language was concretized in the ceremonies and rituals that surrounded the moves in Montreal and Toronto. Consider the emblematic use of the 'religious relics' (particularly the torch in Montreal, and, to a lesser extent, the "Memories and Dreams" flag that was invented for the occasion in Toronto); the acts of 'pilgrimage' undertaken during the parades – which ended in Toronto with an actual religious ceremony that, as I noted above "involving just about every religious denomination short of the Wiccans" ("Goofy parade had a special charm," *Toronto Star*, February 20, 1999); and the general atmosphere of awe and reverence that the teams' managements and fans themselves conspired to create as part of the scene. The sacred terminology that gave rise to what at times was the overtly sacred nature of these ceremonies is rooted in tradition; indeed, it is this tradition (the histories of the teams, the length of time that the arenas, as well as the objects they contain, have had to gain significance in the city, the memories they inspire, and the heroes they have birthed) that has been reified by members of these ‘scenes’ as something sacred, something that necessitates remembrance and, in Blum’s terminology, ‘gravity.’ This unification of metaphorical religion with the symbolic importance of hockey in these cities is a perfect example of Barthes’ concept of “language robbery” - the “[transformation] of language into form” (1972: 131). Hockey’s significance in Toronto and Montreal is the overarching mythological structure in the hockey scene; it is the necessary ‘inflexion’ (in Barthes’ terms) that affects the social usage of this concept, making it a taken-for-granted system of action. These cases of moving from the traditional arenas in Toronto and Montreal are examples of the tone that is frequently taken when a mythology is called into question through an act of change. The very question of its place in the culture makes it essential – in order for the myth to continue – that actors be reminded of the significance that it has in the cultural meaning-structure. That is why such weighty, sacred talk was such a necessary part of the ceremonies and rituals of commemoration and celebration that took place in these cities during their respective moves.

Commemoration

The concept of commemoration is an interesting one here; it was an important component of the closing ceremonies and parades. The ceremonies were necessary from a meaning-making/sharing/continuing perspective, because through them, the teams and their fans could celebrate the integral place that they saw their scene as holding within the larger community (city) over time. The phenomenologist Edward Casey (2000) has analyzed the phenomenon of commemoration in detail; he says that “*commemorating solemnizes by at once taking the past seriously and celebrating it in appropriate ceremonies*” (223). Through phenomenology, we can recognize the actions that took place in Montreal in 1996, and Toronto in 1999. The very actions of commemoration that were undertaken during these weeks of moving make their intentions – the celebration of the past, their benediction to its future – visible. Casey points out such acts of remembrance make visible a past that requires ‘affirmation,’ and ‘homage’ in these acts of communal memory (226). He says that the very reason that commemoration is such a powerful form of human action is that it points to the possibility of transmitting tradition throughout time through a phenomenon that he calls “perdurance.” In his words, “In the lastingness achieved by such ritual [as commemoration], the past to which tribute is being paid is allowed to perdure – to last as coming toward us – through the present of the commemorative act and onward into the future as well” (229).

We can see that the teams’ management organizations understood the determinative social power that the concept of perdurance – of lastingness, even the possibility of a kind of immortality – has for the hockey scene (as it would for nearly any scene we could imagine, other than those who have a deep interest in their own ephemerality). The fact that the management of the Canadiens and the Maple Leafs placed such an emphasis on commemorative rituals during their respective moves shows that they recognize the significance that such a coming together has, even as they used this recognition for their corporate purposes. The concept of perdurance through commemoration points us towards the possibility for a community itself – not just the collective memory of an experience – to have a lastingness, for community members to go through experiences together in the present and to still be sharing those experiences commemorative (and making new ones) in the future. It is this that Casey alludes to when he notes that commemoration creates, “a shared identity more lasting and more significant than would be possible in an uncommemorated existence" (251). This idea is extremely seductive in the uncertain, fragmented culture of modernity, and this sentiment was tapped into by the teams' management in the commercial form of its commemorative ceremonies, and was also co-opted by actors who found its promise alluring. In this way, the dialectical conversation of thee hockey scenes during the critical occasions at hand were carried forward with the hope for cultural continuation into an uncertain future.

Hockey Arenas in Place and Space

The commemorative ceremonies and rituals discussed above were a specific act of remembrance. Casey (2000) has theorized that the phenomenological and embodied act of memory and remembrance is inextricably intertwined with the concept of being, in his terms, 'implaced.' As he writes, "if memory is not simply or exclusively 'of the past,' [i.e. temporal], what does it involve in addition? The very embodiment of remembering hints at an answer. To be embodied is *ipso facto* to assume a particular perspective and position; it is to have not just a point of view but a *place* in which we are situated" (182). This concept has an interesting affiliation with our question, as we are addressing, if you will, a politics of place, in which the problematic nature of place (i.e., the rinks themselves) is debated as important or not. But first, a definition of terms. What do I mean when I talk about 'place?' For the most part, I am following geographer Yi Fu Tuan (1979), who has theorized about the nature of place and found in this discussion a tension that has to do with place's interlocutor, which he says is 'space.' Tuan preliminarily discusses their difference thusly: "Place is security, space is freedom; we are attached to one and long for the other" (1979: 3). His words point to a dichotomy, for how can we be attached to something and find security within such attachment, yet long for something else? Any sociology of space and place must address this dichotomy: that the human relation to environment always encompasses a dialectic between the desire for home, for a place that is identifiable and that identifies us, and for the freedom afforded by a space unobstructed by such identifying – and inhibiting – boundaries.

Bonner (2002: 2) has formulated the city as a site for this dialectic to occur; as he writes: “The city by its very being makes place problematic; through its expression and encouragement of mobility and cosmopolitanism, the city has, through history, challenged the fixity of place.” The city is a place (comprised of many places) filled with near-endless possibilities for finding space. It is precisely for this reason that Michel de Certeau theorized that the simple act of walking in the city can allow the actor to “discover that other side that, in spatial practice, is inseparable from the dreamed place. To walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper” (1984: 103). Thus, the streets and sidewalks of the modern city afford an individual the ‘freedom’ that Tuan regarded as an inherent aspect of the human longing for space. This dialectic is a constant in modern life, and is at the root of the urban drive towards cosmopolitanism, globalization, and gentrification (i.e. there is a constant demand [capitalistically speaking] for something new, something different, something edgy – a new space, in other words, in which to shed more cloying aspects of urban identity - versus the similarly high demand for many new spaces to be mindful of a city or neighborhood’s history and traditions).

How can we see such a tension in the cases we are addressing? Arenas, by their very nature, are places wherein a kind of community of social actors can join together – *en scène*, as Blum might say – to participate in the ‘security’ of joint social action, banding together for a common cause that is located in the specificity of its walls. Such joint social action in place makes for a kind of intimacy with one's compatriots, something which is at the root of constructing local identity. The freedom to be found in hockey arenas is not the freedom of space that Tuan talks about; while there is some freedom in the anonymity that being a fan can bring with it (for example, the ability to perform certain behaviours that would be 'out of place' anywhere else, such as shouting, wearing strange things like a tinfoil Stanley Cup or a large Styrofoam puck on one's head, and waving one's hands wildly), the actions of anonymity I have described are still *implaced* activities, particular to their location. In addition to this general similarity of arenas-as-places, each arena as its own specific place brings a particularity to the range of actions and meanings that it holds. Since this is so – if all arenas can be places and, as such "well suited to contain memories – to hold and preserve them," (Casey, 2000: 186) – then why should it matter if the Maple Leafs and the Canadiens change venues?

To answer this question requires that we look at the competing definitions that the idea of space/place has been given, and the tension that this creates. In modern society, the emphasis on the centrality of place in human life that has been present since the time of Aristotle has been replaced with a Cartesian insistence on the significance of time and space (Casey, 1993; 2000). Descartes wrote, "We conceive a place to contain nothing but extension in length, breadth, and depth," (quoted in Casey, 2000: 185), removing from the discussion of place the cultural meanings that place both gives and is given. This, Casey argues, has been the fate of modernity, resulting in the devaluation of place and its ensuing identity-, meaning-, and community-making potential. What remains is an emphasis on what Casey calls the *site*, a social space notable not for the kind of freedom described by Tuan above, but for its lack of any identity. As he says

> What we witness in Descartes is…the supersession of place by site. A site is not a container but an open area that is specified primarily by means of cartographic representations such as maps or architects' plans. It embodies a spatiality that is at once homogeneous (i.e., having no internal differentiations with respect to material constitution) and isotropic (possessing no inherent directionality such as up./down, East/West, etc.) A site is thus leveled down to the point of being definable solely in terms of distances between 'positions' which are established on its surface and which exist strictly in relation to one another. As a result, a site is indifferent to what might occupy it – and to what we might remember about it." (2000: 185)

This concept of the 'site' may help us to understand why there was so much trepidation (in spite of the presence of its dialectical opposite, anticipation) over the moves. As an implicit yet recognizable ideology in modern life, the actors in Montreal and Toronto were aware of the Cartesian tendency towards annihilating (or ignoring) the meaning in spaces.

But can we truly say that either the Molson Centre or the Air Canada Centre were built as 'definable solely in terms of distances between "positions" which are established on its surface and which exist strictly in relation to one another?' My previous analysis of the hockey-as-scene showed that the new arenas' builders were aware that the new buildings had to be more than sites; that they needed to maintain some sense of tradition and history in order for them to still remain economically and culturally viable. Why then was there so much concern, summed up by *Toronto Star* columnist Rosie DiManno (February 14, 1999; A1), when she said, "The Gardens isn't dying [here, she refers to the potential uses for MLG after the Maple Leafs have left]. But it is being blanched, drained of its very lifeblood, with the Leafs relocating to the virgin Air Canada Centre which can best be described as the Un-Gardens." The Air Canada Centre, as the "Un-Gardens" has none of the ‘lifeblood’ – the force of vitality and energy – that modernity is now draining from the Maple Leaf Gardens. Casey tells us that “the site is indifferent to what might occupy it – and to what we might remember about it” (185), and this is certainly a danger for any building that lacks in vitality. This, we know, is one side of the dialectic of place that is being played out everywhere; in fact, in many ways, this definition is privy to more power in the modern world than is our original definition of ‘place.’ Thus, the new arenas themselves became contested sites (to use the term in a different way) whose meaning (or lack thereof) was up for grabs, in a sense. If it is possible – and, indeed, more likely now than ever – that social spaces are created with no thought to their meaning (think of the endless stretches of suburbanite box stores, strip malls, and tract housing), then it becomes necessary for those who would wish otherwise for these new spaces to give voice to their hopes that an emphasis is made strongly that these buildings be conceived and orchestrated as implaced parts of their urban life, just as the old arenas had been. It is in this point, I think, that Casey’s definition of ‘site’ is not broad enough; he characterizes site as something ‘in process’ – unmemorable because it is composed only of dimensions and space, and not yet a purpose. But I would say that modern life provides plenty of built spaces that completely lack memorability. This may have to do with familiarity (i.e. if we knew and used the strip mall, the box stores, lived on a street of repetitive row houses, they would be memorable to us), but in any case, such spaces lack ‘implacement’ and the memorability that is its result because their “indifference to us is answered by our commensurate indifference in remembering [them]. [Each of them is] just one more lot to look at, and as such it is distinctly unmemorable” (190).

What this brings into focus is the ability that implacement gives us for belonging, for us to see the social space as 'our own.' With place, we can belong to it and it to us. This is a foundational longing at the root of the contested dialogues over the building of the new arenas discussed in Chapter Four, and the reason that the ceremonial send-offs were so necessary. The ceremonies, through their conscientious work to remind citizens of the past in each specific, implaced arena, brought to mind those essential parts of each city's history in that particular place that created that sense of identity, of belonging, of 'one's own.' Examples of this are throughout the ceremonies: the retired players who returned are the living embodiments of the great (and not-so-great) events that took place under the soon-to-be obsolete roofs; the focus on the Stanley Cup banners, the torch, and other "relics" semiologically remind us of the place they represent through the memories and iconic imagery they bring to mind. The explicitly rendered desire of the ceremonial parades was to move the history and tradition from the old arenas to the new – something which tells us a lot about the importance of the memorability of place. Being in place in the new arenas meant that fans would feel at home, that the new rinks – built to be places, but always maintaining the tension that comes with the potential for freedom that space (and, in a different way, site) can bring – would soon feel like 'their own' in the way that the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens had.

In Casey's words, "'One's own' does not imply possession in any literal sense; it is more deeply a question of *appropriating*, with all that this connotes of *making something one's own* by *making it one with one's ongoing life*." (192). This reminds us of the columnist I quoted in Chapter Four, who said that 'hockey is a part of the daily life in Toronto' (*Toronto Star*, December 15, 1997; E1), and of Jack Todd, who I quote above as saying that the Canadiens and the Forum were ‘part of the fabric of life in the city.’ In this sense, even the ‘spectacular’ nature of the ceremonies (the many returning stars, the out-of-the-ordinary festivities, the parade) only served to emphasize the banality of the presence of hockey in these cities; how the sport and these teams (and thus all the ‘relics’ – including the buildings themselves – that come with them) have been ‘appropriated’ by these cities, making them a part of the ‘ongoing life’ of each city. Again, the embeddedness of this mythology – the taken-for-grantedness of its place in the city – shows how hockey is a part of the grammar of these cities. As well, it shows how useful the concept of place is in making people feel unified, that there can be an ‘our own’ in ‘this place.’

This concept is also why auctioning off of both arenas’ “relics” became controversial (more so in Montreal, where it was done first). For example, Graham Watt of Montreal wrote to *The Gazette* (March 11, 1996, B2) to express his dismay over “the dismemberment of a legend, the selling off of seats, banners, and other artifacts for profit, [and] the ruthless destruction of an entity that had grown from a rink to a shrine.” Jack Todd was particularly appalled by the sale of the Stanley Cup banners:

> Yes, [Molson] built the Keg and the Keg is lovely. But we draw the line at the Stanley Cup banners. We’d like to think that those banners are more or less public property, given the amount of money and emotion Montrealers have invested in every one.
>
> Now, thanks to Molson, any Westmount Trust Fund baby can bid on the original 1944 Stanley Cup pennant. That bites. (*The Gazette*, March 11, 1996; E1).

As Casey tells us, “Things congeal the places we remember, just as places congeal remembered worlds – and as the present of remembering congeals the past remembered. *Things put the past in place; they are the primary source of its concrete implacement in memory*” (206). In selling these relics, these ‘things’ that held such special significance to this particular part of city life, instead of giving them to a museum, or moving them to the new appointed space where they could be looked upon by future generations with the reverence that artifacts of tradition can bring, the management was ignoring the importance that things have in the remembrance of the past as a tangible part of the city's identity. This is what both Todd and Watt are alluding to in their protestations. This contested issue makes visible the place that both the Forum and the Maple Leaf Gardens had in the lives of Montrealers and Torontonians, respectively. These buildings were places, full of the distinct memories and significations that only place can give. Yet they were also 'things' in Casey's sense of the term, as places (buildings) in places (cities), they became 'things' that could point to the place of their cities in the world, and to the significance and special nature of those cities' specific pasts and identities. The moves were a threat to the continuation of the importance of such remembrances, and it was this threat that the commemorative ceremonies were attempting to address.

Particularities of Case in Montreal and Toronto

Up to this point, I have been dealing with the ways in which the celebrations and rituals surrounding the changes in hockey venues in Montreal and Toronto were similar, pointing out the ways in which both critical occasions are rooted in the desire for 'things,' and 'places' to reflect the inherent, special memorability associated with 'one's own,' eschewing the modern propensity for homogeneity, and anomie. However, this discussion has thus far been neglectful of the ways in which these cases – so similar on the face of things – have particular difference which can serve to highlight the culture of each city, as our methodology asserts. For my purposes here, I will now discuss one of these specificities of culture per city, although a more lengthy analysis, I am sure, could be done on either city.

Montreal: The Language Issue

One particularity that marks Montreal as ‘it’s own’ in the sense of its difference from anywhere else in the world is the dual and political nature of language – both English and French – within its borders. The ‘language issue’ as it has been called, is integral to the culture of Quebec – and therefore Montreal – but has not been addressed in detail by me thus far. Nonetheless, issues of language, and the power struggle that this suggests, permeate the everyday experience of living in Montreal. This was certainly the case during the move from the Forum – the separation referendum had been held the previous October, only five months before, and the divisions and antipathies that this created were still very much present. The English press, particularly, used the ceremonies at and between the Forum and Molson Centre as an opportunity to remind their readers (or sometimes, more pointedly, the Quebec provincial government) that this case served as an example of the potential for Quebec citizens, both French and English, to work together. Nick Auf der Maur, a former Montreal city councilor, was especially adamant in making this point. He notes the intertwined histories of Montreal and hockey, saying, “Montreal and hockey were built on English-French co-operation” (*The Gazette*, March 13, 1996; A3). This co-operation took the form of decades of economic and cultural tacit (and concrete) agreements:

> Hockey is more than a metaphor for life in Montreal. Read the history of hockey and you pretty well get a history of Montreal’s development. Hockey was basically invented by English Montreal at a time when sport belonged to students and those who could afford leisure time.

Auf der Maur goes on to say that hockey “spread to the working-class Irish” students, who went to French secondary schools, “where they were taught in English, and they introduced hockey to the French…The Irish persuaded the senior league to accept a French Team in 1909. That was the birth of Les Canadiens, a team owned first by an Irishman named O’Brian, then by one named Kennedy….Teams came and went, and when the NHL was formed…in 1917, the Canadiens were in, but there was no English Montreal team until Donat Raymond, a French Canadian, founded the Maroons” for whom the Forum was eventually built.

This history seems to show a cooperative history in Montreal surrounding the increasing popularity and importance of hockey in the city, and, as Auf der Maur asserts, this cooperation formed a tradition that is one of the things that hold Montreal together, in spite of it being seriously tested over the years of political-linguistic strife. This history is one reason why Jack Todd insists, “lose that Molson name [for the Molson Centre], the one that reeks of anglo, corporate power” (*The Gazette*, March 16, 1996; H5) suggesting instead that the Centre be called “*Le Centre Maurice-Richard*” after Maurice “Rocket” Richard. These columnists point to the tensions that are always at work, implicitly and explicitly, in Montreal, and that any meaningful discussion of Montreal culture must attend to. The ceremonies themselves highlighted how integral both French and English cultures are to Montreal’s identity, and the ways that the tension between these two cultures had made the subject of hockey in this city distinctive. This was especially the case with the ovation for Maurice Richard. As Todd notes implicitly above, Richard above all others is emblematic of the ‘glory days’ of hockey in Montreal. Semiologically, he has come to signify so much of Montreal’s history, hopes, and identity in relation to both hockey and politics, as his presence brings to light images of the 1955 "Richard Riot," which many say was the beginning of the Quiet Revolution in Quebec that ultimately changed the political landscape in Canada forever. The semiological significance given to this changes depending upon one's stance on the Riot itself; for example, Red Fisher wrote, "So much of it has been written in this building. It has contributed to ugliness, none as bad or as dangerous as the Richard Riot...That was the Forum's darkest moment" (*The Gazette*, March 11, 1996; E3). However, surely we can imagine that there are many who see the Riot as a great victory against oppression. As well, Richard has come to symbolize the potential for and realization of glory and dreams of victory, since he captained so many winning teams in the Stanley Cup finals. And the Stanley Cups themselves, alluded to so often during the ceremonies and parade, are semiological reminders of a tradition that many in Montreal take pride in and have co-opted as a part of their own identity as members of the city with the winningest team in professional hockey, the sport that is the most meaningful to them. The semiological messages delivered during the ceremonial week in Montreal illuminated the intertwining of Anglophone and Francophone cultures which characterizes this city, showing themselves in the contested nature of the definitions that could be ascribed to each signifier. Here, then, Montreal is an example of the multidimensional character of cities, but more specifically shows itself to be constantly in the business of working through the problem of language, particularly in instances like the case at hand, which has been shared so intimately with Quebecers of both languages.

Toronto: The Problem of Commemorative Recognition

In terms of its particularities, the most striking aspect of the Toronto case, in spite of its many similarities with the ceremonies in Montreal, was the underwhelming reaction given by many columnists to the ceremonies held in Toronto themselves. At the heart of this is the predominant refusal to fall under the sway of the nostalgic promises that the ceremonies seemed to offer. This is in stark contrast with the Montreal reaction, where the Forum was mourned greatly – and seemingly in good faith. I have discussed this reaction above as being a result of the identity of Quebec and Montreal culture being intertwined with the fate of the Montreal Canadiens. But why did it seem to me, as I went through the myriad newspaper articles on the Toronto reaction, that there was no such 'good faith?' First, let me describe the phenomenon. *The Toronto Star* (February 14, 1999) depicted the evening of the Gardens' closing ceremonies as "a night of clumsy symbolism and odd moments that began with a strange-sounding national anthem and a bad hockey game finished awkwardly last night on the final evening of NHL entertainment at Maple Leaf Gardens, perhaps appropriately so for a famous franchise that lost its voice and identity more than 30 years ago." As in Montreal, the Maple Leafs had invited back many of their former players to take part in the post-game ceremony honouring the rink that they had all played in. The problem that many viewers (and columnists) had came when "Memories and Dreams" flag – designed for this event and meant to be taken to be hanged up in the new Air Canada Centre – was passed around between the old and new players. Many in Toronto felt that "the concept behind the curious flag ceremony… was to copy the passing of the torch theme that had worked so well in Montreal when The Forum closed its doors" (*Toronto Star,* February 14, 1999). It became awkward as the official portion of the ceremony (the players' lines and roles) came to an end, and both fans and players seemed uncertain about how to end the evening. As the *Toronto Star* article quoted above continues, “the empty passing of the flag began and the proceedings ended in confusion with no one seeming quite sure whether the evening was over or not. The fans tried to mount a standing ovation for the final minute of play, but even that petered out weakly, with the curious music of ‘Surfin’ U.S.A.’ accompanying the final horn.”

Other columnists noticed the less-than-awe-inspiring send-off to Maple Leaf Gardens as well. Jim Proudfoot said that the closing ceremonies were “painfully long” (“Gardens scrapbook,” *Toronto Star*, February 13, 1999). Jim Coyle called it a “self-conscious bit of banner-waving at centre ice” (“An excrutiatingly long good-bye to the Gardens,” *Toronto Star*; February 20, 1999). John Montesano remarked later that the farewell ceremonies were “awkward” (“Catching up with Toronto’s melting pot,” *Toronto Star*, February 22, 1999). How can we account for this? Montesano, for one, says that it highlights an increasing tension in Toronto: “Whenever power-brokers cling to Toronto’s staid Anglo roots they seem wildly out of touch with what makes the city special today” (*ibid*.). Montesano argues that the ceremony made visible the difference between the Anglophones who control much of the most high-profile aspects of Toronto’s cultural production (such as the Maple Leafs) and the increasingly high level of ethnic diversity and multiculturalism within the city. The ceremony failed to strike a chord because it did not reflect the everyday lifeworld and experiences of the people in attendance – who knew their city to be other than (or perhaps *more* than) the ceremony to which they were witnesses seemed to be portraying. This once again reminds us of the significance that diversity and multiculturalism has come to have in Toronto over the past few decades. Torontonians point to this as “what makes the city special today;” it, more than anything else, perhaps, provides them with a source of pride and identity. However, the cultural significance of diversity for Toronto does not seem to fit with another of its 'sources of pride and identity' – the Maple Leafs, which, as Montesano points out, are rooted in the 'staid Anglo' heritage that founded Toronto (and English Canada). This again is reminiscent of Jan Morris' formulation of Toronto as a place of 'permanent compromise' (1997: 19, quoted in Bonner, July, 2003: 19). That the Maple Leafs are as popular as they are (the local wisdom states that, 'you can't get a ticket,' because the games sell out so quickly[6]), and that multiculturalism is such a source of pride for Torontonians speaks to a strong tension within the city over its identity.

This, however, wasn't the only tension that was explicated by the awkward nature of the commemorative ceremonies. The very notion of Toronto's 'traditionalism' was contested, as well. Commemoration, as I have said above, following Edward Casey, is the 'solemnization of the past.' Commemorative ceremonies make the past alive, valorizing it and bringing it into the present and towards the future. This made the ceremonies very successful in Montreal; in Toronto, however, it rang hollow. As Paul Hunter noted, "The problem with commemorating the history of the Maple Leafs, as we saw Saturday night [during the closing ceremonies at the Gardens], is that we are all too familiar with that history. And for most of us, certainly those on the younger side of 40, there has been very little to celebrate" ("Leaf life," *Toronto Star*, February 15, 1999). He is speaking, primarily, of the thirty-six seasons it has been thus far since the Maple Leafs have won the Stanley Cup; their last came in the final year of the Original Six league, before expansion in the 1967-68 season. Victory is of course the main reason that athletes compete, and also the main reasons that fans maintain an interest. Each year renews hope that this will be the season that the team will achieve its goal of winning the League. That this goal had remained elusive for so many seasons when the ceremony was held meant that the night's festivities just served to shine a spotlight on the unavoidable evidence of so many years of failure.

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[6] This is reminiscent of Yogi Berra's line, "Nobody goes there anymore 'cause there's too many people."

But the commemoration of the history of the Gardens didn't just bring to mind the dearth of Stanley Cups in recent years; more sinister memories also emerged, tarnishing the goal of the ceremonies. *The Toronto Star* reminded, "The Leafs became notorious over the years for gratuitous cruelty to their worthiest people" ("A legacy of broken hearts, too," February 14, 1999), referring to the management's habit of trading players – even captains – such as Dave Keon, Darryl Sittler, and Lanny McDonald under ignominious circumstances. Related to this is what are generally referred to dismissively as "the Ballard years," in which the team was headed by Harold Ballard, who came into power in 1961 along with Stafford Smythe (son of the Maple Leafs' original owner/manager, Conn Smythe), and John Bassett. Longtime *Maclean's* contributor Trent Frayne writes, "Profits and ever more profits became the new trio's goal" (*Maclean's*, February 15, 1999: 54-55). The Ballard era was characterized by an extreme – almost caricature-esque – form of capitalism in which profit truly was the only consideration, at the expense of loyalty to players, fans, the city, and even the law (Ballard was to spend some years in prison for tax evasion and fraud). This taints the 'nostalgic' imagery surrounding the move from the Gardens, as the *Toronto Star* comments below:

> The Gardens, beginning about 30 years ago, when Harold Ballard got his talons firmly into it, was strictly about business. History, tradition and excellence were parked and this place gave a lesson in squeezing dimes out of the customers that the ACC and its modern cousins only hope to duplicate ("Time to get Leafs' tradition off to a new start," February 14, 1999).

In the early 1990s, it also came to light that the Maple Leaf Gardens was the site of pedophiles who preyed on young fans inside its walls for years. In spite of these many years of difficulty, the Maple Leafs remained an extremely popular part of Toronto life. But still, the closing ceremony – and especially the banner-passing, fell flat: "It was as though the fans, unbelievably loyal over the decades, simply couldn't pretend to create a magical moment of real affection that just wasn't there…After all, how could this Maple Leaf franchise have abused its customers more over the past 30 years?" ("A legacy of broken hearts, too," *Toronto Star*, February 14, 1999)

The banner-passing itself, seen as having been conceived "to copy the passing of the torch theme that had worked so well in Montreal" (*ibid*.) was unsuccessful because its imitation, rather than bringing up the emotions of nostalgic pride and tradition that it was trying to do, instead caused Torontonians who witnessed it to reflect upon that tradition, and how it wasn't a reflection of what the ceremony was trying to say. This is an example wherein the semiological meanings attached by the viewer are very different than the ones intended by the creator - in an attempt at what Plato called *anamnesis* - of what is being viewed. Gadamer comments on the phenomenon of *anamnesis* thusly:

> In his theory of *anamnesis* Plato combined the mythical idea of remembrance with his dialectic, which sought the truth of being in the *logoi* – i.e., the ideality of language. In fact this kind of idealism of being is already suggested in the phenomenon of recognition. The 'known' enters into its true being and manifests itself as what it is only when it is recognized. As recognized, it is grasped in its essence, detached from its accidental aspects (1989: 114).

Gadamer is giving us a theory of the successful recognition of a signifier in which what is recognized resonates strongly with its viewer, 'grasped in its essence.' This is not what was reported to have happened in Toronto, even though the ceremony mimicked so closely the one in Montreal which did incite the phenomenon of recognition in its viewers. The case here is a reminder to us of the dangers inherent in imitation; it requires that the cultural product that is moved from one social venue to the next be received similarly in both venues in order for it to work. That this was not the case shows us strongly that the cities of Montreal and Toronto have deep and profound particularities, something that often seems to be threatened by increased globalization which can act to homogenize places, making them the kinds of sites of which Edward Casey would warn us. The organizers of the Toronto ceremonies understood their job as glorifying the past; however, they misunderstood the resonance that this would have to their viewers. The disparity between these two points of view created the 'awkward' situation that so many *Toronto Star* columnists commented on in the days to follow. As one wrote, "you never got past the idea this was more choreographed than real. It just seemed like everybody was trying too hard" ("A half-hearted farewell to the Gardens," February 14, 1999). Joan Allen says, "Awkwardness…can be seen as the awareness of the absence of the conditions necessary for participation, for conversation. One cannot respond 'naturally' where the technical seems to demand to be reproduced to the extent that it overwhelms conversation" (1980: 26). The situation of the move and the ceremonies that took place thereof were seen by the Maple Leafs' ownership as requiring a glorification of the past such that the disappointments, scandals, and outrages were ignored. However, doing this was to deny a large portion of the identity that the Maple Leafs have amassed over the years, and it produced viewer/crowd reactions that were 'unnatural,' uncertain, and 'more choreographed than real.'

Overall, this example shows how the commemoration of the past – though it often tries to co-opt only the most glorious aspects of history, neglecting the rest – is inevitably porous, and susceptible to alternative definitions. In Toronto, the competing definitions that made themselves manifest the night of the commemorative ceremonies for the Gardens are indicative of the Torontonians' relationship to the move to the Air Canada Centre. It reminds us of Casey's edict that "Commemorating does more than pay tribute to honorable actions undertaken in the past and at another place. It constructs the space, and continues the time, in which the commendably inter-human will be perduringly appreciated" (2001: 251). In the Gardens, the 'honorable actions' were there, but they were juxtaposed against some very dishonorable history, and the possibility of 'perduration of space' that commemoration affords was moot, as the hockey scene in Toronto was already anticipating the move, and their new future. David O'Halloran commented on this new future, saying, "The Gardens was designed for 70 years ago, long before TV and multi-million-dollar salaries, and hockey now needs a world-class venue in Toronto if we're to claim a world-class team" ("A new arena to make us proud," *Toronto Star*, February 12, 1999). His words point to the possibility for new hope that the changes afforded by global capitalism can bring – hope that the disappointments that were the Gardens' most lasting legacy can be left behind in that place, with better fortunes to come with the change of venue.

CHAPTER SIX: AFTERMATH

The Habitable City and its Places

In this chapter, I move into the final temporal stage of this analysis, looking at the everyday cultural life in Toronto and Montreal after the moves were complete, and as the teams, their fans, and the media settled – or did not settle – into the new arenas. In many ways, this period of time in both cities was exemplified by a 'life goes on' attitude. This sort of resignation makes sense, since the world of professional hockey in Montreal and Toronto cannot 'go back'; the new venues are now a part of their respective city's urban landscape, inexorably and unchangeably places to be reckoned with. Meanwhile, and in a similar vein, the relationship that the cities had previously had (ambiguous though they might sometimes seem) with their old arenas could not remain unchanged; this relationship, too, had to be re-evaluated and remade as a result of the old venues' new emptiness and eventual redefinition. It is the dialogue that grew around these issues that is of interest to us now. This chapter examines the two most prevalent modes of discourse that emerged in the aftermath of the moves in Toronto and Montreal: nostalgia on the one hand, and an orientation towards the benefits of progress on the other. Finally, this chapter explores these modes of discourse by hermeneutically reflecting upon them in order to gain an understanding of the underlying ambiguous relation to commitment and practical social action that they embody.

To begin to access such a dialogue, let me first turn to a concept that I touched on in Chapter Four, and which runs throughout the thesis, i.e. the issue of the "habitable city." A very basic concern for the city is the problematical fact of its habitability. From a more positivistic or empiricist perspective, it is difficult to get at the notion of 'the livable city.' Empiricism requires that we ask this question of habitability of every citizen in such a manner as to be able to determine whether a majority of these people like their city, etc., and in this way we could say whether or not it was a 'good' city for people who 'live' there. Yet this would get us no closer to our goal of questioning what is meant by the idea that a city can be 'habitable' – that it can be em-placed in Casey's sense of the term, an integral and dialectical aspect of identity (dialectical in the sense that citizens create the city's identity just as the city acts to transform the identities of the individuals who live within its boundaries). So I must return to this question, taking it as seriously here as I hurried through it in Chapter Four in the rush to make other points: what makes a city 'habitable?'

I must again quote de Certeau (1984: 108) in his assertion that "haunted places are the only ones in which people can live." Here, he seems to be addressing the idea that there is a difference between 'living' in a place and simply existing in a space. These so-called 'haunted places,' you may recall, are haunted by vestigial yet integral meaning-structures made up of local legends, often competing threads of history, sites of personal significance, and the imprints of traditions still viable and those that have faded with time. To use de Certeau's own example of walking in the city, each new tableau that offers itself up to the walker is implicitly and inherently filled with and exuding meaningful markers of identity both personal and communal: 'here is where I came last year to see the parade; over in that square Mackenzie King gave a speech during the war; this area they say is dangerous – I'll have to be careful; on the next street over is the coffee shop where I went on that horrible date; here is the old police station – I heard they used to book gangsters who came up from Chicago during prohibition days; here is

Chinatown; here the red light district.' Each vignette brings to mind for the walker (and his community) different significations – different mythologies, in Barthes' terms – that form an environment that is made up of more than just its external façade of buildings, streets, and passers-by. These memories and identifications ('hauntings') are not just flickers of remembrance that come and go without any sense of meaning to the observer; true 'haunted places' change the individual and community as the community has shaped him. In Edward Casey's words, "The sense of self, personal or collective, grows out of and reflects the places from which we come and where we have been." (1993: 38).

I have said that this kind of meaningful identification is an essential part of the debates surrounding the arena moves in Toronto and Montreal: since the old venues were so steeped in these legends and stories – so fundamentally haunted, if you will – there was an inherent concern in the cities that this could not be continued on in the new arenas. It is this concern – one that is debated over and over throughout the ever-transitory nature of the life of the city – that is so ineffable, inaccessible to the extent that the answers yielded by purely empirical or scientifically-driven questioning do not satisfy on the fundamental level of meaning, or understanding a culture. Yet the embodied and emotional sensation of place-meaning is a part of the everyday – it is rooted in the stories a community tells itself about the places it inhabits and the people who live there. And it is this way that de Certeau reminds us is 'the only way in which people can live.' To 'live' in the city, then, in de Certeau's formulation, is to be aware of the meaning-structures that one encounters and that encounter one in day-to-day life – not only this, it is to live in a world that allows for such meaning not only to be constructed but to *matter* in the affairs of the everyday. In other words, this (sometimes subversive) meaning must be validly meaningful in the dialogical urban milieu. This kind of meaning-making can sometimes be subversive in the sense that a community can construct its own mythology that flies in the face of those more structural forces around them. An example of this is the claim in Montreal that the Forum stood in as a political space that acted to subvert the dominance of the powerful Anglophone elite, both through the games played in it (i.e. the symbolism of the matches against Toronto) and through other cultural expressions (its role in the Richard Riots and the many political rallies staged there). It is for this concept of the communal dialogue over the meaning of spaces which de Certeau expresses concern in his discussion of the over-arching and restrictive powers of the *Panopticon* which the modern lifeworld can exert over individuals in such a way that it seems to make a wide range of choices impossible. As well, as I discussed in Chapter Four, it is this concern which is at the root of the concern over the moves from Maple Leaf Gardens and the Forum themselves. The effect of the *Panopticon* is to make the city less habitable in the sense that it seems to remove the possibilities for choice in the city, and, relatedly, the potential that citizens have in the habitable city for sharing in the meaning-making and process as a dialectical matter of course.

De Certeau's concern that the modern lifeworld is a potentially detrimental force to the habitability of city life is in no way a strange idea in the human sciences today, as we will see below. But is this concern a purely psychological one, as it may seem from a more empirical point of view? Hermeneutics refutes this concern by asserting that the meaning which individuals and communities give to places to which they belong and which belong to them is not rooted in the self, but in the history and traditions of that community's life. An empiricist outlook discounts the claims of history and tradition as being potentially prejudicial and counter to reason; however, Gadamer (1975: 218-264) says they are essential to all understanding. To again quote Kieran Bonner on this matter, "Any full understanding of a phenomenon has to include the way community, history, and culture operate in such an understanding, even (and most especially) in the kind of understanding that specifically seeks to exclude these features" (1998: 40). This 'inclusion of community, history, and culture' for a more complex understanding of social phenomena is what de Certeau meant in a taken-for-granted way in his adamant claim that stories and legends matter in the life of a city and its places, and that it is only when individuals treat them as such that the city can be made 'habitable.' His "Walking in the City" reminds us that everyday life is 'haunted' by the indelible spirit of a community's past and cultural history – a claim that is taken seriously by Gadamer's hermeneutical understanding. For de Certeau, like Foucault, it is the *Panopticon* (in a manner similar to Weber's "iron cage") that manifests itself in the fear that such elements of living (legends, cultural traditions, etc.) will be taken as 'unreasonable,' 'prejudicial,' and 'romantic' rather than as an essential part of making the city a place in which one can *live*. The hermeneutical commitment to taking seriously the claims of "community, history, and culture" can thus be seen from this standpoint as one way of subverting the strong hold of the *Panopticon* in both everyday life and theorizing.

An orientation to creating a habitable city requires an openness to tradition and the past, a questioning and thoughtful spirit, and commitment to place. Like all other claims and modes of being, the idea of the habitable city is but one way that the city can be addressed and oriented towards. What is of interest for this project is how this dialogical problem is manifested in the conversation that followed the moves in Toronto and Montreal. In the remainder of the chapter, I identify two sides of the dialectical debate over what constitutes a habitable city, and how that was reflected in the actions and claims made by citizens involved in the discourse of the new and old arenas. These two sides can be seen to be like Max Weber's concept of "ideal types," rather than empirical categories; only in this case the types are placed in dialectical conversation with each other, and thus are not merely an historical description. The first side is characterized by a nostalgic longing for a bygone age, addressing the *Panopticon* by orienting to a hopeless desire for a return to a past in which the *Panopticon* did not seem to be as powerfully decisive in individuals' lives. The other side embraces the notion of progress, and the excitement and novelty that can come from the new. It sees a city as being habitable when it is capable of satisfying the needs and desires of the people who live there, particularly including the desire for what is modern, up-to-date, and 'spectacular.' Both discourses attempt to take up the problem of living in the city in a meaningful way, and the remainder of this chapter will investigate how they go about doing this, and what this says about the city, and society at large.

Nostalgia: Desire for the Lost Past

I have identified the two sides of the dialectical debate over what constitutes a habitable city. This debate appears implicitly in many of the areas of contestations that spring up within a city, including the case study that I am interested in. In a strong sense, this problematic gets at Leo Tolstoy's fundamental question, *What should we do and how should we live?* Radical interpretive sociology requires a reflexive orientation to the dichotomous sides that this debate brings forth. To begin, let us look at the more conservative tendency that our site of contestation has brought up. One strong relation to the moves in both Toronto and Montreal is an inclination towards a nostalgic longing for what came before, and which seems to have been lost through the passages of time. As such, this inclination has a strong relation to the past, and tends to be mistrustful of the rapid-fire changes wrought by globalization (etc.) in the modern city. At the same time, it has a more passive orientation to the future. Overall, this stance is redolent with the inexorable feeling that 'something has been lost' to the passage and ravages of time and social forces. Roy MacGregor draws from this standpoint in his *Ottawa Citizen* article "New arenas not hockey shrines: Intimacy, character often lost as teams build for more seats" (February 4, 1997, C1). MacGregor laments the loss of the unique characters that had built up around the old arenas in Chicago, Boston, Montreal, and elsewhere, in spite of the "by and large magnificent facilities" being constructed to replace them. He writes,

> It is intriguing to note the three teams most-closely connected to their old buildings and loyal fans – Montreal Canadiens, Boston Bruins, and Chicago Blackhawks – are all shadows of their former selves, just as their once-revered former buildings, the Forum, the Garden, the Stadium, today cast long shadows over their replacements.
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> The greatest change of all has probably been in Montreal, where the Forum had even been called "the shrine," and where the cavernous, cold, 21, 273-seat Molson Centre has seemed not only a different building, but one housing a different team and seating different fans.

How can his claims be understood – how are they, in Blum and McHugh's terminology (1974), the 'impetus' that drives our search for understanding of the city? MacGregor's article questions the uniformity of modern arenas, and how they seem to promise so much, yet that instead can feel like they detract from the experience. MacGregor is not able to articulate what it is, precisely, that diminishes the experience of attending a game, only that it has created a change, particularly in Montreal, where the atmosphere is decidedly 'different' – as though Molson Centre is 'housing a different team and seating different fans.' For MacGregor, this difference is a melancholy one: "The higher-priced seats – necessary to pay for the heavily financed buildings and soaring salaries – have caused a fundamental change in the make-up of the crowds. Gone are the 'characters' who were there, night after night, with their bellowing insults and invigorating cheers." MacGregor's comments remind us of the emotional wounds that can be left by the loss of places, the sadness that comes when joys of the past seem to be over for good.

This sentiment would most commonly be called *nostalgia*, which Casey says is "not merely a matter of regret for lost times; it is also a pining for lost places, for places we have once been in yet can no longer reenter" (1993: 37). Often nostalgia is discounted as a pointless pining for what could very well be a misremembered past. In spite of what can be a very strong emotional resonance for what has been 'lost' (or perhaps because of it), nostalgia as a social and individual phenomena is generally given very little credence as an object of study and interest. Kimberly Smith (2000) has argued that this is due to modernity's tendency to subdue the painful power of its original manifestation[7] into something which is simply an inevitable and even pleasant aspect of adulthood and change. She writes, "The concept of nostalgia has made it difficult to talk about the pain of dislocation generally, first by characterizing it as an individual illness amenable to psychological treatment, and eventually by characterizing the whole nostalgic experience as pleasant rather than painful" (519). Thus, the nostalgic longings that are a common experience in modern life (both for lost times and lost places) are generally discounted by both the taken-for-granted ideology of the everyday and by the empirical social sciences as either (a) irrelevant as a subjective emotion that therefore cannot be studied in any real, objective way, or (b) so pleasant, banal, and taken for granted that a concerted reflective method is not necessary or just not thought of. As an example, we witnessed this second concept – that nostalgia can be pleasant – in the auctioning off of the 'relics' of the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens. These items were bought, particularly by private citizens, as a way of concretizing the pleasant memories of the past, of making them real again, tangible before them, and giving them the ability to recall these pleasantries whenever after the object is contemplated.

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[7] Kimberly Smith (2000: 508-509) writes that nostalgia's "history properly begins in 1688, when the Swiss physician Johann Hofer coined the term. He was describing a malady the Germans called "Heimweh" (homesick) – a word tat itself originated perhaps 100 years earlier. Hofer was interested in the frequent occurrence of nostalgia among Swiss mercenaries who were fighting in foreign lands, defining it as a result of a disturbed imagination, "a sad mood originating from the desire to return to one's native land." Its symptoms included persistent thinking of home, melancholia, insomnia, anorexia, weakness, anxiety, smothering sensations, and fever. Hofer's suggested treatment: return home."

In spite of this discourse of nostalgia's dual tendencies to be either irrelevant or pleasant, nostalgia as a phenomenon of everyday life exists, and its significance is undeniable. In "They Don't Play Hockey Here Anymore: The Montreal Forum's Chief Ghost Meditates Upon the History of the Game," poet Bill Templeman (1999: 194-197) gives voice to the feeling that something fundamental and good about the past is now slipping away.

> They've taken out the boards, auctioned off the seats.
> No one plays hockey anymore. Never mind.
>
> Today I hate hockey! Let me be clear about this;
> I really hate this farce they call hockey. I hate all that it stands for.
>
> It used to be a game of skill and grace when the Rocket played
> along with Geoffrion and Bouchard. Now it's a game of thugs.

Both this poem and MacGregor's article show us how nostalgia – which Casey refers to as "one of the most eloquent testimonies to place's extraordinary memorability" (2000: 201) – cannot be discounted by a hermeneutical method as without merit for study by the human sciences. Both Templeman and MacGregor are expressing a deep regret for the loss of the historical venues – they draw our attention to the fact that there was ‘something about them’ that cannot be duplicated no matter how much money, time, and effort was spent in building their modern day replacements. For example, MacGregor sees the Forum as being a unique, memorable social space (or *place*, rather), while the multi-million dollar Molson Centre he can only describe as being “cold” and “cavernous.” Templeman’s poem echoes this sentiment in his ‘chief ghost’s’ disdainful line, “You’ll never catch me haunting that ritzy new rink downtown.” These expressions of this stance seem to fly in the face of my previous assertion that nostalgia is generally not given any particular significance in either academic or everyday life.

Edward Casey has written that the phenomenological act and expression of nostalgia is a reaction to the oppressive and totalizing forces that modern life imposes upon the meanings of spaces. He writes,

> No wonder we are nostalgic (literally, “pained at the [non]return home”), not just over cherished childhood places but over many now inaccessible or despoiled places, often in consequence of ecological damage or negligence. Such massive nostalgia is a speaking symptom of the profound placelessness of our times, in which we have exchanged place for a mess of spatial and temporal pottage. (1993: 38).

Thus, Casey locates the emotion and longing of nostalgia in the lack of place that is promulgated by the ideology of modernity. For Casey, this is something of a disaster, a catastrophe which has resulted in anomie not just of space or of the spirit, but most essentially of thought: “the placeless is the thoughtless; and if we fail to honor and remember places, this is a direct reflection of our unthinking and increasingly ill condition” (*ibid*.). Casey goes on to list the symptoms of modern nostalgia and placelessness as “disorientation, memory loss, homelessness, depression, and various modes of estrangement from self and other” (*ibid*.). This conception of the nostalgia felt due to the modern loss of place depicts a painful and nearly irreparable condition; far different from the 'pleasant' sensation of nostalgia described by Kimberly Smith. As well, in MacGregor's description of the loss of the historical hockey arenas, he certainly seems to fall closer to the painful rather than the pleasant end of the spectrum. His regret over the loss of these buildings (even the 'bellowing insults and invigorating cheers' of each place's 'characters') is palpable, and should not, heremeneutically, be discounted as 'mere nostalgia' (Smith, 2000: 515). Instead, we must see his claim as an example of an expression of nostalgic longing for lost times and lost places, and as such as an example of one side of the dialectic of place-making and meaning-making in the modern city. MacGregor clearly sees the venue shifts as making a less habitable city – less habitable as a result of the placelessness that has been created in the wake of the modernizing of the cities' hockey arenas.

So we can say that nostalgia – as a phenomenon of particular social importance in the modern world – is very amenable to a hermeneutical reflexive approach to uncover its underlying presuppositions. Thus far I have formulated nostalgia as something that an individual experiences and expresses as a result of the social forces of modernity which act to 'displace' the world, creating a condition that Berger (et al., 1974) would call 'homelessness.' Berger et al. link this perpetual feeling of placelessness with the increasing modernization of the world, particularly connecting it with three main concerns: the increasing technological foundations of the modern world, increasing bureaucratization, and pluralization of the life-worlds (1974: 181-184). These, they say, have led to an entirely new orientation to the world in which "certainties of any kind are hard to come by" (184). The symptoms of such homelessness have been described in purely individual terms up to this point (i.e. depression, anomie, alienation, loss of meaning and memory, etc.); however, the systemic spread of nostalgic sentiments throughout modern communities has the potential to create a problematic relationship to the building of habitable cities. Alan Blum writes, “We might think of the city as the place where humans are stripped bare, are brought face-to-face with the questions of their limits. The city can be said to expose its subject to the fundamental impermanence of all that comes to be, to the inexorable uncanniness of artifice and social construction” (2003: 234). The city, then, is a place of transition, changeability, newness, and ‘fundamental impermanence.’ This is a version of place, however, that nostalgia could be seen as attempting to overcome, or more likely, simply to lament. The city’s penchant for fundamental impermanence means that the places and times of the past must inevitably be lost to the past, and often. George Grant’s work illustrates the despair that the fundamental impermanence of modern places can bring; it is an expression of regret for the losses of our age. For example, he writes

> That conquering relation to place has left its mark within us. When we go into the Rockies we may have the sense that gods are there. But if so, they cannot manifest themselves to us as ours. They are the gods of another race, and we cannot know them because of what we are, and what we did. There can be nothing immemorial for us except the environment as object. Even our cities have been encampments on the road to economic mastery.” (1969: 17)

We can see Grant’s work as nostalgic in the sense that he is oriented to the past (even the gods are from a time before, of ‘another race,’ inaccessible to the present or future), and to his longing for it. It offers us an exemplar of the theoretical foundation of what can be an everyday experience. As well, it points us towards the subject of the next section; in his comment that there is ‘nothing immemorial for us except the environment as object’ (the result of our ‘conquering relation to place’), Grant makes visible that orientation against which nostalgia is reacting. This orientation is the belief that all things in the world exist purely on the basis of their use for human consumption; that is, as objects. It is to this point that we now turn.

Postmodernism and the Consumer Relation to Place

The nostalgic perspective is not the only way in which Toronto and Montreal, in various ways, were oriented to the problem of losing their historic arenas and gaining new, modern venues for their professional hockey teams. Indeed, many of the quotes and examples that I have given throughout this thesis seem to point to an altogether opposite ideological orientation than the nostalgic remembrance and lamentation of the past. For example, during the Toronto move, David O'Halloran's commented ("A new arena to make us proud," *Toronto Star*, February 12, 1999) on his desire to see a new "world-class venue in Toronto," in spite of the reminiscences of days spent with his father at Maple Leaf Gardens during his childhood brought up by the move from the Gardens to the Air Canada Centre; as he writes, "I'm no longer so small, or so simple to please, and neither is hockey." For O'Halloran, the question of the move is not problematic; since it reflects his own desire (i.e. for a more cosmopolitan, comfortable, up-to-date space) his relation to the Air Canada Centre is one of acceptance, pleasure, and pride. In fact, he notes that at the new ACC "there'll be all the advantages of staying at home to watch the game on TV, with all the atmosphere of being there live."

In many ways, O'Halloran's comments 'make sense' to us. They seem to reflect a kind of pragmatism that not only accepts the reality of the present as it 'really is,' it takes this present reality as an opportunity that can be reveled in, if only the individual is savvy enough to take the advantages such as the ones he cites as advantages.

After all, why mope about, wishing for something you can never have again, when you can do much better by ‘making the best of things’ – and have a comfortable, yet spectacular, experience doing so? If his statements do make sense to us, what does that say about our social milieu – in other words, what kind of a world make his comments intelligible, and how can hermeneutics help us to answer such a question? First of all, we can see that O’Halloran’s standpoint is at dialectical crossroads with the nostalgic point of view discussed above. While he acknowledges that there is a ‘good old days’ element to the closing of Maple Leaf Gardens (he exemplifies this in his remembrances of the excitement of the live games of his childhood), his main point is one of progress, and of the benefits for the consumer that come with such a mode of being and doing. From this point of view, nostalgia is the refuge of one who refuses to live in the present, who refuses to accept the inevitable nature of time and the changes that time creates in/for social space. As such, the nostalgic perspective is treated with some impatience, as though the nostalgic is the kind of person who cannot relinquish the promises and charms of childhood in order to grasp the reality of growing to adulthood (i.e. both the difficulties of its responsibilities and the privileges of freedom, choice, etc.). In this sense, the viewpoint that O’Halloran is voicing in his article seems to assert the importance of facing uncomfortable truths, no matter the cultural or even individual costs. After all, as O’Halloran himself asserts, “Memories don’t win leagues. And memories don’t win Stanley Cups.” Since it is assuredly the case that the goal of each professional hockey team (or any other team involved in games of all sorts) is to win – to prove its merit above and beyond all other teams – it therefore becomes necessary to put aside any superfluous details (such as a longing for what is now past, i.e. a historic arena) that might distract a team from reaching that goal. O'Halloran here highlights the potentially damaging possibilities hidden within the sentiments (which he would probably characterize as sentimentality) of the nostalgic perspective. The nostalgic's zeal for remembering the past and her resistance to the strangeness of the unfamiliar present make any embrace of the benefits of progress problematic at the high cost of risking not only the present and future of the team (i.e. the capital support needed to 'win Stanley Cups) but the capacity for the individual to enjoy the exciting potentiality that comes with being up-to-date (i.e. the comfort of being at home, but the atmosphere of being there live).

If O'Halloran's position can be said to discount the nostalgic perspective, what then, on a deep level, is it promoting? I have already stated that O'Halloran is oriented towards the idea of progress – a modern ideal which, as discussed in Chapter Four, is concerned with the perfectibility of the world over time. It is this ideology that O'Halloran draws upon in order to argue his case that "the Gardens was designed for 70 years ago, long before TV and multi-million-dollar salaries, and hockey now needs a world-class venue in Toronto if we're to claim a world-class team." Thus, the Maple Leafs need to demonstrate a commitment to the progressive betterment of the team and its venue in order for the ultimate goal ('a world-class team') to be realized. A traditional, yet shabby venue in Toronto would, for O'Halloran, symbolize the Leaf organization's lack of commitment to putting such a world-class team on the ice. Yet this is not O'Halloran's only point: he is also interested in highlighting the impressive potential that the new Air Canada Centre has for giving fans a more comfortable, exciting, and modern experience. It is not very surprising for me to say that the arenas –

new and old – are commodities in David Harvey’s conception of the term; however, what O’Halloran is making visible is the commodification of these buildings (and concomitantly these teams) not only by their ownership/management, who would obviously want to commodify them in order to profit from their successes, but by the consumers themselves, who make the venues into commodities in their desire to ‘get the biggest bang for their buck.’ Consumers such as the ones implicitly exemplified within O’Halloran’s article are interested mainly in buying for themselves the most spectacular, exciting, and comfortable experience that they can afford. The taken-for-granted assumption underlying this is a strong orientation towards the satisfaction of the desires of the self. What is important from this viewpoint is that the personal needs and desires of the individual are met – that enough choices (by which I mean commodities) exist so that people can get or buy what they want.

Kieran Bonner (1998: 153-175) has described such an orientation to the world. He notes that the ideology of ‘modernity’ – which has been so central to my own work herein – has been superceded by a more ‘postmodern’ way of being in the world. Such postmodernism, he says, is characterized particularly well in the personage of the consumer. Bonner’s work looks specifically at the choice that [post]modern consumers have between living a rural or urban existence, yet the broad social environment in which these actors are located (and the ideologies and problematics that such an environment raises) exemplify the same issues that have been faced by actors in Toronto and Montreal who are trying to come to terms with and make meaningful the hockey arena moves. This is because, in Bonner’s words “Consumer society [and therefore the ideology of postmodernism] is everywhere” (1998: 154); it is the *zeitgeist* of the present age. What then does this mean for practical action? It creates an environment in which a certain kind of behaviour is taken for granted as normal, rational, and sensible – a kind of behaviour in which the postmodern individual is "able to recognize…benefits…through the use of a means-end rationality" (1998: 164). Such means-end rationality does not take into account historicity, tradition, or a community-centred lifestyle (unless this is what the individual wants). Instead, it privileges a mode of living in which

> Neither the premodern notion of loyalty to place nor the modern universalist commitment to enlightenment and progress are real issues for the consumer. One is never required to think in terms of commitment to place as a particular other, nor in terms of 'constructing a better, reason-guided and thus ultimately universal order' (Baumann, 1994: 352), because what one is committed to is a general idea that can accommodate a variety of places as the occasion arises… One is not required to think in terms of resisting a commitment to place in the name of progress and enlightenment. The postmodern can be with the other (place, people, community) and yet not be with that other at the same time" (1998: 167).

Thus, to turn back to the O'Halloran example, the impetus to support the idea of moving to the new Air Canada Centre was not based on an ideological standpoint that necessitates the support of 'progress and enlightenment,' which is what a modern ideology would presuppose. That the new arena could be seen as progressive (in the sense that it was more modern, i.e. more "spectacular" and comfortable) was concomitant with the point that it could become a satisfactory part of O'Halloran's (and doubtless many others') "lifestyle."

Similarly, the *Toronto Star* published an article ("Leisure redesigns urban landscape," December 16, 1998: E1) that stated,

> Maple Leaf Gardens may be a hockey shrine and a Toronto landmark, but it dates from a time when the citizens of this good burg still exercised WASP restraint, even when it came to their pastimes. No one ever felt comfortable in the Carlton St. Cavern – and certainly not as comfortable as they will be in the Air Canada Centre. If fans haven't taken over the game, they have made the arena their own. This place is for them; it takes their needs seriously and caters to all of them enthusiastically.

Again, the focus is not on the meaning and significance of the Gardens as a 'hockey shrine and Toronto landmark,' as the nostalgic standpoint would do, but on the level of personal comfort and fun that the new venue affords the consumer. When the writer above states that the Air Canada Centre 'is for them,' he doesn't mean that culturally and mythologically it has a specific meaning integral to 'them' as a community, but rather that it was built in response to the consumer's desire for entertainment, something which this writer says is reflected in Toronto's shift away from purely corporate interests and towards the industry of entertainment. Here, to use George Grant's terminology, he is taking his environment as an object. The writer locates this in the postmodern notion of personal happiness and satisfaction that Bonner, Berger et al., and Grant have all talked about in various ways: "Leisure is the prerequisite to much of what we hold important and meaningful – namely, having fun." Phenomenologically, we can say that this means that the postmodern ideology that permeates our age has created social space and social meaning in a certain way (i.e. it privileges neither the notion of place and community that the premodern ideology did, nor the modern ideological assumption that 'progress and enlightenment' were inevitable and favorable, but instead assumes that world can be ordered upon the whims and desires of each individual actor) and consequently forgets that any human agency was involved in creating such a way of being. This postmodern mode of living thus becomes taken for granted as 'natural' and 'just the way things are.'

This taken for granted ideological position is what makes it possible for those who write about the moves to display cynicism about what they would view as an unduly high level of emotion involved in these cases. The nostalgic ideology, as we have seen, leads to a social milieu in which longing for the past is paramount; in Berger et al.'s terminology, such a longing is characterized by a feeling of 'homelessness.' From this standpoint, the moves are taken as just another example of how the modern predicament is characterized by the inexorable disruption and destruction of the vestiges of 'home' – which here could even be said to have been old hockey arenas – that still remained. The instrumental or consumer relation to place, however, adopts a certain cynicism towards the idea that the arenas – either old or new – could be 'homes' in Edward Casey's sense of being 'places.' The cynicism stems from its preconception that what matters about buildings (or anything else, really) is not their potential to be meaningful and emplaced centres of community, but only about their potential to be (or not be) objects of desire for a particular consumer. Thus the debate becomes 'only a matter of personal choice' – either you like the new arenas and want to be a part of them or you do not. This ideological basis looks at the nostalgic position of longing for what has been lost as ultimately wrongheaded – it sees nostalgics as longing for something that cannot be chosen, and which might never have been an option at all. The consumer relation to place thus creates an individual who is just as 'homeless' as the nostalgic that Berger et al. or George Grant have written about – however, their homelessness has been stripped of its pain, because the 'home' in question is seen as never having been a home at all in the first place. The ineffable qualities that de Certeau says create a meaningful place in the world cannot be instrumentalized or even made empirically tangible – and they cannot really exist for the postmodern as exemplified by the consumer. The very notion of 'home' (as signified, in this case, by the hockey arenas) cannot be proven and therefore have no validity as a part of what can be consumed – because they require a *specific meaningful relation* from the consumer, which I shall get into shortly. Thus, the consumer as described by Bonner (1998) can be said to be what Blum called “a critic who knows which way the wind is blowing” (2001: 5) – not disenchanted by modern life as the nostalgic is, but cynically ‘aware’ that the world can only offer any enchantment (and only then when one has an instrumental relationship towards being enchanted) when one is in the position of being able to choose what one wants from the world, and ultimately to be able to master that process of choosing.

Nihilism, Commitment, and Practical Social Action

Let us return to the first concept that we examined in this chapter: the possibility of the habitable city and what this means. The questions of what makes a city habitable, how to attain such a goal, or even if this goal is possible can be said to enliven the urban environment, permeating each critical occasion as citizens who are well aware of the pluralization of lifeworlds and the contestations that are the result attempt to work out and work through the problems that face them. From my own hermeneutical methods, this working through is always and inevitably dialectical in nature, a social conversation that contains the ‘to and fro’ motion that must be in play when multiple individuals in a community or society try to reach a common understanding. Such an understanding is elusive, however; as we have seen from our own example, social meaning can be pulled in dichotomous directions, and it is in this ‘in-between’ that any kind of common meaning is found. As Alan Blum writes, the city

> makes reference to an opportunity for mutual and reciprocal influence and so, a context in which the agitations and frustrations released from trying to persuade one another circulate demandingly upon us in ways that sharpen our sensitivity to accountability. The city is the site of such a conversation because it is the place where our aspirations for worldly influence must run up against the ‘immense’ forces released by our efforts to persuade one another. (2003: 8)

Thus the city is a centralizing site for constant social conversations and various attempts at persuasion.

In the cases this study is interested in, we have already seen such a conversation in the ‘to and fro’ dialectic between those who see the moves as an occasion for nostalgia and longing, and between those who see them more instrumentally as new and exciting opportunities for consumption. These are the two extreme ends of the dialectic, and the most intensive meaning-making is located somewhere in the middle of these two extremes; for example, someone who is nostalgic for the former glory and tradition of the Forum or Maple Leaf Gardens may also be excited about attending games in the new space, a viewpoint that, as we have already seen, occurs many times over in the literature. (This is indicative, again, of the postmodern relation to space, which does not require an either/or relation to a situation, but rather allows the individual to pick and choose which aspects of the situation are amenable to his or her lifestyle.) As well, in many ways, not exhibiting an extreme viewpoint (i.e. acknowledging that there are other ways of being and seeing) is an example of what Blum above calls ‘our sensitivity to accountability.’ Actors are aware of the social currents running through the problems and issues of community, and show their accountability by acknowledging the other side, and how they see themselves as fitting into that opposite viewpoint or not. This orientation towards accountability shows that people in our society recognize that they have a duty towards making statements that are as accurate as possible – that to make a statement or display a particular orientation towards a contested issue comes with a certain kind of responsibility.

But does this attitude of responsibility and accountability orient itself in any particular way to the problems of the habitable city as we have talked about them? Do actors – whether they display a nostalgic or instrumental relation to the issue at hand – take into consideration the problematic nature of collective meaning-making in any way? In the works of de Certeau, Bonner, and Alan Blum, there is a similar thread running through the concept of what makes a city livable or ‘fit for humans.’ This is that the habitable city requires something from its citizens; they must be accountable for their part in it, and take responsibility for some part of its being. The habitable city *demands a commitment*. This is different from the kind of accountability that I discussed above – this accountability was to the idea that an opinion needs to be argued for with some degree of evidence in order for it to be taken seriously. The accountability that is necessary for the habitable city to exist goes deeper than this, extending to the level of meaning and social understanding and requiring an active kind of agency and awareness from citizens. Yet, as we have seen, the orientation to the world that is the result of an instrumental or consumer relation to place has no such requirement; it denies those things which de Certeau, Bonner, etc., say make a place livable (things like an active participation in Barthes-style mythology, the continuation of stories and traditions, and commitment to place) because these are things that are ineffable and cannot be concretized, and as such cannot be consumed in the instrumental manner required by the postmodern outlook. Thus this ideology is inherently antithetical to the concept of the habitable city, for, as Bonner (2002: 13) has said, “when a city is always being remade in a celebration of the productivity of humankind, it does not lend itself to being a place fit for humans.”

Neither does the ideology of nostalgia (particularly in its most extreme forms) lead to an orientation towards creating a habitable city. The nostalgic position longs not for a return to the past, but for the remembrance of what has been lost, and as such it runs the risk of making the city less habitable purely out of its inability to picture the present (and future) as something that also requires commitment. In this, I am in agreement with Kieran Bonner's statement that "humans make a place for themselves in the made place that is the city when the city is not so overwhelmed by a past (e.g. Rome) that the present can only bask in its past glory" (2002: 13). Thus, the truly habitable city is committed to making a place for the development of the present and the dreams for the future. Nostalgia as theorized by Berger et al. and George Grant and exemplified in the writings of both MacGregor and Templeman – which in its extreme form is characterized only by a lament for the past without the benefit of hope for the present or future – diminishes the city's capacity to be a place for transcendence, for excitement or energy, for what Blum (2003) calls the 'sweetness of living' since current citizens can never hope to behold their city as it was in its days of past glory. Henri Bergson touches on this point when he comments,

> He who lives in the past for the mere pleasure of living there, and in whom recollections emerge into the light of consciousness *without any advantage for the present situation*, is hardly better fitted for action [than one who remembers nothing]" (quoted in Smith, 2000: 516).

Thus, while the two concepts that I have discussed as being integral in the dialectical conversation surrounding the moves in Toronto and Montreal seem to be on opposite sides of the issue, at base, they are same in that they *do not require any practical social action* from citizens. At a deep and taken-for-granted level, these two modes of dealing with the critical occasions at hand lack the accountability required by a truly habitable city in that they require no commitment towards doing something in the present that helps to contribute to building and sustaining a city that is ‘fit for humans.’

In essence, this lack of any requirement towards practical social action displays a kind of *nihilism*. This nihilism is rooted in the belief that at a foundational level, the social action and objects that society makes meaningful are actually without any particular meaning, and thus are ultimately irrelevant. Thus we come to an impasse in which the denial of the potential for meaningful community-centric action (and the resultant meaningful connections and consequences that could accompany such action) has led to a denial that action matters at a fundamental (Truth) level. Nostalgia may see the past as having held some kind of meaning, but the ravages of time have stripped the present of any lasting significance. Postmodernism denies that there is any deep meaning or truth in the world beyond that of individualistic desires and objectives. Both ideological concepts are rooted in taken-for-granted social understandings and support Berger’s assertion that “society provides for the individual a gigantic mechanism by which he can hide from himself his own freedom” (1963: 145) – the freedom to act in any other way but in the ideal-typical ways of either nostalgia or consumerism (i.e. to act *in support* of the belief in the habitable city) which seem to be self-evident, so reified are they in modern society. That this is so speaks to the embeddedness of both of these claims, and the difficulty that either the theorist or the layperson has in rooting out the underlying presuppositions that guide the social action that occurs, and those forms of action which are discouraged.

The double-sided ideology of nostalgia and instrumentalism are commonplace in the modern city, including Toronto and Montreal. Since we see them as contributing to an atmosphere of nihilism, what Joan Allen calls a "melancholic respect, [a] sense of the futility of desiring to be anything other than a copy of nature" (1980: 21), can we then say that the very possibility of there being such a thing as a habitable city is called into question? The habitable city requires a meaningful and conscious orientation to place, and what Gadamer (1975: 282) calls a "living tradition." Nostalgia and postmodernism ultimately seem to make statements of nihilism. Does this mean, then, that the desire to collaboratively create a habitable city in modernity is irredeemably lost? To answer this, we must look more closely at nihilism as a social phenomenon. Kieran Bonner (2001: 284) writes that

> Nihilism is a problem made urgent by a very specific relation to language, history, and community. It is very much a modern problem as it involves coming to terms with the energies released by the development of modernity from the Reformation through to the Enlightenment, the industrial revolution, and the technological innovations of the twentieth century.

Thus, the nihilism of our modern age is foundationally shaped by the social, political, and historical changes out of which our society has grown. It is not, therefore, simply a psychological morass that exists solely to drain all hope of Truth from the world, although it is sometimes discussed in those terms. Instead, we must see nihilism as the fundamental interlocutor of all modes of serious thought. As Alan Blum says, "Every great philosophy has in some sense taken its bearings from the specter of nihilism, the reminder of the groundlessness of being" (2003: 4). Although its significance to philosophy and academic thought is important, nihilism cannot be seen as purely an intellectual fixation. Its possibility in everyday life is also significant, as Blum continues:

> if every philosophy is a suppressed dialogue with that interlocutor, the voice that challenges the desire for truth and knowledge with that provocation (the desire Plato called the Good), then nihilism is internal to the Good as the trace of irresolution that always remains in action. (2003: 4)

Thus, from Blum’s perspective (and my own), the power of nihilism inevitably goes beyond the philosophical to embody the uncertainties that necessarily and invariably haunt practical social action.

From this perspective, nihilism seems to be inextricably linked to thought, or its denial. The social, political, and philosophical thinker, Hannah Arendt demonstrates this in her comment: “nihilism may be seen as an ever-present danger of thinking…[and] thinking is equally dangerous to all creeds” (1978: 177; quoted in Bonner, 2001: 285). Thought is dangerous because, in its reflexivity, it threatens to undermine deeply held beliefs and understandings. To get back to our cases, we have seen that the ideologies of nostalgia and postmodernism have been the shields that people in these cities have used to hide from themselves the different possibilities for meaning and doing that the moves could have sparked. In other words, the beliefs upon which the citizens acted upon (expressions of regret and sadness; excitement over ‘spectacular’ new venue and its comfortable amenities) were not necessarily the only way things could have been. But because such different expressions towards the move could be imagined to have gone so deeply against the underlying ideology of the modern Canadian city, resistance towards a thoughtful orientation to the problem that the moves created was implemented in the form of the denial of practical community-oriented action – the moves were thus seen as ‘just the way things are.’ It is for reasons such as these that Bonner (2001: 286) characterizes the problem of nihilism in modern society as “intertwined with the deep need for thinking.”

What does this mean for these cities? How can a city live with the ‘specter of nihilism’ and still be habitable? The problem of nihilism seems to be unavoidable; an aspect of the human condition from which we cannot escape. Does this mean, then, that human beings must inevitably succumb to nihilism as the only fundamental truth – the one contradiction in terms that can be accepted? Alan Blum addresses this problem by, in a sense, subverting the homelessness/individualism conception of nihilism that we have discussed as being inherent to the critical occasions at hand. He says that the threat of nihilism is an inescapable part of everyday life, a social force that acts to give the city its liveliness by engaging it in an ongoing debate over meaning and challenging the city to create meaning for itself. In his words,

> We might suggest…that the problem with which we must contend [i.e. nihilism] is not making and implementing ideals, but dealing with the consequences of our actions, that is, with life and its continuous reminder of our limits. This means that the making of such a community is in part the remaking of the nihilism that invariably haunts it." (2003: 8)

We can see the conversations and dialogues that were the result of the moves in Toronto and Montreal as being fundamentally engaged with this problem; in other words, 'with life and its continuous reminder of our limits.' However, this engagement ultimately resulted, for the most part, into a retreat from the human limitations within the problem of moving, and what that meant for each city – a retreat that was characterized by the discourse on both nostalgia and the instrumental relation to place. Responses to the moves were formulated as being between two choices: a nostalgic longing for the past, which characterized nostalgia as being a debilitating threat to the meaning of the present, or embracing them with a postmodern and somewhat cynical individualism, which characterizes nihilism as a modern inevitability and as something to be contended with by focusing more purely on the desires of the self. These responses, we can see, did not so much contend with nihilism in a way that acknowledged its potential for enlivening the city as they backed away from the fear that nihilism can bring with it in demonstrations of a lack of an orientation towards the choice of practical social action. The problematic nature of this formulation of reality was touched upon by Søren Kierkegaard, who wondered, “Who would want to be a tablet on which time writes something new every instant or to be a memorial volume to the past?” (quoted in Smith, 2000: 516). His question is a summation of the fundamentally alienating worldviews espoused by both the nostalgic and the postmodern way of being in the world.

As if in response to this, Blum’s theorizing tells us that the city need not be a retreat from the fear of nihilism – in fact, quite the opposite. He believes that the city is an environment that creates its vitality out of the specter of nihilism. The city, he says is “the environment that dares to risk putting nihilism and its overtones into play as a vital part of the everyday discourse; indeed, this is what makes the city a primary centre of freedom” (2003: 235). The ‘freedom’ of the city comes from its ability to ‘play’ with nihilism as a part of everyday life – to engage in its possibilities and potentialities. To do this is not to accept nihilism as the ultimate condition of human existence – even though, as Bonner points out, “nihilism… can neither be embraced nor avoided.” (2001: 285). Rather, it is to act in practical and socially relevant ways in defiance of the specter of nihilism, and in this way to make a meaningful, ‘habitable’ environment in which to live. The outright denial of nihilism leads to ideological constructs such as the ones we saw within the claims of nostalgia and postmodernism. This denial can only create a society in which thought and reflexivity are unimportant – the most dangerous kind of society, as history has taught us. In demonstrating these modes of being, Toronto and Montreal made visible an aspect of the Western society into which they are embedded that accepts and promotes this kind of unthinking acceptance of ‘the way things are.’ However, through the conceptions of the ‘habitable city,’ including the practices of reflexivity and oriented practical action even in the inevitable face of nihilism, the claims of meaninglessness – and that these modes are ‘the only way it can be – can be refuted and actively changed.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Thus far, this thesis has focused largely on the generalities of the cases at hand. As such, I have addressed the underlying presuppositions that have led to the claims and actions demonstrated in Toronto and Montreal during the moves from Maple Leaf Gardens and the Forum. In short, the moves, as I have formulated them, can be seen as particular ways in which both cities wrestled with the political/economic ramifications of meaning, the dialectical problems of identity, the discourse of the traditional comforts of place versus the temptations of the freedom of space, and confronting or accepting the specter of nihilism that [post]modernity necessarily brings up. The act of wrestling with these issues – i.e. the social processes surrounding the critical occasion – has allowed me to confront some of the ideological foundations within the modern city that are most often taken for granted. But have I come any closer to answering that integral part of my original question – what these cases demonstrate about the particularities of Toronto and Montreal as unique cities? Have we said, in any definitive way, what unique perspective and understanding these cities bring to the issue of the moves? Certainly such particularities need to be addressed in a more concrete and focused manner. This chapter, the conclusion of this work, will attempt to collect the disparate issues brought up during the course of the research and writing process, focusing on the distinctive ways in which they are made manifest in each city, and what this tells us about the 'special spirit' that both cities exhibit. It is a re-examination of the research question, a reflecting-upon the ways in which the cities of Toronto and Montreal were (and/or were not) 'shaping forces' in the ways in which their respective cases were played out.

Montreal

In the previous chapter, I discussed the general tendency in Montreal to formulate the move to the Molson/Bell Centre in nostalgic terms – i.e., the Forum was a significant cultural icon and its meaning to the city had great symbolic value that has now been lost to time and history. As a city with its own unique cultural mythology, Montreal is able to create and sustain a dialogue in which the nostalgic lamentation of the Forum and all it stood for is understandable in a taken-for-granted manner. The Forum is lamented as a former place of victory, heroism, and great moments of community and coming-together. As well, it was seen as a cultural and political hub, encapsulating the Québécois struggle to matter on the national scene in its literal manifestation as a place of political rallies and speeches, and more figuratively in the metaphorical nature of the games played there, and the triumphs won. The nostalgic viewpoint most prevalent in Montreal (although it was certainly not the only viewpoint; life invariably provides a multiplicity of perspectives) saw the move to the Molson Centre as a melancholy event, in that it symbolized and concretized the move away from the community's former tradition and heritage into a more modern, sterile ("cold," "cavernous") environment in which to play and watch the Canadiens, among other things. This dialogue, as I formulate it, shows the necessity of wrestling with nihilism, of questioning Edward Casey's belief that there can be such things as meaningful places. Casey (2000: 201) says that nostalgia highlights the "extraordinary memorability" of place; however, in its extreme form, looking at the world from an inexorable condition of nostalgia risks the adoption of a nihilist relationship towards meaningful places. As I have said, extreme nostalgia makes the habitable city impossible, for the nostalgic city is one which is so enamored with the past that the lively and communal creation of the present and development of the future cannot occur. As Gadamer says, “Even the most genuine and pure tradition does not persist because of the inertia of what once existed. It needs to be affirmed, embraced, cultivated” (1975: 281). A city that places too great an emphasis on the conversation of nostalgia runs the risk of not being able to ‘affirm, embrace, and cultivate’ the active continuation of its tradition forward in time.

So what do I mean by locating the sentiment of nostalgia within Montreal’s dialogue about the move? What does it say about Montreal that this dialogue was so resonant for the city? Do I mean when I talk about nihilism that the nostalgic tendency in Montreal means that its ability to be a habitable city in the reflexive sense of the term is irrevocably and definitely limited? No – what I am saying is that the predisposition towards a nostalgic way of being in the world (again, in the extreme form) can lead to a nostalgic city that, ‘like Rome,’ as Bonner says, does not make a place in which people can work towards a collective and purposeful future. However, this attitude of nihilism is an indication of the changing relation between the Canadiens (and everything that goes with them) and Montreal as a habitable city. Historically, the team was a significant part of the cultural milieu that made Montreal a special place, unique in the world. Montreal’s commitment to and concern with/for the significance of the Canadiens to their city is summed up in Michael Farber’s 1991 quote that they are “The World’s Most Serious Hockey Team.” (*The Montreal Gazette*; April 4, 1991; F1). In Bonner’s (2003) reflective interpretation of Jan Morris’s work, he formulates her characterization of Montreal as a city of “irresolvable causes” as more deeply her valuing of passion, excitement, and even torment as a positive aspect of city life. Over the course of their years as part of city life in Montreal, the Canadiens supplied all of these things to the cultural life of Montreal, and the passion and excitement (and torment – the funeral of Howie Morenz, heartbreaking playoff losses, etc.) supplied the cultural raw materials about which Montrealers could be ‘serious,’ could take seriously as a significant source of the mythological substructure of their city’s identity.

But through the progressive tendencies of modernization, the homogenizing influences of globalization, and the desire for cosmopolitanism, this special quality has been increasingly called into question. Cosmopolitanism – that elegant quality of the global city – makes problematic the relationship that Montrealers have to their “World’s Most Serious Hockey Team” by creating an increasing number of alternatives (other outlets for passion, excitement, torment) that have the additional benefit of being novel. Such a competing viewpoint highlights the ‘created-ness’ of the Montreal hockey mythology – its taken-for-granted essence in Montreal was disrupted, thrown into relief. Such a disruption can be met with acceptance, and in a society of ideological free choice, particularly as it pertains to being a consumer, this is frequently the case. This – what I have previously discussed as a ‘postmodern’ outlook towards life and consumption – was a choice in Montreal, and one that was accepted by many in myriad ways. However, as I have already said, it was nostalgia that seemed to sum up most significantly the particular Montreal orientation to the move from the Forum to the Molson Centre. What I, reflectively, see this nostalgic formulation as saying about Montreal by Montreal is that the city that was able to take its hockey team seriously – able to claim that they took their hockey more seriously than any other city, in fact – is gone, or at least greatly diminished. This perspective sees the move itself as symbolic of the city’s transition from a tradition and past that could locate the passion and excitement that resonate with its citizens in their hockey team to a more cosmopolitan future which, while comfortable, no longer holds the potential for such a transcendent quality – or rather, if it does, this does not necessarily include hockey. The nostalgic sees this as a melancholic event, something that has limited what Blum (2003: 228-230, following Nef, 1960) calls the "sweetness of living," and what the Greeks called "the Good." Nostalgia's viewpoint of "the Good" is that it was in the past, but that it is no more; thus, the sweetness of life has been stripped away in an immutable present. For Montreal, this means that while the habitable city may still be possible, the meaningful discourses out of which it grows will pass on to other areas of city life that can continue to thrive (or start to thrive) in the midst of the changes wrought by globalization. The transcendent quality that hockey can impart and has imparted to Montreal is gone, the nostalgic point of view expresses. To give another example, in June of 2000, Molson sold the Canadiens and the Bell Centre to an American, George Gillette, Jr. Of this, *Montreal Gazette* writer Jack Todd wrote,

> If a big company like Molson, with its long-standing ties to both the community and the hockey club, with its clear "synergy" (to use [Canadiens president Pierre] Boivin's favourite word) can't make a go of it with a team that sells out one of the two biggest arenas in the NHL night after night – then who can?
>
> ("Excerpts from columns and editorials about Molson's decision to sell the Montreal Canadiens;" *The Canadian Press*, June 28, 2000.)

'Who can?' is the question that sums up the nostalgic position. Ultimately it shows how Montreal is wrestling with the question of the habitable city in the modern, cosmopolitan world. In answering this question via nostalgia, it shows its orientation towards changing along with a changing world. The nostalgia stems from the concordant implication that, while the habitable city can continue on, hockey and the Canadiens may no longer be one mythological foundation upon which Montrealers can draw in order to socially create a "place fit for humans" (Bonner, 2002: 13). It reminds us that while change can bring with it excitement and passion, it can also bring torment (or at least melancholy); for Montreal, this hockey heritage is important, yet still seems to be irredeemably slipping into the past, while a very different image of what Montreal *is* – in Bonner's language (2003: 23-24), its 'relation to its name' – is being established and carried on into an uncertain future.

Toronto

The hockey scene in Toronto is faced with the same political and economic factors as those identified in Montreal, particularly in lieu of the homogenizing effects of globalization in the city. Earlier, I quoted Orum and Chen in their assertion that "the impact of globalization has turned the city's traditional intra-national and local orientations outward to the international economy. Once the city has been to [a] large extent denationalized, it is no longer local in its existence and functions" (2003: 55). This kind of outward orientation is one of the factors that both Montreal and Toronto struggle with throughout the dialectical conversation surrounding their respective moves. In spite of this similarity of circumstances, I have already described (and theorized) the Torontonian response to the move from Maple Leaf Gardens as having a different orientation than the one that characterized the Montreal reaction. The Toronto response, I said in earlier chapters, could be described in terms of a postmodern or consumer relation to the concept of place. I have described the Toronto formulation of the problem as being oriented towards the idea of progressive change, modernizing future, and the fulfillment of individual desires. From this standpoint, the sweetness of living that Blum describes as the thoughtful and careful balance between the quality and quantity of the production of goods and services in the city is formulated as the acquisition of qualitatively and quantitatively better and more progressive goods and services – for example, the desire for a new, more cosmopolitan arena. The concept of place as I have described it, following Tuan and Casey, from this perspective is imagined as the raw material for individual and corporate benefit; commitment to place in this sense is based on questions of personal desire for luxury, entertainment, spectacle (etc.) and relatedly on the appreciation of the cosmopolitan or up-to-date amenities that are afforded by orienting to space/place as changing in a progressive and modernizing manner.

What does this say about this particular part of the Toronto orientation to life? How can the Toronto journalists' responses to this question be seen as answering to some taken-for-granted aspect of the Torontonian psyche? At a basic level, it speaks to Toronto's identity and reputation as the strongest corporate market in Canada, a city of great political and economic power. This has leant a specificity to the idea of what Toronto is, although this specificity, too, is problematic. Until about 25 or 30 years ago, the business elites who were the most common symbols of proto-typical Toronto life traditionally were white, English-speaking, and wealthy individuals, or so-called "WASPs" (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). It was from this version of the city's identity that the moniker "Toronto the Good" was coined. Under the umbrella of this term was the idea that the city was 'Good' in its WASP-ish tendencies towards homogeneity, a strong business and civic ethic, a certain quality of reserve, and an orientation towards order. As such, the "basic principles" of Toronto's identity, as articulated by John Montesano ("Catching up to Toronto's melting pot," *The Toronto*

Star, February 22, 1999) “have always been a potent mix of British civility and American entrepreneurship.”

However, Toronto’s more recent identity as a multicultural and diverse city (Bonner, 2003) problematizes this more traditional orientation to the meaning of being a Toronto citizen. Jan Morris describes Toronto’s new identity by noting that

> multiculturalism…turned out to be the key word, so to speak, to contemporary Toronto. As *ooh-la-la* is to Paris, and *ciao* to Rome, and *nyet* to Moscow, and *hey you’re looking great* to Manhattan, so multiculturalism is to Toronto (quoted in Bonner, 2003: 18).

In Chapter Five this new emphasis on multiculturalism was described as one of the reasons why Montesano, among others, experienced the Maple Leaf Gardens closing ceremony as “awkward.” The Toronto case examined here showed the Maple Leafs organization as a strong symbol for the traditional WASP elite class in this city, and the kind of place they built. As such, Maple Leaf Gardens symbolized the old, dated, and even ‘backwards’ aspect of Toronto. What is interesting is how the Gardens are also venerated as a traditional place of civic pride and hockey glory. Yet the power of the ideology of progress and the belief in Toronto’s new orientation to multiculturalism can be seen in the influence it has in creating and shaping newer presuppositions of Torontonian identity. As Montesano said following the 1999 closing ceremony, “Now that they put an end to Maple Leaf hockey at the Gardens, maybe we can bury some of the attitudes that went with it” (*ibid*.). From this viewpoint, multiculturalism is seen as Toronto’s ‘new way,’ and the “staid Anglo roots” (in this example, as represented by Maple Leaf hockey at the Gardens) that the city’s “power-broker’s cling to” (*ibid*.) belong in the past. However, as both Gadamer and George Grant have said, in different ways, the history and cultural heritage of a community must always be reckoned with;

Gadamer calls this the “distorting mirror” (1975: 276) of human subjectivity, which in modern times wishes to be ‘make judgments’ rather than ‘hold prejudices,’ yet cannot. This means that while social change is an irrefutable part of human existence, no change is ever totally brought about, without the significant remains of history; societies (or cities) cannot be reinvented out of whole cloth. To again quote Gadamer, “Even where life changes violently, as in ages of revolution, far more of the old is preserved in the supposed transformation of everything than anyone knows, and it combines with the new to create a new value” (1975: 281).

Thus in Toronto, the change to an identity rooted in multiculturalism must also necessarily carry with it the old values of Toronto’s ‘staid Anglo power-brokers.’ For some, like septuagenarian Peggy Howes Moxon, who grew up in Toronto during the 1930s, this is not terribly problematic. The letter she wrote to the *Toronto Star* (March 9, 2003; F07) about her “family’s history in Toronto when it was a predominately WASP city” was prompted by “recent census figures describing how diverse and interesting Toronto’s population has become.” In spite of this, she says, “the old days are worth remembering while enjoying the new and vibrant city.” Her letter focuses on the cleanliness, orderliness, and civility (Bonner, 2003) that are hallmarks of Toronto cultural heritage, and sees the combination of this history with the ‘new and vibrant’ multicultural city of the present as unproblematic. This viewpoint may perhaps be seen as indicator of the kind of mindset that the orchestrators of the opening and closing ceremonies hoped would resonate with viewers and paying fans alike. The commemorative ceremonies, the parade, and the selling of memorabilia, were designed to particularly in an attempt to do what Ms. Moxon advises (or at least to sell that point of view to consumers), to remember the old days while enjoying what is new and vibrant (i.e. the new building, the possibilities for future NHL glory). However, in Toronto, as I have previously discussed, this was only partially successful.

The reason for this is that there is a strong segment of Torontonians who see the potential for present-day vibrancy as being threatened by the past. The inherent tension in Toronto between the old and the new; what was, what is, and what may be, makes for a city which, as Morris says, is in a state of "permanent compromise." This compromise was picked up on by *Toronto Star* architecture critic Christopher Hume, who noted that the city's built landscape contained "an ugliness [that] could only exist in a city famous for its clean streets and healthy downtown" ("The ugly face of a very pleasant city;" April 8, 1999). Hume pinpoints the Air Canada Centre as an exemplar of the Torontonian tendency to "build ugly." In his words,

> Even our landmarks are dreary by design. The most recent example is the Air Canada Centre, which represents the ultimate Toronto compromise between ugliness and modesty, pleasure and pain, feeling bad about feeling good. It has already been nicknamed The Hangar, which it resembles, but at the same time, it's politely unassuming about its terrible plainness. Hidden behind the façade of an old postal station and tucked in almost beneath the Gardiner, its ugliness is only revealed slowly, over time.

Hume here is echoing Morris's conception of Toronto's permanent compromise – that although the city may welcome the novelty and vibrancy brought by the relatively recent influx of new and different groups of people, ideas, and ways of living, they cannot escape their orderly and reserved past, and in fact accept its inclusion as a natural part of Toronto. As Hume says, with tongue in cheek, "you get the impression that Torontonians consider themselves so fortunate to get a new arena that it would be greedy of them to expect it to be attractive as well." The statements of both Hume and Morris give us an insight into the culture of this city; we can see that Toronto is different from Montreal, that such statements could not be made seriously about the Montreal orientation to living. They tell us that Toronto is in the position of having to recognize a past that is very different from the direction its present is taking it in. The recognition of this past may be done either with honour or contempt (or somewhere in the middle, like Hume's affectionate but biting criticism) but cannot be ignored. John Montesano's critique of such reckoning, as I have described above, fails to understanding that Toronto's "staid Anglo roots" cannot be wished away in a desire for an entirely different kind of city. Hume's description of the Air Canada Centre shows that in spite of the desire of its builders (in both the Raptors' and the Maple Leafs' organizations) for it to be a venue that reflected Toronto's modern and progressive side, in its architecture (or as Hume might say, its characteristic Torontonian 'ugliness') can still be seen as being rooted in a fundamental kind of Toronto-ness that can be linked to an earlier orientation of Toronto as "Toronto the Good" – clean and orderly, but a bit bland (in Hume's words, "a good place to live, but you wouldn't want to visit").

In their own ways, the two parts of this particular Toronto compromise – between the ideology of newness, diversity, and multiculturalism and the earlier (yet still present) ideology of the combination of 'British imperialism and American entrepreneurship' – represent the consumer relation to place that I identified as a particularly Torontonian response to dealing with the issues brought up by the move from the Gardens to the Air Canada Centre. I want to reiterate that this relation to place isn't only located in Toronto (its hold has taken root or could take root anywhere that globalization has touched… in other words, almost anyplace). But the way of life that I identified as being a part of Toronto reflexively held an 'elective affinity' to this orientation to living in place – to the idea that one may pick and choose what one wants from the place one is in, without the requirement of an individual or societal commitment to that place as a place. Perhaps this makes visible a certain impatience in Toronto of constantly having to deal with a permanent compromise, about always having to 'feel bad about feeling good.' The typical Toronto response to the move to the Air Canada Centre, which was exemplified more by this postmodernist or consumer relation to place rather than a nostalgic longing for the past, made visible the difficulties that must be faced in Toronto about living between the irreconcilable polarities of the two cultural ideologies of past (reserved, orderly, sensible, clean, homogenous, business-oriented) and present (vibrant, fun, exciting, diverse, entertainment-oriented). In its orientation to multiculturalism and all that this entails, the ideology is more hopeful for the future than reverently mindful of the past. Because of this, leaving the Maple Leaf Gardens did not have the same emotional resonance as leaving the Forum did in Montreal, because the Gardens remind 'new Toronto' of its WASP past, a past which is experienced as irreconcilable with the multicultural future.

Deeply, we can see the predominance of the consumer relation to place in Toronto as one kind of response to this indeterminacy; if identity of place is a constant struggle (as it generally is in modernity, and particularity in the permanent compromise between old and new in Toronto), the struggle is eased when one needs only think of one's own tastes. In this way, both multiculturalism and the Torontonian tradition of civility (Bonner, 2003) can be seen as objects of consumption, or commodities, in Harvey's terms. Montesano asserts that a "makeover of multiculturalism will allow us to better repackage Toronto and present it to the world" (*Toronto Star*, "Catching up to Toronto's melting pot," February 22, 1999). At the same time, Hume conceives of Toronto's historical and current trend towards 'ugly' architecture as a consequence of consumerism, as well:

> In the architecture of post-war prosperity, the consumer was king. It wasn't that consumers had not taste – although that was never their strong point – it was retailers who decided they knew best. Worried they might seem too expensive, many store owners, office-tower developers and apartment- and condo-builders opted for the low road. More often than not, they chose the reassuring familiarity of the banal. (*Toronto Star*, "The ugly face of a very pleasant city;" April 8, 1999)

This ugly, though familiar, banality, Hume says, "does not bring contempt. It brings a cosiness and a comfort level to [Toronto's] surroundings." Thus, Torontonians are free to choose the aspects of either or both of multiculturalism or traditionalism which they like best; they may take on the identity of being a part of such a diverse and cosmopolitan city as Toronto, partaking in the festivals of different cultures and eating food from different countries. As well, if they so choose, they can revel in the traditions of the past, as did the people who, for example, bought memorabilia from the defunct Gardens. This consumerism only becomes problematic when citizens are too ideologically entrenched in favour of one side or the other, as John Montesano did on the matter of the 'awkwardness' of the closing ceremonies at Maple Leaf Gardens.

The consumer relation to place allows individuals to sidestep the difficult (or, as Morris implies, impossible) choices that are placed in front of people in a city built upon the 'permanent compromise' between two ideological premises that are firmly opposed to each other. It shows an orientation perhaps not so much to a "compromise," but to having it both ways – to latch onto the vitality, modernism, and excitement that diversity and heterogeneity bring to a city, and yet to still maintain a link to the comfortable banality of the city's heritage and tradition. Modern life may make these two things seem ‘irreconcilable’ (as Montesano’s suspicion of the motives driving the Maple Leaf organization and the change in venues illustrated); its image of the progressive future necessarily casts a suspicious eye on the prejudices and mistakes of the past, what Gadamer sees as the modern schism between reason and tradition (1975: 276-282). In the Toronto case, then, this schism is seen in the ambiguous nature of the reception towards the moves, the awkwardness attributed by people like Montesano to the ceremonies, and the uncertainty about the level of emotion that was appropriate for such an occasion. The way this problematical issue has been sidestepped is by orienting to the moves as a consumer, and therefore seeing the consumption of both nostalgic commemorative events and the spectacle of the new venue as evidence of individual taste rather than a specific commitment to what makes a city habitable (i.e. a reflexive compromise between the old and the new). Conversely, what constitutes a habitable city from this orientation to the world is a variety of choices for the consumption of place (as well as the goods and services that go with place) in order to satisfy individual wants. Thus, what is “Good” in the Platonic sense is that which can be consumed, can be commodified – the old and the new, the traditional and the up-to-date. That Toronto, in this case, oriented to this consumer relation to place in a taken for granted way shows the hold that this relation has on the modern consciousness, particularly in a city where, unlike Montreal, the focus (in terms of the Maple Leafs, especially) is forward-looking and progressive. In Montreal, the nihilistic danger is that the present could become subsumed by the power of the past. Toronto, on the other hand, must reckon with the possibility of individually consuming itself out of a collective identity. In both cases, the specter of nihilism both is itself the temptation and danger that must not be wholly entered into, as well as the impetus that creates the meaning out of which the respective culture of these cities is formulated dialogically.

* * *

Bonner tells us that “radical interpretive research recognizes the inextricable intertwining between the practical and the theoretical, between having an instrumental relation to place and the theoretic position that posits the primacy of the subjective realm of desires and moods over the objective realm of place and the world.” (1997: 155). As such, this thesis itself has illuminated the dialectic between the everyday and the theoretical realms, since both the everyday member and the theorist share a linguistic world. In this way, the research brings itself into question inasmuch as it seeks to question the world, an inherent aspect of radical interpretive sociology. The specific question about the world that I undertook at the beginning of this project involved an examination of both the possibility of a city having such a thing as a locatable “culture,” and also how that culture, if it does seem to exist as an identifiable phenomenon, can be seen as a shaping force in the meaningful discourse that grew up around the two particular cases of the hockey arena moves in Toronto and Montreal. I have formulated throughout this work that there are thematic strands that run in different ways through both of these cases – in essence, that there *is* such a thing as a cultural milieu, and that this milieu influences in taken-for-granted ways the meaning that citizens take from specific events and consequently the ways in which they act upon these meanings. In essence, I have argued for the meaningful ‘reality’ of such social constructions as “culture” and, indeed, as “cities.” That everyday life and theorizing thereof inevitably involves taking into account the problematic of a multiplicity of perspectives does not mean that doing the theoretical and practical work of reflexively orienting to and attempting to understand the related concepts of “city” and “culture” are irredeemably lost to subjective incoherence. Instead, multiperspectival reality is posited by radical interpretive research as a challenge that must always be reckoned with, rather than avoided. In such a way, theorizing ‘the city’ or ‘the culture of a city’ became possible throughout the thesis.

Thus, instead of seeing the concept of culture as invariably elusive to an intensive theoretical and methodological orientation, the approach used herein was helpful in establishing a meaningful theoretical relationship with the idea of ‘culture’ because it illuminates the link between tradition and present reality (Gadamer, 1975). Hermeneutically, culture is rooted in language and tradition that existed before the present reality (i.e., it is something drawn into the present from before), yet also something that is collectively created out of these past remnants into the stream of the here-and-now. Radical interpretive sociology, in its interpretive (and particularly hermeneutic) orientation to the understanding of the meaning of tradition and history in the present day, has provided me throughout this work with a methodological means of orienting likewise to the idea of “culture.” Hermeneutics tells us that no concept of social or human science can be freed from the legacy of the past, and that all accountable research must be willing to take into consideration subjective and nearly-ineffable concepts such as ‘culture’ – in spite of the anxiety that comes from not being able to pin something down with empirical precision, what Gadamer calls “the experience of human finitude” (1975: 357).

Throughout the course of this work, the cases in Montreal and Toronto have both implicitly and explicitly made reference to and been concerned with the dialectical conversation between the cultural domination of the city by cosmopolitanism, globalization, and modern political economic forces and the potential for some cultural specificity and uniqueness to remain in the face of such social pressures. Both Montreal and Toronto exist in the same country, facing the same forces that have been brought to every city on Earth through globalization. Additionally, the cases I have addressed herein were remarkably similar, pitting the nostalgic and traditional love of the professional hockey teams (and their arenas) in both these cities against the allure of modernizing the present venue to 'keep up with the times.' Yet, as we have discussed, the cities displayed their unique natures by responding to these similar circumstances in markedly different ways in spite of the similar dialogical points being made in both of the cities. Analytically, such differences are interesting and relevant for social inquiry. As I have noted throughout, they point to the specific linguistic and cultural traditions that each city has developed. More specifically, these differences illuminate the ways in which the particular culture of each city – the mythological and traditional *patois* that colours the taken-for-granted understandings of any social space – acted as shaping forces in the ways that these similar cases were played out in their respective cities.

I have also discussed these cities, in their different ways, as displaying a kind of nihilism in the course of their mutual reckonings with the issues at hand. However, I would not say that they are nihilistic in the totalizing connotation that the word may contain. Instead, their separate relations to a similar problem (nostalgia by Montreal; postmodernism by Toronto) display their different ways of wrestling with the problem of nihilism in the city (which, as Blum reminds us, is inescapable), and its ramification for living, and living well. Both of the cases remind us that an understanding for what kind of practical social action is best is highly problematic and often very difficult. Yet, if the city, as The Culture of Cities Project has asserted, affords near limitless possibilities for choices of practical action, particularly those choices which may be made in society in order to create and sustain a meaningful community or habitable city, then the idea that such choice is (a) irrelevant [nihilism], (b) impossible [nostalgia], or (c) only important for the individual making the choice [consumerism], is highly problematic as well, and significant in terms of the messages that we interpret as coming from our world. Both Toronto and Montreal, in these cases, were cities caught in a state of change, and both displayed the difficulty that this brings. For Montreal, the city's temptation to slip nostalgically into the past without considering future action as a possibility may point to a weariness with a city of passions, where the 'irresolvable cause' of its identity is constantly being argued. Likewise, Toronto's accordance with a consumer relation to place displays a desire to overcome the 'permanent compromise' between memories and dreams at least in the sense that the individual is able to make the decisive choice to break the compromise. In both of these cases, the cities are wrestling with nihilism and its connotations. Alan Blum says that the city is

> the environment that dares to risk putting nihilism and its overtones into play as a vital part of the everyday discourse; indeed, this is what makes the city a primary centre of freedom. In this way the city arouses the very emotions it needs to surpass – the anomic intuition of fragility and impermanence – in its building and rebuilding that both affirms the present while deferring mastery of eternity." (2003: 235)

For these cities, as we have seen, the specter of nihilism contains both opportunity and loss, and the buildings themselves, both old and new, seem to stand as symbols of both the urban qualities of nihilism and hope for the future. Within their walls is a true urban mythology: the dance between progress and remembrance, between history and modernity, between space and place. These are the dances that tell us about the culture of a city, and the questions that each city must answer for itself.

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