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**EVERYDAY COSMOPOLITAN PLACE MAKING:
Multiethnic Commercial Streets in Montréal Neighbourhoods**

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**EVERYDAY COSMOPOLITAN PLACE MAKING:
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ABSTRACT

Although ethnic diversity is a defining feature of immigrant-receiving cities of the global North, much research on the multiethnic city focuses on either single ethnic groups or particular neighbourhoods. In contrast, this thesis investigates social relations between people from many social and ethnic backgrounds at a different scale of place: the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street. In particular, it explores how such places become „cosmopolitan“ through practices that involve being open – or closed – to „the Other“. It draws on ethnographic fieldwork in four streets in Montréal in order to examine how diverse actors – merchants, workers, residents, visitors, municipal officers, newcomers and old-timers – interact with each other and engage with each street as a place. It finds that the streets are sites of richly varied forms of public sociability, as unknown and familiar people interact in public in close and distant, remarkable and unremarkable ways. Ethnicity is mobilized in ways that can lubricate social relations, especially in exchanges within „ethnic“ businesses, or irritate them, as when tensions relating to other kinds of differences are ethnicized. Each street constitutes an identifiable place as a whole, the product of both planned and unplanned place making, which sometimes includes place marketing. A range of cosmopolitan and parochial figures emerges from analysis of the interplay of similarity and difference among people on these streets. Each street fosters its own kind of cosmopolitanism, uneven or imperfect as it may be. The thesis thus contributes to empirical research into cosmopolitanism as it actually exists in everyday urban spaces.

Key words: cosmopolitanism; ethnicity; sociability; place making; multiethnic city; street; Montréal

RÉSUMÉ

La création des lieux cosmopolites au quotidien : les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier à Montréal

Bien que les villes des pays d'immigration se caractérisent entre autres par leur diversité ethnique marquée, la recherche sur la ville multiethnique a tendance à l'aborder par le biais des groupes ethniques ou des quartiers particuliers. Cette thèse porte plutôt sur les relations sociales entre des personnes d'origines sociales et ethniques diverses à une autre échelle, celle de la rue commerçante de quartier multiethnique. Plus particulièrement, nous traitons des processus d'ouverture ou de fermeture à l'Autre qui pourraient rendre de tels lieux proprement « cosmopolites ». En puisant dans un travail de terrain ethnographique mené dans quatre rues multiethniques de quartier montréalais, nous explorons les façons dont divers acteurs – commerçants, travailleurs, résidants, visiteurs, fonctionnaires municipaux, anciens et nouveaux-venus – interagissent entre eux et avec la rue en tant que lieu. Dans chaque rue, des gens connus ou étrangers les uns aux autres interagissent de manière proche ou distante, remarquable ou non, générant ainsi des formes très variées de sociabilité publique. La mobilisation de l'ethnicité est également variée, de sorte que parfois elle agit comme lubrifiant des relations sociales, notamment dans les échanges associés aux « commerces ethniques », parfois comme irritant, quand par exemple les tensions associées à d'autres différences sont « ethnicisées ». Chaque rue constitue un lieu en soi, créé autant par des usages organiques que par des aménagements programmés, dont à l'occasion des stratégies de promotion. De notre analyse du jeu de similarité et d'altérité dans ces rues se dégage une variété de figures cosmopolites et paroissiales. Chaque rue génère aussi sa propre forme de cosmopolitisme, aussi imparfaite ou inégale soit-elle. La thèse contribue alors à la recherche empirique sur le cosmopolitisme tel qu'il existe dans des espaces urbains de la vie quotidienne.

Mots clés : cosmopolitisme; ethnicité; sociabilité; création des lieux; ville multiethnique; rue; Montréal

Conformément à la politique linguistique de l'INRS, nous fournissons en annexe (Appendix X) un résumé long en français de la thèse.

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NOTES ON LANGUAGE

Extracts from interview transcripts and fieldnotes

The majority of quotations of interviews come from verbatim transcripts. I use the following conventions:

...	An ellipsis indicates a pause in speech.
–	An em-dash indicates an interruption or self-interruption (change of subject).
[...]	An ellipsis in square brackets indicates that I have omitted some material, to improve clarity or relevance.
[customers]	Words in square brackets are best estimates of speech that was difficult to hear on tape.
<i>When was that?</i>	Italics distinguish the interviewer's speech.
<i>[laughs]</i>	Words in italics in square brackets are my own explanations or modifications, e.g. to note non-verbal language, anonymize the material or explain an expression.
<i>[name of shop]</i>	

Quotations that have been translated from French to English are marked with a „T“.

Minor changes to actual speech have been made to facilitate reading (e.g. deleting repeated “you knows”). A few interviews were not recorded, at the interviewee's request, and were written up from notes taken during the interview. Excerpts from these interviews resemble fieldnotes in their format (e.g. use of reported speech).

Extracts of fieldnotes remain as close to the original fieldnotes as possible, although since they are my own words I have taken more liberties with the editing. Quotes of other people in fieldnotes are based on memory and on notes taken as soon as possible after the event.

Attribution

To protect people's identities, I do not use their real names, and given the large number of interviewees, I decided to use numbers rather than pseudonyms. Quotes from interviews are attributed as follows:

[street code]	[interviewee type]	[number]
deL de Liège Ouest	w worker (storekeeper, employee, business owner, merchant, etc.)	1, 2, 3, etc.
JTE Jean-Talon Est	u user (local resident, passerby, visitor, etc.)	
ShO Sherbrooke Ouest	f festivalgoer (at the St-Viateur street festival)	
StV St-Viateur Ouest	b brief interview (with passerby)	

This gives, for example, **DeLu1** (first user interview on de Liège), **JTEb3** (third brief interview on Jean-Talon Est), **ShOw7** (seventh worker interview on Sherbrooke Ouest), **StVf8** (eighth festivalgoer interview on St-Viateur).

Where quotes are particularly sensitive and the context (or careful cross-referencing) could lead to the person being identified, I have not attributed them at all. Since I only interviewed a handful of municipal civil servants, I do not distinguish between them other than by the generic title „municipal officer“, in order to preserve their anonymity.

Fieldnotes are indicated by street and the year and month of occurrence, e.g.: (StV fieldnotes, 2007-06).

Local language

Montréal is one of the largest French-speaking cities in the world. It is therefore not surprising that many **French words** have become incorporated into the English spoken in Montréal. Three in particular crop up at regular intervals in this thesis:

- *depanneur*: a convenience store (Can.) or corner shop (UK) (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2004);
- *terrasse* or *café-terrasse*: a patio or sidewalk café (Can.), i.e. the outside drinking and eating area used by a restaurant, on or adjacent to a sidewalk, often constructed by a physical barrier (fencing and/or decking) but sometimes just marked off by tables and chairs;
- *Maghrebi*, not often heard in English. „North African“ is more frequently used to refer collectively to people of things from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. But since both Statistics Canada and the Canadian Oxford Dictionary (2004) use this adjective, so do I. It also has the advantage of corresponding to the common French adjective *maghrébin*.

Montréal **street names** are all officially French and widely used by anglophones. I have reproduced this official and local usage (with some variation for stylistic purposes). In French, the generic part is not capitalized, so rue, avenue, boulevard, etc. appear in all lower-case letters in the text.

Vernacular use of **cardinal directions** is conventional rather than literal. Streets in Montréal are laid out along a grid that runs parallel and perpendicular to the Saint Lawrence River, which runs approximately south-west to north-east (see map, Figure 3.1). For convenience, people orient themselves in Montréal as if the streets were aligned with the four cardinal points. What people call „north“ is actually roughly north-east, „east“ is south-east, „south“ is south-west and „west“ is north-west.

Style

As a Brit who lives mostly in French-speaking milieus, I apologize to Canadian readers for any remaining **Briticisms** in the text, but I trust they do not hinder understanding.

In the interests of inclusivity, I use either the masculine and feminine third person singular for the universal or **generic singular**. That is, I use „she“ or „he“ instead of „he or she“ or „s/he“. It should be clear from the text that I am not referring exclusively to women or to men.

INTRODUCTION

Let's begin with a small gesture. An elderly man is at the checkout of a small grocery store, buying a few things to eat: a can of soup, perhaps, a loaf of bread, a beer, a couple of bananas. He greets and holds out his palm to the woman at the till; she picks out the right change from it and smiles.

This gesture has intrigued me ever since I observed it during fieldwork in a grocery store on a multiethnic commercial street in a neighbourhood of Montréal. It is a moment of contact between two strangers, or perhaps „familiar strangers“ who recognize each other from their everyday rounds of shopping and work. They are from different ethnic backgrounds: he is black and has a Caribbean accent; she is brown and wears a mark of red powder on her forehead. The queue of people behind the man includes me next, a white European woman, and then a line of maybe a dozen assorted others, of various ages, genders and colours, on their own or in twos or threes. Up on a shelf behind the checkout is a small shrine bearing a few choice fruit, with incense smoke unfurling before statues of the gods. The store itself is known for its high-quality fruits and vegetables; people often call it Indian, although some know it to be owned by Sri Lankan Tamil immigrants. It marks the beginning of a stretch of Sherbrooke Street West in the neighbourhood of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce that is largely food-oriented and visibly multiethnic.

What might the man's small gesture, enacted and observed in this grocery store, mean? It unequivocally embodies a certain degree of trust, in that the man trusts the woman to pick out the correct change that is too fiddly for him to manage or too small for him to see. But does it mean anything more? What kind of trust is it and how far does it go? One could very well argue, on the one hand, that such a small action is so commonplace as to be not worth thinking about. It is utterly ordinary, a gesture made by a senior citizen who probably forgot his glasses and so needs help with his change. It must happen all the time in commercial transactions all over the world. It is nothing more than functional, just a way of satisfactorily completing an exchange of money for goods under slightly inconvenient circumstances. Or, on the other hand, one could argue that it does merit further attention – perhaps precisely because it is so mundane. The gesture puts two quite different people (and more, if you count the line-up) into relation with each other in a particular kind of context. However trivial, it is part of their everyday urban lives, and they may have something to say about it. It represents a tiny stitch in the social fabric of the multiethnic city.

The cities of many countries of the global North are becoming increasingly multiethnic. Changes in national immigration policies since the 1960s have led in many cases to increased flows and in all cases to diversified sources of immigration. Canada provides particularly strong examples of these trends. The 2006 Canadian census showed that 84% of immigrants who arrived in the country between 2001 and 2006 were born in regions other than Europe (Statistics Canada, 2008a: 12); the top ten countries of origin of these recent immigrants were China, India, the Philippines, Pakistan, the USA, South Korea, Romania, Iran, the UK and Colombia. Not only are immigrants more diverse, they are also more urbanized, and indeed there is a relationship between the two trends. Immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean, East Asia and South Asia are much more likely to have settled in metropolitan areas than those from Northern and Western Europe and North America (Heisz, 2006: 13). Moreover, while the population as a whole is increasingly urbanized, immigrants and visible minorities are even more so. In 2006, just over two thirds of Canada's total population lived in census metropolitan areas (CMAs, cities of 100 000 or more inhabitants at least half of whom live in the urban core), compared to 90% of immigrants and almost all members of visible minorities (96%) (Chui, Tran and Maheux, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2008a). This means that in Canada, cities are the places where people who come from (and are perceived as coming from) diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds cross each other's paths every day even if they do not live side by side.

Much academic research and received wisdom focuses on urban multiethnicity as a generator of anxiety, tension, conflict and discrimination. In urban studies in general, the dystopian trope of the „fragmented city“ has become one of the most popular lenses through which to view the city, and ethnicity is seen as one of its major fault lines. Ethnic residential segregation is a topic of a great deal of research and public concern. For example, fears of „ghettoization“ in Montréal led government agencies to commission research from the INRS-UCS to investigate the matter in the early 1990s (Germain et al., 1995) and again more recently (Apparicio and Séguin, 2008). Fears of „cultural clashes“ between minorities and majorities in shared urban spaces are another source of angst. Ethnicized and racialized difference remains strongly associated in public opinion with urban riots, „unrest“ or „disturbances“, as witnessed so far this decade in various Western cities including Sydney, Bradford, Paris and Montréal. However, these are by no means a necessary nor logical result of the ethnic diversification of cities, but instead are typically triggered by incidents that are the last straw for social groups suffering from systemic and institutional discrimination, for example on the part of the police. Less violently, conflicts over urban land use for ethnically and/or religiously marked purposes (ethnic „theme“ malls, new places of worship) or the distribution of state-sponsored resources

(sports centres, social housing) can inflame tensions between minority and majority populations. Urban ethnic diversity is thus often studied as a point of fissure.

At a broader scale, especially since the collapse of the communist bloc in 1989, the economic and ideological insecurities brought about by globalization have transformed relations between majorities and minorities, immigrants and native-born in Western countries. Global geopolitical conflict has been reframed by conservative scholars such as Huntington (1996) as a „clash of civilizations“, as opposed to the clash of „ideologies“ of the Cold War era, or the perpetual (if heavily masked) clashes of economic interests. Epitomized by the „war on terror“, the so-called clash of civilizations has relocated “cultural difference rather than ideology [as] a site of natural hostility and separation” (Fortier, 2008: 5). At the level of policy, this has led to a backlash against policies of multiculturalism in Western immigrant-receiving countries, while citizenship has been re-imagined as conditional upon minorities’ affirmations of sharing the „values“ of the majority (Fortier, 2008; Grillo, 2007; see Ministère de l’immigration et des communautés culturelles, 2008 for an example). At the level of everyday urban life, it has raised new fears of the cultural „Others“ in our midst, and above all has reactivated Islamophobia (Helly, 2004; Noble, 2005). It has doubtless also fed into the greater difficulties that immigrants now face in integrating into the labour market (Chicha and Charest, 2008), since immigrants and ethnic minorities often serve as scapegoats when the population at large is suffering from economic insecurity. Clearly, there is no shortage of weighty and troubling ethnic and cultural conflicts to study.

As valuable as analyses of such antagonisms are, they fail to attend to those small gestures that persist, in the interstices and intervals between „more important“ things. If ethnic and cultural difference is presumed to be a fault line of urban social relations, then it is hard to see the places where it might possibly be a bridge. We still know little about the urban social and spatial contexts in which ethnic diversity appears to be relatively unproblematic. It is therefore to such places that I turn my attention in this thesis. At the most general level, I ask, how do diverse kinds of people get along with each other (or not) in the ordinary public spaces of the city? More specifically, I approach this question via an investigation of social and spatial relations in multiethnic commercial streets in Montréal neighbourhoods.

These kinds of streets are marked, shaped and used by people from different ethnic groups in the course of their everyday activities, as they work, shop and socialize in them, or just pass through on the way to somewhere else. They are distinct from downtown streets, which serve a larger market, provide more occasional or exceptional goods and services, and often

have considerable symbolic meaning for people throughout the city and beyond. From one perspective, therefore, neighbourhood retail streets constitute unremarkable spaces of everyday life, the parts of the city one passes through in between activities that are more special or important. Seen from another angle, however, they are exactly the kinds of places that are celebrated in tourist guidebooks and „lifestyle“ newspaper features and promoted by urban institutional actors as the „hot spots“ that make their city vibrant and attractive. Retail commerce is, after all, a large part of what a city „does“; it is a sector that employs many city-dwellers and occupies much of the free time of many others. Neighbourhood commercial streets are an ordinary but important part of the vast array of places and atmospheres a city can offer, and for that reason deserve more scholarly attention than they have been given in the urban studies literature.

Reflecting the origins, connections and imaginations of the people who use them, neighbourhood commercial streets in multiethnic cities are typically multiethnic themselves, at least to some degree. Signs of ethnicity can be detected in the streetscape, in store façades and décors and lines of stock, as well as among the population of merchants, cashiers and other workers, customers, visitors, flâneurs and other passersby. In underlining the ordinariness and, in some cases, attractiveness of multiethnic commercial neighbourhood streets, I do not mean to say that they are immune to interethnic tensions. Rather, they can be constructed as objects of study without assuming that ethnicity is necessarily problematic – or even always salient – in the kinds of social relations that they host. In the light of the research and policy focus on the fragmented city, and on ethnicity as one of its points of fracture, it seems all the more important to investigate how people get along in ordinary multiethnic places like commercial neighbourhood streets.

To come back to where I began, then, this thesis takes the stance that those kinds of small gestures do matter, and investigates how they are enacted and what they mean to diverse people, in the specific contexts of four commercial streets in multiethnic neighbourhoods in Montréal. It thus constitutes an exploratory, qualitative and empirically grounded contribution to scholarly debates on „living with difference“ in the city. Four themes structure my investigation of social relations in multiethnic commercial neighbourhood streets: public sociability, the mobilization of ethnicity, place making and cosmopolitanism.

Each can be discerned in our introductory gesture. Public sociability is in the contact of the gesture itself, in the relationship it establishes between the man and woman, customer and cashier, as witnessed by the audience of customers in line. What forms of sociability hold

diverse people together, or push them apart, in a store or a street like this? Ethnicity is mobilized, by which I mean performed and interpreted, in the goods up on the shelf and the mark on the woman's forehead, in the colours of people's skins... – all of which hint at differing experiences but give no details of the lives they envelop. It is also signalled in the goods on the shelves – Polish jam, Mexican drinking chocolate, Hungarian mayonnaise, South Indian coriander chutney – and in the mistaking of the shopkeepers for Indian rather than Sri Lankan. How are ethnic differences understood and what do they signify in these ordinary spaces of public sociability? The store's layout, reputation and location in "the food court of Sherbrooke Ouest" (as one interviewee put it) point to how it is embedded in processes of place making. In 2008, the shopkeepers were able to expand into the premises left empty when the Italian bar next door closed down, adding even more lines of stock that the big stores do not carry. What planned and unplanned actions go towards producing an ethnically diverse street as a place? Lastly, cosmopolitanism can be inferred from the ways in which people engage with those they see as different from themselves. It is potentially present in the relationship between the Caribbean customer and the Sri Lankan cashier, in the curiosity that leads customers to experiment with unfamiliar food, or in the donations customers made to the collection boxes the storekeepers put out for victims of the tsunami in December 2004. In what ways do people show "willingness to engage with the Other" (Hannerz, 1990: 239) as they use neighbourhood commercial streets?

This thesis therefore uses three main concepts – public sociability, ethnicity and place making – in order to shed light on a fourth, cosmopolitanism, which has arguably been over-theorized but under-researched on an empirical level. As the product of an interdisciplinary doctoral programme in urban studies, the thesis draws on literature in English and French from anthropology, geography, sociology and urban planning – while keeping its sights set on the city itself as an object of study. Its focus on the „street-level“ experience of everyday urban life, captured by the use of ethnographic methods, is strongly influenced by my background in social anthropology, and indeed it makes a particular contribution to the field of urban anthropology.

The thesis is structured as follows. In Chapter 1, I set out the foundations of my theoretical framework. I begin by reviewing theories of cosmopolitanism, which I divide into a four-fold typology of political cosmopolitanism, identity cosmopolitanism, personal cosmopolitanism and commodified cosmopolitanism. I illustrate how each of these variants can be made manifest in the city, and conversely explain how scholars of the city have tended to approach urban cosmopolitanism as a phenomenon. Secondly, I present Montréal as a

particularly interesting laboratory of cosmopolitanism. I describe its patterns of immigrant and ethnic settlement, and then sketch out the scope and impact of the federal, provincial and municipal policies that aim to manage the resulting ethnic diversity. Thirdly, I turn to the concept of ethnicity which, although not the only kind of urban „otherness“, is the one primarily used in this research to think through difference. I explain how ethnicity has been understood as a phenomenon in and of itself, and how it has been understood to structure the city.

Chapter 2 draws on the empirical literature on city streets in order to demonstrate how and why they are a relevant site in which to investigate the experience of multiethnicity and possible openness to the Other. Overall, I argue that these sites are not as inconsequential as they might appear. At the end of the chapter, I complete the construction of my problem statement with a research proposition that uses Henri Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) triadic conceptualization of the production of space to articulate the key research questions.

Chapter 3 explains how I put these questions and concepts into empirical operation, beginning with the selection of streets to study. I chose sections of four commercial neighbourhood streets, all multiethnic, but varying by urban form and socioeconomic circumstances. Secondly, I give a quick „guided tour“ to introduce each of the four streets. Thirdly, I describe my methods of data collection, which consisted primarily of observations and interviews, complemented by documentary research and compilations of relevant census data. The first two methods raised specific ethical questions, which I address in the fourth section of the chapter. Fifthly, I explain how I analyzed my fieldwork material, using an iterative, bottom-up approach. The sixth section addresses some of the limits of the research methodology. I close Chapter 3 with a reflection on the construction of the street as a research object, and specifically its tendency to „disappear“ in users' discourses, either fragmenting into its constituent micro-places or melting away into the neighbourhood.

I begin to present my analysis of fieldwork material in Chapter 4, which focuses on public sociability. I open the chapter by drawing on the sociology of Georg Simmel and Erving Goffman to flesh out this concept more fully. In the second section I discuss the ways in which the spaces of the four streets enable and/or constrain forms of public sociability. Thirdly, I discuss the axes along which forms of sociability themselves vary. Fourthly, I consider the role of sociability in the commercial context, discussing whether it is a means to an end or an end in itself.

The theme of Chapter 5 is the mobilization of ethnicity. It begins with a comparison of census figures and users' representations of the ethnic composition of the local population. While ethnicity is extremely hard to categorize and quantify, this exercise enables us to think

about the relative (in)visibility of particular ethnic groups. In the second section, I compare in turn the census figures on population with the ethnic affiliations of stores and services, and develop a reflection on the muddled and multiple meanings of markers of ethnicity in the streetscape (e.g. on shop signs or goods for sale). Thirdly, I discuss the work of „doing ethnic business“, that is, the production and consumption of ethnicity in explicitly „ethnic“ stores and restaurants. Fourthly, I come back to street-level to discuss individuals“ discourses on interethnic relations in each street.

Chapter 6 addresses the production of the streets as places. It uses Michel de Certeau’s (1990 [1980]) conceptualization of „tactics“ and „strategies“ in order to show how the four streets are produced as places, through formal and informal, collective and individual, concerted and casual actions. Following an overview of theories of space and place and a presentation of the relevant concepts, the chapter is divided into four sections that tell the place making story of each street in turn.

Chapter 7 draws on themes and material presented in the preceding three chapters in order to identify and develop a typology of the forms of cosmopolitanism produced in multiethnic commercial streets. It begins by reengaging with and extending an argument begun in Chapter 1 as to the existence of the figure of the locally-rooted cosmopolitan, in contradistinction to the most prevalent strands of the theoretical literature. Having illustrated this argument with one particular interviewee’s story, I continue the focus on people in the streets by presenting both the cosmopolitan and the non-cosmopolitan figures who stand out in my research. The third section of this chapter then turns to places, in order to analyze the particular kind of cosmopolitanism that each street could be said to foster. In the Conclusion, I summarize the main arguments of the thesis and discuss their implications for urban studies. I note some of the strengths and limits of the research design and show how the thesis contributes to theories of cosmopolitanism.

CHAPTER 1 PROBLEMATIZING THE MULTIETHNIC CITY

Cities are enormous machines for the generation of connections between the unexpected and the unexceptional. They are also an on-going experiment into how people of vastly different backgrounds, incomes, wealth and values can live together. Obviously, this can produce divisions and walls, but it can also generate new forms of connection, hybrids and unexpected mixings. (Latham, 2003: 1719)

Cities have always been magnets for social and cultural diversity. By their very nature, as hubs of economic and social exchange and seats of political power, they attract and indeed need people from all kinds of backgrounds and all walks of life. Cities are places where people encounter people unlike themselves, differing in terms of ethnic origins, social class, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and family situation, to name but a few variables. Some of these differences seem relatively predetermined, like age or gender; others depend on early socialization into a particular culture; still others are acquired through experience of long-term trajectories (of education, migration or residence, for example) or the twists and turns of chance. But however social and cultural differences are constituted in the city, we still need to know more about how they are encountered, about how people construct, experience and deal with difference in their everyday urban lives.

My research engages with this theme of „living with difference in the city“. The dimension of „difference“ that interests me most is ethnic difference, although not to the exclusion of other variables, and the scale of „the city“ that I find most compelling is the micro level of particular public spaces. Specifically, I explore multiethnic commercial streets in central Montréal neighbourhoods. As for the „living“, I investigate particular practices and discourses or representations of everyday life,¹ focusing on public sociability, the production of meanings in commercial exchange, and formal and informal place making. In all of these spheres, ethnic difference can be constructed, performed or interpreted (as can other kinds of difference). City-dwellers share their streets with ethnic „Others“, and my research investigates the kinds of forms that these relations can take, as they co-produce the spaces of everyday urban life.

¹ Although „everyday life“ is such a common term in social scientific literature as to be taken for granted, I use it intentionally to refer to “the observable manifestation of social existence” (Sztompka, 2008: 31), that engages social actors in repeated, embodied, spatially localized and temporally situated events, which are often stylized or scripted to some degree, and are sometimes habitual to the point of being unreflexive (ibid: 31-32). This observable „micro“ level is nonetheless structured by „macro“ societal forces and systems.

This chapter presents the principal theoretical foundations of the research problem. I begin with the recently reinvigorated concept of cosmopolitanism, which we can broadly gloss as openness to the Other, explaining how it has been understood and why it is worth looking at everyday multiethnic places through a cosmopolitan prism. Secondly, I set out the context of the research by giving an overview of Montréal's evolution as a multiethnic city, including the ways in which this multiethnicity is managed at different levels of government. Thirdly, I provide an overview of how social scientists have understood ethnicity, in order to isolate the dimensions of the concept that are particularly relevant to this research. I also discuss how ethnicity has been conceived of in relation to the city and urban space, which will help explain why I choose to study it at street-level.

1.1 The cosmopolitan city

The word „cosmopolitan“ can evoke many things: colourful, bustling city streets, a well-travelled polyglot, a vodka cocktail, a racy women's magazine, and perhaps the United Nations or a museum of world civilizations. It is often used, especially in French (*cosmopolite*), as a mere synonym for „multiethnic“, to describe a place full of people from many different countries of origin or ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Simon, 1997b). However, the Greek etymology of the word, „citizen [*politês*] of the world [*kosmos*]“, implies more complex meanings. It dates from the fourth century BC, when Diogenes, a Cynic, and Zeno, a Stoic, and their followers began to imagine belonging to a community beyond the confines, comforts, ambitions and power struggles of their own city-states (Nussbaum, 1994; Paquot, 2003). Abandoning the citizenship of their polis, they would become instead citizens of the cosmos, at home anywhere in the world. This would necessarily entail a readiness to engage with the other cultures and polities that make up the world, that is, an openness to „the Other“. Already, hints of various current meanings of cosmopolitanism are apparent in this early version: declaring primary political allegiance to humanity as a whole; being skilled at moving through and between cultures; peppering one's lifestyle with elements from many cultures; or fully embracing other cultures. Already, too, we can infer a certain tension between belonging (to the world) and detachment (from one's origins) that is crucial to debates on cosmopolitanism today.

The last decade or so has witnessed a great resurgence of interest in cosmopolitanism in the social sciences. Modern theories of cosmopolitanism generally trace their source to the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Writing in the 18th century, he conceived of cosmopolitan society as a worldwide federation of sovereign states, based on both the practicalities of world trade and the ethics of belonging to humanity as a whole, which would help ensure perpetual peace

(Cheah, 2006). Parallel contemporary concerns over accelerated economic globalization and paths towards post-Cold-war peace doubtless account for the concept's recent revival, which has generated much debate about what cosmopolitanism is, or should be, in the form of edited books (Archibugi, 2003; Binnie et al., 2006a; Cheah and Robbins, 1998; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002a) and special issues of journals such as *Public Culture* (Pollock et al., 2000), *Theory, Culture and Society* (Featherstone, 2002), *British Journal of Sociology* (Beck and Sznaider, 2006), *European Journal of Social Theory* (Fine and Boon, 2007) and *Environment and Planning D* (Jeffrey and McFarlane, 2008), as well as many other articles and singly-authored books. While earlier work in this recent phase was largely theoretical, there is a growing body of empirical research as the concept is operationalized or old data are revisited in the light of new theories. This is both qualitative, drawing on ethnographic fieldwork (e.g. Kothari, 2008; Notar, 2008; Werbner, 1999), interviews (e.g. Datta, 2009; Lamont and Aksartova, 2002) and focus groups (e.g. Binnie and Skeggs, 2004; Skrbis and Woodward, 2007), and quantitative, using large-scale survey data such as the Eurobarometer and World Values Survey (Pichler, 2008, 2009; Schueth and O'Loughlin, 2008, respectively).

Cosmopolitanism remains, however, strikingly polysemic, such that scholars tend to tailor it as a two-piece ensemble. A rummage through the literature will unearth references, in no particular order, to rooted (Appiah, 1997), vernacular (Bhabha, 1996), strategic (Mitchell, 2003), actually-existing (Robbins, 1998), ordinary (Lamont and Aksartova, 2002), critical (Delanty, 2006), discrepant (Clifford, 1992), visceral (Nava, 2007), migrant (Kothari, 2008), everyday (Cohen, 2004; Datta, 2009), abject (Nyers, 2003), intimate (Mitchell, 2007), working-class (Werbner, 1999), and banal cosmopolitanism (this last mirrors the concept of banal nationalism (Beck, 2002b; Hannerz, 2006; Szerszynski and Urry, 2002)). Each of these represents quite a precise specification of cosmopolitanism, and there are many more besides, so several overviews propose broader typologies. One distinction commonly made is between political-legal and culturalist approaches (e.g. Binnie et al., 2006b; Yeğenoğlu, 2005). However, my own readings lead me to identify four separate but related clusters of meanings, which I label *political* cosmopolitanism, *identity* cosmopolitanism, *personal* cosmopolitanism and *commodified* cosmopolitanism. I will address each in turn, along with some of their knots and slippages and overlap (since they are not mutually exclusive). I want to pay particular attention to each variety's apparent opposite(s), as well as the extent to which it is normative and judged as „good“ or „bad“. I will also illustrate how each kind of cosmopolitanism has been or could be understood at the level of everyday urban life.

In political philosophy, following Kant, cosmopolitanism refers to ideals of global citizenship, in the form of human rights, institutions and activism that cross or transcend international borders, including systems of international law, the UN apparatus and international NGOs (Cheah, 2006). This political cosmopolitanism tends to be normative, setting out how we *ought to* engage with our fellow citizens of the world in order for useful solidarities to be forged. The leading sociologist of this variety of cosmopolitanism is Ulrich Beck (Beck, 2002a, b, 2004; Beck and Grande, 2007; Beck and Sznaider, 2006), who argues that globalization has transformed late modern society to such an extent that the latter can only be understood – and its problems can only be solved – on a global scale. His cosmopolitanism is a political project that “offers an ethics for globalisation” (Calhoun, 2008: 429). Besides envisaging norms and forms of international cosmopolitan governance, he also calls for a cosmopolitan turn in the social sciences, to take them beyond „methodological nationalism“, that is, the tendency of social sciences to think in terms of and in the interests of nation-states (Beck and Sznaider, 2006).² Nigel Rapport (2006, 2007; Rapport and Stade, 2007) has taken up this normative, political approach to cosmopolitanism in his advocacy of a cosmopolitan turn for anthropology, in which the common humanity of individuals – rather than the particularities of cultures – would define the discipline’s projects and goals:

„Cosmopolitan study“ is that Kantian anthropology of humanity which considers „the human“ to exist as a complex singularity over and above proximal categorizations and identifications of nation, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, locale, and so on. It encompasses an ontological project – defining the singularly human; a methodological project – gaining access to the human; and a political-cum-moral project – securing the human. (Rapport, 2006: 24)

As Rapport signals, citing Beck, „cosmopolitanism presupposes individualization“: cultures are not human sub-species and individuals exist beyond particular community memberships, capacitated to be authors of their identities (Beck, 2002: 7)” (Rapport, 2007: 268-269). This individualism distinguishes cosmopolitanism from multiculturalism, which pursues the recognition of *collective* rights. The moral and ethical idealism of cosmopolitanism also distinguishes it from transnationalism, which is now widely understood to be a fact of mobility

² Beck’s work has been sharply and, in my view, justly critiqued by Luke Martell and Bruno Latour. The former takes issue with Beck’s claim that cosmopolitanism is a novel political philosophy uniquely equipped to resolve issues of global inequality, as these have in fact already been addressed well by supposedly „methodologically nationalist“ social science (Martell, 2009). The latter argues that Beck’s vision remains hopelessly embroiled in the Eurocentric universalism of the Enlightenment, e.g. in its secular stance on religion, and therefore cannot take in the full range of political perspectives that exist in the cosmos (Latour, 2004). Both further believe that Beck fails to recognize the conflictual rather than collaborative nature of global politics (ibid., Martell, 2008).

resulting from globalization, rather than a political project *per se* (Roudometof, 2005). Political cosmopolitanism's proper antonym is usually taken to be nationalism or xenophobia, and it is generally seen as a „good thing“. It was not always so: at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, „cosmopolitan“ was often a slur used to denounce the „anti-patriotic rootlessness“ of, say, the international plutocracy, workers' solidarity networks or Jews (Paquot, 2003; Rey, 1998; Tarrow, 2007; Winock, 1997). Less prescriptively, however, recent scholarship points out that nationalism and cosmopolitanism are neither necessarily diametrically opposed nor mutually exclusive (Appiah, 1997), and that both can be either progressive or reactionary (Cheah, 1998).

Political cosmopolitanism can also be relevant at the level of the city, since just like nation-states, local governments, NGOs, institutions and services must deal with cultural difference, and with political imperatives that are grounded in this difference. These can take the form of special requests from particular groups or simply the need to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds. Local policies on the management of diversity thus have an obvious bearing on the degree of openness to the Other that is constituted in a given regime of urban citizenship. Whether driven by formal policy or case-by-case pragmatism, such policies can be understood to represent a particular political philosophy: perhaps one of „culture-blind“ universal access (making no concessions to cultural difference) or, conversely, recognition of cultural differences and of the importance of finding suitable adaptations or compromises across them (Germain et al., 2003; Germain and Alain, 2006). One could therefore look for forms of political cosmopolitanism in the ways in which local authorities respond to culturally-grounded requests for special leisure services (Billette, 2005b) or zoning of places of worship (Germain and Gagnon, 2003), or in how inclusive they make urban planning processes (Sandercock, 2003). Another example would be Derrida's (1997) idea that municipal governments give refuge to writers fleeing political persecution, which puts into practice the obligation to give hospitality to citizens of the world as set out by Kant (Dikeç, 2002). That said, in light of its institutional and normative focus, political cosmopolitanism is the least relevant variety of cosmopolitanism to my urban research.

A second register of cosmopolitanism is performed through claims of identity. Here, the argument is that citizens of the world are likely to belong and claim belonging to a variety of ethnic, cultural, social or national groups, whether by affinity or affiliation (Vertovec and Cohen, 2002b: 18). Identity cosmopolitanism, as I call it, is the expression of a certain kind of citizenship of many groups in the world, one of which may well be humanity as a whole. It recognizes that not only can one „engage with the Other“ but also that to some degree, the „Self“ can integrate

many aspects of „Others“. Indeed, one „Self“ can take up various positions, depending on context, such that its relative „Other“ varies (Meintel, 2006). This may be part of life for immigrants and their children and grandchildren, or for partners and offspring in mixed marriages or unions (Hall, 2002; Meintel and Le Gall, 2008; Nava, 2007),³ and even for those who develop international solidarities through experiences of travel or activism (Germann Molz, 2005). Cosmopolitan identities can be multiple (I am a Montréaler, a woman, an immigrant and an academic), hybrid (he is a blend, Indo-Canadian) or „nested“ in ever-increasing circles (she is Porteña, Argentinean, South American and Latin American), or any combination of the above. This version of cosmopolitanism thus pulls the concept towards moorings in many social groupings or parts of the world, rather than floating free of any ties except to the world at large:

It is not that we are without culture but we are drawing on the traces and residues of many cultural systems, of many ethical systems – and that is precisely what cosmopolitanism means. It means the ability to stand outside of having one's life written and scripted by any one community, whether that is a faith or tradition or religion or culture - whatever it might be - and to draw selectively on a variety of discursive meanings. (Hall, 2002: 26)

Identity cosmopolitanism is often opposed to multiculturalism, which can appear to foster a compartmentalized view of cultural belonging (as critiqued by Hall, above), allowing only one ethnic or cultural affiliation per person (Rapport, 2007). As such, identity cosmopolitanism is typically seen as positive, and even liberating, although it is generally discussed in descriptive rather than prescriptive mode. For example, specific questions about identity – e.g. whether people see themselves as national and/or European and/or world citizens – have been operationalized as dimensions of cosmopolitanism in recent quantitative research (e.g. Pichler, 2008, 2009; Schueth and O'Loughlin, 2008; Woodward, Skrbis and Bean, 2008).

In cities, identity cosmopolitanism would be located in places or social groups that allow people to freely claim and perform their various identities. For example, Law (2002) describes how the Sunday gatherings of Filipina domestic workers in public places in Hong Kong constitute space where they can express multiple identities: as transnational workers, service workers, Filipinos, Hong-Kong-dwellers, mothers, daughters, friends and so on. Although she does not refer explicitly to cosmopolitanism, Podmore (2001) pursues a similar idea in her study of Boulevard St-Laurent in Montréal as a liminal „space of difference“ in which lesbians can be

³ Identity cosmopolitanism may well be an increasingly important social phenomenon in Canada. The 2006 census shows that from 2001 to 2006 there was a 33% increase in mixed unions with one visible minority member, compared to a 6% increase for all couples (Statistics Canada, 2008a). Reporting of multiple ethnic origins is also on the rise (ibid.).

visible to each other while also assuming their other everyday identities as musicians, students, mothers, or members of a more generalized „alternative“ scene. Starting from mediated and virtual space rather than physical space, Çağlar shows how Turkish-German media channels “foster a kind of multi-connectedness by means of an urban attachment” (2002: 186) among young German Turks to both Berlin and Istanbul (in opposition to rural Turkey or the rest of Germany). Experiences of particular urban spaces can thus both mould and echo identity cosmopolitanism.

A third variety, much favoured by anthropologists and sociologists following Hannerz’s (1990) hugely influential development of Merton’s (1957) ideas, construes cosmopolitanism as a personal attitude or “disposition” (Skrbis, Kendall and Woodward, 2004) of openness towards other cultures. It is worth quoting Hannerz here at length:

[C]osmopolitanism [...] includes a stance toward diversity itself, toward the coexistence of cultures in the individual experience. A more genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It entails an intellectual and esthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. [...] At the same time, cosmopolitanism can be a matter of competence, and competence of both a generalized and a more specialized kind. There is the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting and reflecting. And there is cultural competence in the stricter sense of the term, a built-up skill in maneuvering more or less expertly within a particular system of meanings and meaningful forms. (Hannerz, 1990: 239)

As one would expect from an anthropologist, Hannerz displays a fine-grained theorization of „culture“ as a “system of meanings and meaningful forms”, elements of which can be experienced by an open-minded outsider, with the potential of acquiring a more thorough expertise over time. It is important to bear in mind this emphasis on cosmopolitanism as a process because, as we shall see below, much of the debate over the „value“ of cosmopolitanism concerns whether the cultural exchange it fosters is sufficiently deep or genuine. In personal cosmopolitanism, as I call it, the cosmopolitan is disposed to be open to and interested in, although not necessarily expert in, elements from cultures other than his or her own. The elements to be approached, experienced and perhaps appreciated can be events, products (e.g. food, music, art), or kinds of information or skills (e.g. attitudes or beliefs, knowledge of current affairs, ways of doing things), as well as the people, famous or not, who embody them. The cosmopolitan’s opposite is the „local“, whose scope of interest is much more limited to the immediate cultural environment (Merton, 1957).

While personal cosmopolitanism can be presented normatively as a desirable ethical ideal (e.g. by Nussbaum, discussed in Yeğenoğlu, 2005), in more exploratory accounts, the

moral judgment is either absent or ambivalent. Sometimes the open cosmopolitans are presented as the heroes and locals as the villains; elsewhere, the reverse is suggested, or the good and bad in both are outlined. For example, Nava (2002, 2007) presents personal cosmopolitanism in a positive light, showing how Londoners' and particularly women's embrace of exotic trends such as tango and the Russian ballet's performance of *Schéhérazade* in the early 20th century was part of a revolt against the conservatism and xenophobia at the opposite pole of the English cultural continuum. In contrast, Binnie and Skeggs (2004) describe an unevenly distributed cosmopolitan competence in Manchester's gay village: there, the cosmopolitans are the privileged straight white middle-class Mancunians who learn how to move „respectfully" through the area, enjoying its uniqueness and difference, while the gay people who created the space in the first place are mere „locals" who “can only be cosmopolitan by existing as a sign of difference for others” (Binnie and Skeggs, 2004: 53). Less judgmentally, Sorge sees locals and cosmopolitans in Orgoloso, Sardinia, as “occupy[ing] different niches in the day-to-day elaboration of what it means to be Orgolese” (2008: 821). The cosmopolitans of this rural highland village, even if they are urban-oriented, nonetheless fully support and promote local identity and collective memory. In all these cases, ultimately, the two groups are interdependent, since “there can be no cosmopolitans without locals” (Hannerz, 1990: 250).

For personal cosmopolitanism to be analytically useful, it is crucial not to confuse mind-sets with mileage. Perhaps because Merton picked the word „local" as the opposite to cosmopolitan, it is often assumed that only the well-travelled elite can be open to the Other, whereas the locally-born are local in attitude (e.g. Friedman, 2002; Nijman, 2007).⁴ However, other scholars point out that both working-class migrants and people who stay at home can be cosmopolitans too, particularly given today's information and communication technologies and globalized media sources (Szerszynski and Urry, 2002; Werbner, 1999). Thus, in his study of immigrant integration in Vancouver, Hiebert distinguishes between cosmopolitan social milieus, in which people demonstrate “the capacity to interact across cultural lines” (2002: 212), and transnational ones, whose members are attached, due to their migration experiences, to at least two nation-states but interact mainly with their own cultural group. Transnationalism does not necessarily entail cosmopolitanism (Roudometof, 2005); likewise, “vernacular ethnic rootedness does not negate openness to cultural difference or the fostering of a universalist civic

⁴ A more useful opposite number for the cosmopolitan (in this variety, at least) might be an etymologically Greek rendering of „citizen of one's own back yard" – a *polites* of the *oikos*, perhaps? As I note in Chapter 7, „parochial" is one option, but carries a somewhat derogatory connotation in English.

consciousness and a sense of moral responsibility beyond the local” (Werbner, 2006: 497). This nuance is important for understanding everyday interethnic contact in the city, and I will return to it in Chapter 7. What counts on the street, in the park, at school, in the workplace or at city hall is the way in which we interact with the Other in this place, now, however we got here.

In contrast to the other three rather appealing versions of cosmopolitanism, the fourth variety flips it on its back to expose its grubby underbelly. Here, cosmopolitanism is understood as a discourse that co-opts openness to cultural diversity in order to sell commodities or otherwise gain a competitive advantage in today’s cutthroat global economy. Commodified cosmopolitanism, as I call it, is not about being open to Others, let alone knowing or understanding them, as a virtue in itself, but because it helps one distinguish oneself (i.e. accumulate cultural capital) or make a profit (i.e. accumulate economic capital). In other words, it is an instrumentalization of personal cosmopolitanism: the cosmopolitan’s mask of openness hides his or her acquisitiveness; the cultural exchanges he or she makes are not genuine, but superficial. A classic example concerns the everyday practice of eating out at culturally diverse „ethnic“ restaurants, a very common activity in the commercial streets of the multiethnic city (Bell, 2002, 2007; Lemasson, 2006). Many scholars interpret this practice as having less to do with intercultural exchange than with the maintenance of personal and usually middle-class distinction (Hage, 1997; Heldke, 2001; hooks, 1992; Schnell, 2001; Turgeon and Pastinelli, 2002). Germann Molz, for example, analyzes round-the-world travellers’ accounts of their exotic eating experiences, and concludes that:

culinary tourism is often more about the traveler’s performance of cosmopolitan competence than it is about the culture and cuisine being eaten. In this sense, even the culinary tourist’s embodied engagement with food can be seen as a kind of commodity fetishism in which the food experience bolsters the tourist’s identity and social status. (Germann Molz, 2007: 91)

Commodified cosmopolitanism has two identifiable opposites. The first, on an ideological register, is multiculturalism seen in its most positive light, as an honest and inclusive recognition of both collective cultural difference *and* the structural inequalities resulting from discrimination (Turner, 1993), in opposition to an instrumental and individualizing cosmopolitanism. Thus, Mitchell (2003) criticizes the shift in school citizenship curricula from a respectful multicultural model to a “strategic” cosmopolitan model, in which knowledge of other cultures is seen to be essential to gain a competitive advantage in the global economy (see Zachary, 2000 for a bare-faced example of this thinking). The second antonym, on a more interactional register, would be authenticity: since commodified cosmopolitanism is a cultural con-trick reducing ethnocultural difference to just another kind of branding, another way into our wallets, genuine interethnic

exchanges would somehow be free of these ulterior motives and therefore more authentic. Obviously, social scientists do not generally see commodified cosmopolitanism as a desirable ideal; it is rather a critical analysis of a given state of affairs.

Commodified cosmopolitanism is particularly relevant in the city, which is not only where ethnic and cultural diversity is concentrated, but also where all kinds of things, including „lifestyles“, are put on offer, commodified and consumed (Ascher, 1995; Bourdin, 2005). There is indeed a link between the two: “Ethnic and sexualised difference is [...] held to be central to the sustainability, creativity and entrepreneurialism of cities” (Binnie et al., 2006b: 2). Commodified cosmopolitanism can thus be identified in the sale of „exotic“ food, music, clothes and the like, particularly where the transaction is seen as inauthentic, either because the seller or the goods is not „really“ of that culture or because the buyer buys in order to show off his or her good taste or knowledge. In this version of things, as Hage puts it:

if an area is more multicultural than another, this appears to have less to do with who *inhabits* it, who makes a home in it, and the degree of interaction between cultural subjects within it, and more to do with what multicultural commodities are *available* on its markets and who has the capacity to appreciate them. (1997: 132)

Moreover, while at one level, ethnic difference can be used to sell a meal in a restaurant, at another, it can be used to brand whole neighbourhoods and thereby promote local music festivals, for example, or sales of residential property (e.g. Hackworth and Rekers, 2005). „Cosmopolitan“ is itself a key word in the dreams of a distinctive lifestyle that real estate agents sell as part and parcel of condominiums in Manchester (Young, Diep and Drabble, 2006). For these property developers and their clients, the word evokes trendy loft-living in a 24-hour café society, “a narrow range of consumption practices” (ibid: 1705) representing the “„correct“ form of urban development” (ibid: 1707). Since this signification is entirely divorced from any actual association with people or practices from other cultures, it is a kind of cosmopolitanism without cultural difference (one might even say, a white-washed cosmopolitanism). And this brings us back to the vodka cocktail and the racy women’s magazine: they are cosmopolitan not because they represent international solidarity or openness to the Other, but because they give their consumer a patina of worldly sophistication.

I want to devote my last points on cosmopolitanism to its place in contemporary urban studies (as distinct from its possible manifestations in the city). Before the concept came back into scientific fashion, scholars were inclined to interpret cosmopolitanism in the city in a way close to the political variety, often with reference to classical multicultural cities like ancient Rome, medieval Córdoba or Byzantine Constantinople. (Indeed, cosmopolitanism has a strong

association with the Mediterranean region (Driessen, 2005).) For example, Remy (1987, 1998 [1990]) characterizes a city as cosmopolitan when it enables different cultural or national groups to coexist in a kind of variable geometry: each group has its own physical or social territory and may be subject to slightly different laws, but all share an allegiance to the city; and the city itself necessarily has spaces that foster a productive and comprehensible “communication through distance” without requiring full assimilation of its diverse denizens. Kahn’s (1987) eponymous “gilt-edged dream” of the cosmopolitan city argues that the conditions for urban cosmopolitanism are: a culture of tolerance built on a rich public life, particularly in lively public spaces in which the city’s diversity is obvious and observable; abundant opportunities for „strangers“ to succeed economically and to participate in civic life; and “a vision, a sense of purpose or mission” (ibid.: 17), which vaguely invokes the possible practical applications of political cosmopolitanism (Derrida, 1997; Sandercock, 2003). For these researchers writing in the 1980s, urban cosmopolitanism embodies the potential for intercultural coexistence and exchange.

In contrast, contemporary urban researchers seem more commonly to see the commodified variety of cosmopolitanism as its dominant form in the city, as is made apparent by the majority of contributions to the book *Cosmopolitan Urbanism* (Binnie et al., 2006, see reviews by Beauregard, 2007; Jayne, 2007; Stevens, 2007). Cosmopolitanism thus tends to be viewed as a mere discourse, a smoke-and-mirrors trick used to promote the chimera of urban competitiveness (Paul, 2004; Shearmur, 2008). Exactly such a usage can be found in the City of Montréal’s most recent economic development strategy:

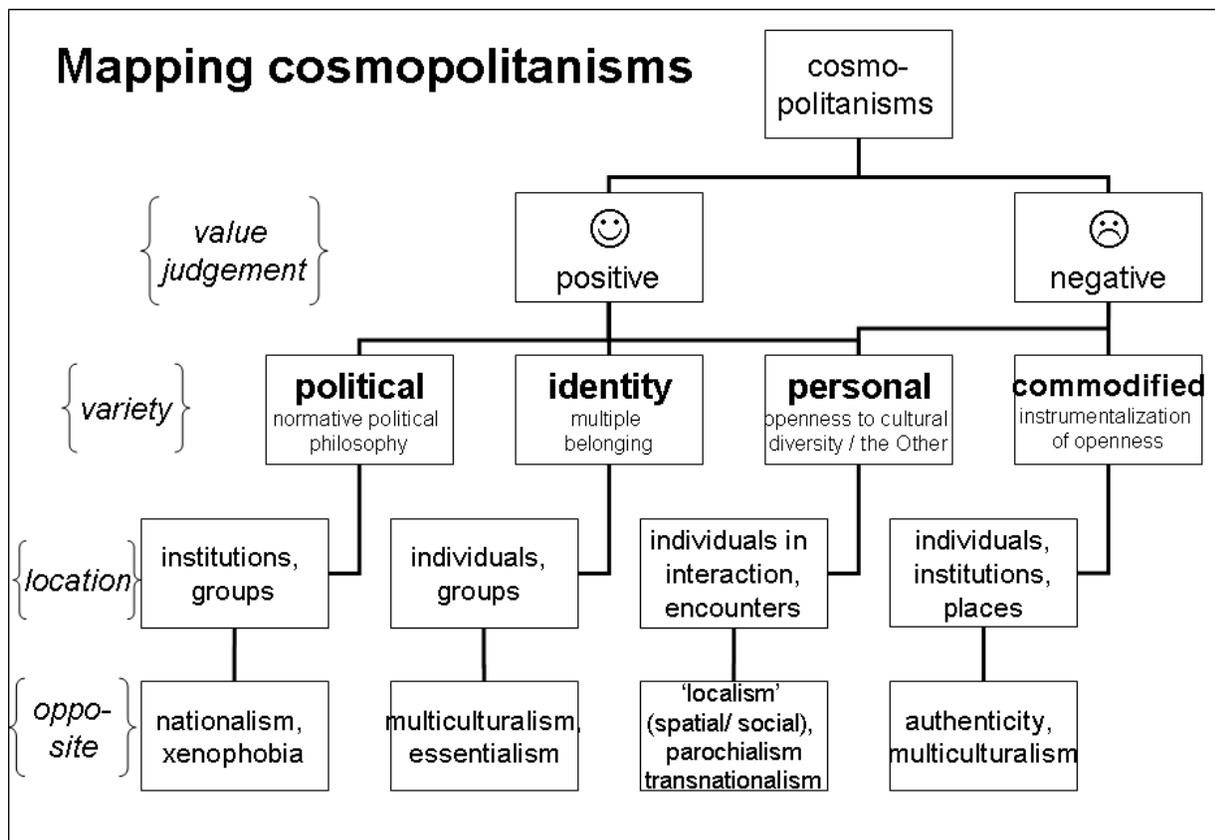
To be recognized worldwide as an international and cosmopolitan centre open to the world, Montréal must assert its positioning and enhance its international reputation by defining and promoting a coherent, integrated brand based on the unique assets that set it apart in North America. (Ville de Montréal, 2005c: 17)

This is cosmopolitanism as a buzzword, carrying little meaning aside from the tautological “open to the world” and, on another page, a vague association with immigrants and festivals: “the ongoing contribution of immigration and the presence of major events, which help make the city truly cosmopolitan” (ibid: 11). Cosmopolitanism here is almost an empty signifier, but it is clearly crucial to „selling“ Montréal. Québécois political scientist Daniel Latouche criticizes such “truncated cosmopolitanism” (1997: 3) as superficial, a “cosmopolitanism of the bazaar” (1990) consisting of “the mere overconsumption of the obvious signs of cohabitation and ethnicity” (1997: 13, my translations). But is it really the case, as he argues (ibid.), that only the time and space of the nation can provide the foundations for a properly cosmopolitan city? I

suggest that we can also seek different kinds of cosmopolitanisms on Montréal's neighbourhood streets.

Cosmopolitanism, then, can be understood as a kind of political philosophy, identity politics, personal disposition or commodification of otherness; I have summed up these varieties in Figure 1.1. Depending on which meaning predominates, it can be located in collective forums and institutions, in individuals, groups or interactions, or it can be attached as a label to places that are supposed to represent a certain kind of cosmopolitanism. Because of its polysemy, cosmopolitanism has a variety of antonyms, and it is rarely morally neutral.

Figure 1.1 Mapping cosmopolitanisms: four varieties of theories of cosmopolitanism



This ambiguity makes it all the more pertinent to study actually-existing cosmopolitanisms in everyday lives, in specific places. Since I am investigating everyday interactions in public space, the debates on cosmopolitanism as a political philosophy are tangential to this thesis (although as I have noted, there are certainly links between the arenas of politics and everyday places). I am particularly concerned with exploring real people's

practices and discourses of being open or closed to the Other, and thus with cosmopolitanism as a personal disposition. Identity cosmopolitanism is of secondary interest, because although it nourishes personal cosmopolitanism, I see it as located within the individual as members of groups rather than in interactions between individuals in particular places. Commodified cosmopolitanism, however, is certainly relevant, given that I am studying spaces of consumption: I suppose that openness to the Other on commercial streets will to some extent be driven or appropriated by interests of economic or cultural capital. In sum, cosmopolitanism as a theoretical framework allows me to investigate engagement with cultural difference at an interactional level, while also making links with the commodification of cultural difference in the multiethnic metropolis.

It is to the particular metropolis in which I conduct my research that I now turn, in order to explain how its multiethnicity has unfolded over time, and how that multiethnicity has been managed by different levels of the state.

1.2 Montréal's multiethnic evolution

Montréal is an excellent laboratory in which to conduct research into the everyday experience of the multiethnic city. Canada's second largest metropolis has not only a fascinating history of immigration and a highly diverse population, but also a unique sociopolitical context for interethnic relations, due to the complex dynamic of majority-minority relations between Canada and Quebec. In this section, I will first sketch a brief history and current picture of immigration and ethnic settlement, and then discuss the policies that have framed the management of immigration and ethnic diversity at a national, provincial and local level. This overview therefore serves not only to put my research in concrete context, but also to highlight its potential relevance to policy.

1.2.1 From ethnic to multiethnic neighbourhoods

Montréal has a fascinating history of what we would now call intercultural contact.⁵ The city, built on an island in the St Lawrence River, is part of the homelands of Aboriginal peoples, principally the Iroquois, but also Hurons, Stadaconians, Algonquins and others (Germain and Rose, 2000). In 1611, the explorer Samuel Champlain set up a short-lived fur-trading post on the island, and in 1642 a small group of French settlers founded the missionary colony of Ville-Marie. The city's

⁵ Much more detailed portraits of Montréal's immigration history can be found in Germain and Rose (2000: Chapter 6) and McNicoll (1993).

original aims – missionary and mercantile – presuppose intercultural contact by their very nature. Montréal remained a small French village of about 5000 inhabitants for the first century of its colonial existence. Annual immigration from France was low, at less than 70 people a year, so population growth depended mainly on a high birth rate. It is important to note that “[t]his historical fact helps explain why even today French Canadians tend not to perceive their country as a land of immigration, in contrast to most of the rest of North America” (ibid: 216).⁶

After the British conquest of New France in 1759, immigrants from the British Isles arrived in the city to live alongside the earlier settlers. Among them were some of those whose names mark the streets and institutions of Montréal today, such as McGill and Molson. Few Brits at first heeded their government’s call to settle the newly acquired territory, and those that did (including Loyalists from the newly independent USA) generally chose a rural life. However, in the first few decades of the 19th century, the end of Napoleonic Wars, the clearings in Scotland, the potato famine in Ireland and the general social upheaval of the Industrial Revolution pushed the dispossessed of the British Isles towards a new life in the new world. Many settled in Montréal (Rudin, 1985), and from 1835-1860 the city even had its only period of a majority anglophone population (Linteau, 1982). However, differences of religion, colonial allegiance and socioeconomic status were as marked among these English-speakers as they were between them and the French-Canadian population, and they tended to establish separate neighbourhoods and community institutions.⁷ This pattern of ethnic „segmentation“ was to be a long-lasting one in the history of settlement of Montréal (Germain and Rose, 2000).

⁶ Ethnic, linguistic and national nomenclature in Quebec and Canada is a delicate matter. I use „French Canadians“ to refer to (people who perceive themselves as) the descendants of the white, francophone settlers of New France. They constitute the „ethnic majority“ of Quebec, and I also call them „Franco-Québécois“ (as distinct from simply Québécois, which could refer to any Quebec resident), especially if they themselves prefer the term Québécois. I use „Anglo-Canadians“ to refer to white anglophones of mainly British Isles descent (i.e. what was long seen as the „ethnic majority“ of the rest of Canada). These two groups constitute the two „founding nations“ (after the First Nations) of Canada. I use the terms „anglophone“ and „francophone“ to refer to language use only (i.e. I try to avoid conflating language and ethnicity, as often happens in Quebec).

⁷ The Anglo-Scottish Protestant elite built the elegant mansions of the „Golden Square Mile“ close to the present city centre (many of which would in time become buildings of McGill University) and, later, the affluent town-within-a-town of Westmount. The Irish Catholics arrived in significant numbers in the 1840s and 1850s and settled mainly in southwestern industrial districts like Pointe Saint-Charles and Griffintown alongside French-Canadian labourers. Working-class Irish Protestant, English and Scottish immigrants also settled to work in the city’s various factories and workshops.

The 1825 census provides an early sketch of the classic image of Montréal as a city of „two solitudes“,⁸ with the francophones to the east of Boulevard St-Laurent and the anglophones to the west. But Linteau warns against too strict an interpretation of this trope:

From the early 19th century we can identify two significant phenomena. On the one hand, there was an ethnic polarization between east and west, but on the other, the distribution of groups on the territory implied a much greater contact between them than the image of a city cut in two would suggest. (Linteau, 1982: 35, my translation)

Besides the French Canadians and those from the British Isles, there were a small number of people of other origins living in Montréal. Aboriginal people had of course been there since before the beginning. In 1625, 1400 black people had been brought as „servants“ (if not slaves) to New France; other black people arrived with the Loyalists (Germain and Rose, 2000). The first Jews in the city were officers in the British Army at the time of the conquest; they founded the city’s first synagogue in 1778 (Anctil, 1997), and their religion was legally recognized in 1832. And a tiny handful of Arabic speakers had arrived in 1882, mostly Christian Syrians from a part of the Ottoman Empire that is today Lebanon.⁹ But compared to other north-eastern American cities, Montréal’s ethnocultural diversity bloomed late: in 1901, people who could trace their origins back solely to France or the British Isles still made up 96 per cent of the island’s population (Linteau, 2000: 45).

Still, Montréal was then and remained until the 1950s the industrial and commercial capital of Canada, so the first waves of immigrants of other origins soon landed. During the period 1880-1930, the main groups who arrived were Germans, Ukrainians, Afro-Caribbeans, Chinese and Ashkenazi Jews. The Germans tended to settle in „British“ neighbourhoods and the Ukrainians in industrial areas. The (anglophone) Afro-Caribbean community settled mainly in the area known as Little Burgundy, south-west of downtown. They arrived first from the USA, escaping slavery¹⁰ and then segregation, and later from the Caribbean. Afro-Caribbean women often worked in domestic service, while many men worked as porters in the Pullman railway cars. Most Chinese people arrived in Montréal from the west of Canada, having originally

⁸ This phrase, from a novel of the same name by Hugh MacLennan (1945), has been very widely used to express the idea that Anglo-Canadians and French Canadians live in two completely separate cultural worlds.

⁹ It goes without saying that data on ethnic origin from this period (or indeed any period...) is extremely difficult to analyze, given the great confusion between 1) ethnic origin and immigration trajectory, 2) ethnic origin and religion and 3) ethnic origin and language (Linteau, 1982).

¹⁰ Montréal was a terminus of the famous Underground Railroad, along which African-Americans escaped slavery, moving up the Hudson Valley and into Canada via Lake Champlain.

entered to work in forestry or on the trans-Canadian railway before settling in the urban east. They typically worked in domestic service or set up small businesses and laundries at the south end of Boulevard St-Laurent, which is still known and marked as the Quartier chinois today.¹¹ The wave of immigration of Ashkenazi Jews had started in the 1880s, as they fled persecution and pogroms in Lithuania, Romania, Ukraine, Belarus and other parts of the Russian Empire. Ashkenazi Jews reproduced an urban version of small-town *shtetl* life of dense social ties, spatially concentrated and centred on craft, commerce and manufacturing (particularly in textiles). The Jewish community was known for its political activism and cultural effervescence, and for the first half of the twentieth century, Yiddish was a strong third literary language of Quebec (Simon, 2006). Initially clustered around Boulevard St-Laurent south of Sherbrooke, the Jewish community gradually moved northwards to better housing conditions, and eventually to Mile End. Later waves of immigrants would later follow a similar path up „the Main“, the „immigrant corridor“ of Boulevard St-Laurent, the street that separates „east“ and „west“ street addresses in Montréal. Meanwhile, during the same period (1880-1930), the French-Canadian population of Montréal increased greatly, due to both high levels of migration in from the countryside and a high birth rate (Germain and Rose, 2000).

The next period of Montréal's immigration history saw the arrival of significant waves of southern Europeans, namely, Italians, Greek and Portuguese who migrated to escape conditions of (mainly rural) poverty. Many followed typical patterns of “chain migration” (MacDonald and MacDonald, 1964), encouraging and supporting later arrivals from the same village or local area, and thus reproducing home country social networks in Montréal. They occupied various niches of skilled and unskilled labour and small enterprise in the Montréal economy. Acquiring property was of paramount importance to them, and for many years immigrants had a higher rate of home ownership than the Canadian-born (Germain and Rose, 2000: 229). They often settled in distinct residential areas, in which they established small businesses and community institutions; this was the era of Montréal's “ethnic villages” (Germain and Rose, 2000; McNicoll, 1993). Italians immigrated in three waves (1870-80, 1910-30, 1950-60), living at first in the south of the city, near the port and railway yards, for which Italian men had been recruited as low-skilled labour, and then further north, near other rail yards and train workshops. Two neighbourhoods are particularly marked as Italian: Petite-Italie, around the

¹¹ The Quartier chinois has traditionally been strongly associated with Cantonese Chinese, but in the last few decades it has diversified, due in part to the arrival of Chinese-origin immigrants from Vietnam in the 1970s and Hong Kong in the 1990s (Cha, 2004; DeWolf, 2007).

intersection of rue Jean-Talon and boulevard Saint-Laurent, and St-Léonard, a 1960s suburb in the north-east of the island, but there are Italian businesses and residential clusters scattered throughout the city. Today, Italians are the largest ethnic and linguistic group in Montréal after the French Canadians and Anglo-Canadians (although Arabic speakers will soon outnumber Italophones). The first people from Greece immigrated at the turn of the century, but arrived in greater numbers in the 1950s-70s; many settled in Mile End (which the Jewish and French-Canadian communities were leaving) and just to the north, in the newer suburb of Parc-Extension. Portuguese immigrants arriving from the 1950s to the 1970s settled chiefly in the western part of the Plateau Mont-Royal, where they invested a great deal of money and labour in dilapidated housing, restoring it from slum to heritage quality. In line with the „mosaic“ model of the multiethnic city, many of Montréal’s minority ethnic and immigrant groups up to the 1970s therefore have a fairly close association with particular neighbourhoods. Although the population of these neighbourhoods has since changed considerably, the association often remains, thanks to the ethnically marked businesses and institutions still in operation or even a name that has stuck to the area (Petite-Italie, Quartier chinois). Moreover, the City of Montréal granted considerable recognition to immigrant and minority groups in the 1970s and 1980s by renaming several public parks and squares in their honour (e.g. Parc du Portugal, Parc Athéna, Parc Dante, see Germain et al., 2008).

Montréal has since become increasingly ethnoculturally diverse thanks to what has been called the “new immigration” (Germain and Rose, 2000: 230 ff.). Flows to Canada from Southern Europe diminished as the region became more politically and economically stable, while changes in Canadian immigration policy (1962-1976) favouring education¹² and professional experience over country of origin led to increased immigration from continents other than Europe. The “new immigration” also includes many more „visible minority“¹³ immigrants than in previous waves. Immigration has not diversified uniquely in terms of countries of origin. Even among those who come from the same country, recent immigrants have very varied socioeconomic statuses, due in large part to their immigration paths: they may enter the country as economic immigrants (with or without a job on arrival), business immigrants, refugees or sponsored family members. On top of these pan-Canadian changes, Montréal’s situation makes

¹² Over 65 per cent of immigrants who arrived in the province of Quebec between 1999 and 2003 have more than 14 years of formal education (Gouvernement du Québec, 2006).

¹³ Visible minorities are defined under Canada’s Employment Equity Act (1995, c.44, s.3) as „persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour“.

it something of a special case. Since 1978 the province of Quebec has been able to select its own immigrants in the skilled worker category, as well as government-sponsored refugees, and has had quasi-total control over its immigration policy since the Canada-Quebec Accord of 1991.¹⁴ It has used these powers to favour immigrants with a knowledge of French, i.e. from countries where French is a common second language (e.g. Algeria, Vietnam, Romania, Haiti, Lebanon) as well as from France or francophone Belgium or Switzerland (see Appendix A). Quebec also admits a higher proportion of refugees than elsewhere in Canada, and the list of refugee-sending countries tends to change every few years. Therefore, although immigrants to Canada comprise only 21% of the population of the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Montréal, compared to 46% and 40% in the CMAs of Vancouver and Toronto respectively,¹⁵ the origins of recent immigrants to Montréal are much more evenly spread between world regions than in Vancouver or Toronto, largely due to greater proportions of immigrants from Africa and Europe (see Appendix A).

The “new immigration” also involves new outcomes for immigrants. Up until the mid 1980s, immigrants integrated easily into the job market, and often attained a higher level of economic success and living conditions than people of similar socioeconomic status born in the country. Over the past two decades, this trend has changed. While many immigrants still prosper, others have a great deal of difficulty finding suitable employment, in spite – or perhaps because – of their qualifications and credentials (Chicha and Charest, 2008; Reitz, 2001). Members of visible minorities are also seriously under-represented in the public sector, despite programmes designed to increase their access to these jobs. Furthermore, members of visible minorities (whether immigrants or not) are over-represented in the unemployment statistics (Jedwab, 2003).

While the spread of countries and continents of origin is now broad, the geographical distribution of immigrant and ethnic minority residents of Quebec is not: the vast majority live in the Montréal area, and immigration remains a central-city and inner-suburban phenomenon (Murdie, 2008). Three-quarters of the recent (2001-2006) immigrants to the Montréal CMA live in

¹⁴ Several other Canadian provinces now also have the authority to select their own skilled worker immigrants, but in all provinces (including Quebec), the federal government can ultimately reject prospective immigrants on grounds of health or security risks.

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, 2006 Census. The term „immigrants” refers to people (usually) born outside Canada who have been granted the right to live there permanently. Each CMA also has a number of non-permanent residents, i.e. those people and their dependents who were born outside Canada but who are in the country temporarily for work or study or who are awaiting the outcomes of claims to refugee status (1%, 2% and 2% of population in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver respectively).

the City of Montréal (Chui, Tran and Maheux, 2007). Compared to Toronto and Vancouver, few new immigrants settle directly in the outer suburbs, although the number is growing (and immigrants who arrived longer ago and second generations still often follow the familiar pattern of moving out to wealthier suburbs when they can afford it). Many of the suburbs on the island of Montréal (built up mainly in the 1930s-1970s) are ethnically and linguistically diverse (Apparicio, Leloup and Rivet, 2006). Immigrants to Montréal settle in a linguistic landscape characterized by a strong presence and sometimes majority of anglophones in suburban municipalities in the west end of the island (known collectively as the West Island). In suburbs situated off the island (i.e. the island of Laval and the north and south shores of the St. Lawrence River, see Figure 3.1 – inset), and of course in the province as a whole, Canadian-born francophones are in the majority. The ethnocultural homogeneity of the periphery thus contrasts sharply with the heterogeneity of many districts on the island, where most Montréalers cross paths daily with people from a great diversity of cultures.¹⁶ And although older ethnic neighbourhoods can be identified by traces such as shops, places of worships and community and cultural centres, there is now little residential ethnic segregation: Montréal has become a city no longer of “ethnic villages” but of “multiethnic” neighbourhoods (Germain, 1999b).

Seven of Montréal’s most multiethnic neighbourhoods were the subject of a major research project conducted for the Quebec government in the early 1990s by a team at the INRS-Urbanisation (Germain et al., 1995).¹⁷ Based on observations of social interactions in public spaces and interviews about local social dynamics with key actors such as community workers, leaders and activists, municipal service providers and local business people, the study found that interethnic relations were generally „peaceful but distant“. While interactions in public space were often segmented along ethnic (and gender and generational) lines, social dynamics were generally characterized by harmonious coexistence, often facilitated by community groups’ work to ensure fair access to collective resources. In many ways, living with difference was easiest in the most multiethnic places: the research emphasized the sense of “cultural comfort” (McNicoll, 1993) that many residents take from living in neighbourhoods where no single ethnic group seems to be dominant, either in terms of numbers or community politics. It also found that shared social representations of the neighbourhoods could have quite an impact on interethnic

¹⁶ See the maps in Chapter 7 of Germain and Rose (2000).

¹⁷ The neighbourhoods studied were Parc-Extension, Mile End, Côte-des-Neiges, Petite-Bourgogne (Little Burgundy), Chaméran, Norgate in the on-island suburb of Ville St-Laurent and the „Quartier S“ of Brossard on the South Shore. As will be explained in Chapter 3, the first two neighbourhoods in this list are where two of the streets studied in this thesis are located.

relations. For example, residents of Mile End espoused a discourse of the neighbourhood's "cosmopolitanism" – understood not only as multiethnicity but also as an openness to difference – that both reflected and guided their social interactions and collaboration in community affairs (Germain and Radice, 2006; Rose, 1995).

The narrative of Montréal's history of multiethnicity has therefore moved through several tropes: from the „two solitudes“ of the so-called founding nations, to the mosaic of ethnic villages, to the diversity of multiethnic neighbourhoods. Vertovec has coined the term "super-diversity" (2007) to describe the current state of multiethnicity in Britain, arguing that it is no longer sufficient to think of multiethnicity solely in terms of countries of origin. One must also take into account the interplay of diversity of languages, religions, migration channels and immigration statuses, gender, age, residential dispersion or concentration, and transnational commitment. It seems reasonable to suppose that Canadian metropolises, including Montréal, are undergoing a similar "diversification of diversity" (ibid.: 1025). Perhaps the next trope of the Montréal's story of multiethnicity will be the kaleidoscope of cosmopolitanism?

1.2.2 The management of ethnic diversity at different scales

Interethnic relations in a city cannot, of course, be explained solely by the settlement patterns of immigrant and minority ethnic populations; they are also framed and shaped by public policy. For example, the Canadian system is fairly unique in that immigrants' permanent residence applications are processed and granted before arrival, and full citizenship can be acquired quite rapidly (after a minimum three years of permanent residence). This is largely because the Canadian government, like Australia's, explicitly wants to increase immigration to the country to meet demographic and economic objectives. On another level of experience, Canada and Quebec are affected very differently than the USA or Europe by the structural and symbolic inequalities produced by the legacies of slavery and colonialism. I suggest that such historical and sociopolitical circumstances can have a considerable impact on living with difference at the day-to-day level, in terms of civic participation or senses of belonging, for example. This section therefore discusses the social policies that manage ethnic diversity at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. It ends by sketching the contours of the controversy on „reasonable accommodation“ between majority and minority cultures that was ignited during the period covered by this research.

Interethnic relations in Canada have been framed since 1971 by the federal policy of „official multiculturalism“, which refers to a complex bundle of legislation and social programmes designed to manage the country's ethnocultural diversity. Multiculturalism emerged from the

recommendations of the Royal Commission into Bilingualism and Biculturalism set up in 1963 by then Prime Minister Lester B Pearson. In the light of the growing movement for national independence in Quebec, the „B & B Commission“ was part of Pearson’s attempt to reinvent the Canadian nation-state – hitherto seen as a principally British settler society (albeit one rife with British-French antagonism) – as an equal partnership between French and English Canadians, the two „founding nations“ (Mackey, 2002: 55). During the commission, however, relatively long-established ethnic groups like Ukrainian-Canadians raised objections to the implicit hierarchy between the „founding nations“ and other Canadian groups, and the final Report of the Commission recommended a policy of official multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, rather than biculturalism as such (ibid: 64, 66). The policy, adopted by the government of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in 1971, declares that “there is no official culture in Canada, and nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other” (Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, 1985: 15 cited by Mackey, 2002: 64). In sum, “[m]ulticulturalism” was developed as a mode of managing internal differences within the nation and, at the same time, created a form through which the nation could be imagined as distinct and differentiated from external others such as the United States” (Mackey, 2002: 57).

„Official multiculturalism“ allocates state resources to the recognition of minority ethnic groups’ heritage and their representation in the „mosaic“ of Canadian society. In Trudeau’s language, it accords state support – “resources permitting” – to “all Canadian cultural groups” that are committed to making a contribution to Canada for the preservation of their own culture and heritage, as well as for official language acquisition and help in overcoming “cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society” (Trudeau cited by Mackey, 2002: 64). It can therefore be understood as a policy of integration. In actual practice, multicultural programmes have evolved from funding folklore preservation, to promoting intercommunity dialogue and antiracist education, to creating a sense of belonging to a multicultural nation (McAndrew, Helly and Tessier, 2005). Multiculturalism has, indeed, become part of Canada’s national identity. One is tempted to say its „brand“, which is apposite since one of the justifications for the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 was the economic utility of Canada’s multicultural heritage (Mackey, 2002: 68). Although it seems to be a vast improvement on overtly assimilationist policies of nation-building, it can be argued that official multiculturalism still positions „cultural groups“ as extraneous or, at best, accessories to an implicit mainstream national culture invoked by terms such as „Canadian unity“ and „Canadian society“. “[D]espite the proliferation of cultural difference, the power to define, limit and tolerate differences still lies in the hands of the dominant group” (ibid.: 70).

While my research does not expressly deal with the direct content or consequences of official multiculturalism, it is important to recognize that at some level, any mobilization of ethnicity in Montréal is framed by and potentially refers to this policy. When a resident talks about the equality between different ethnic groups in a street, or a shopkeeper asserts the ethnic authenticity of her merchandise, it seems likely that behind their words lies a certain awareness of multiculturalism as recognition of the right to cultural difference. However, it is equally important to recognize that multiculturalism has a decidedly different resonance in the province of Quebec than it does in the rest of Canada.

Quebec's dynamics of majority-minority relations are particularly interesting because the French-Canadian group is a minority in Canada but a majority in Quebec. As noted above, official multiculturalism was in part a response to the threat posed by the movement for national sovereignty in Quebec. Support for independence was by no means new, but grew considerably after the Second World War, and throughout the „Quiet Revolution“ of the 1960s, as the francophone “reconquest” of economic resources and political power in Quebec is known (Levine, 1990). The election of the nationalist Parti Québécois to provincial government in 1976 led to a referendum for independence in 1980, and another in 1995. Both times the idea was rejected, but only by an extremely narrow margin in 1995. The drive towards independent nationhood is fostered most intensely (although not quite only) among French-speaking Québécois who trace their roots back to Nouvelle-France. Their claim to sovereignty is based specifically on a felt history of being a colonized and marginalized people rather than an equal founding partner in the Canadian project. Many Franco-Québécois continue to aspire to independence and Quebec is often referred to from within as a nation. For instance, St-Jean-Baptiste day is known as *la fête nationale* and the provincial parliament as *l'Assemblée nationale*. Like such movements elsewhere in the world, and notwithstanding the weight of its political and constitutional rationale, Quebec nationalism emerged from a strong popular sense of belonging to an ethnic „people“ (French Canadians). Many „sovereigntist“ intellectuals now envisage a nation inclusive of all Quebecers, of all ethnic origins, as long as they adopt the French language (e.g. Bariteau, 1998), and indeed the Quebec state is formally an inclusive one, as the 1975 *Charte des droits et libertés de la personne* establishes (Blad and Couton, 2009). However, this does not stop populist ethnonational sentiments from rearing up

occasionally (and being exploited for party political ends).¹⁸ Even if the independence of Quebec seems to be off the agenda for now, it is understandable that many immigrants feel more ambivalent about their place in Quebec than about their place in Canada, the state that officially accepted them.

Whichever political party holds power, the Quebec government must still deal with ethnocultural diversity, not least because current government policy aims to encourage ever-larger flows of immigration, which is widely believed to be necessary for keeping the economy and the birth rate afloat (Blad and Couton, 2009; Ministère de l'immigration et des communautés culturelles, 2004). As noted, many Franco-Québécois feel that their claims were deliberately undermined by the federal government's ideology of official multiculturalism: suddenly, in 1971, they were no longer one of two founding nations but simply one minority among many others. During the late 1970s, the Quebec government began to develop its own strategy for the „management“ of diversity, which emphasized the values of both pluralism and dialogue between the cultural groups who make up that pluralism (Ministère de l'immigration et des communautés culturelles, 1981, 1990). The Quebec government settled on a policy – or rather a quasi-policy¹⁹ – of „interculturalism“, in opposition to multiculturalism which it sees as maintaining barriers between cultures and according too much importance to minorities at the expense of the majority (Blad and Couton, 2009; Bouchard and Taylor, 2008; Juteau, 1999). In fact, the two policies have many points in common, in that both are pluralist rather than assimilationist and “recognize that the actualization of equality requires more than formal equality; that is, they recognize that there are differentiations in the practice of equality” (Juteau, McAndrew and Pietrantonio, 1998: 101). Also, the actual programmes of social intervention resulting from interculturalism are quite similar to those driven by multiculturalism (Juteau, McAndrew and Pietrantonio, 1998). Still, interculturalism posits the existence of a core Québécois (French-Canadian) “nation” as distinct from “cultural communities” (*communautés culturelles*), a new (and tautological) term coined to refer to minority ethnic groups, whether immigrant or not (Juteau, 1999: 158). In spite of an official revision in 1991 recognizing members of cultural

¹⁸ For example, the current Quebec government has recently proposed that immigrants sign a “Declaration of shared values” on arrival (Ministère de l'immigration et des communautés culturelles, 2008).

¹⁹ As Bouchard and Taylor explain (2008: 99), interculturalism has never been explicitly and fully proposed as a policy and model for managing intercultural relations in Quebec; rather, the key documents mentioned above established a normative framework. Indeed, they recommend that the Quebec government “enshrine[s] interculturalism in a statute, a statement of principle or a declaration that specifies its purposes, principles and applications” (ibid.: 257).

communities as Québécois too, there is still considerable ambiguity over the term. “We are all Québécois, but some are more Québécois than others” (ibid.: 159, my translation, see also Lamarre and Djerrahian, 2004).

The other prong of Quebec’s strategy for the management of diversity is linguistic. Indeed, it could be argued that the instrument used to ensure the survival of French, although perhaps assimilationist in its intentions, has turned out to be intercultural in effect. Bill 101 became law in Quebec in 1977, consolidating the position of French as the only official language in the province since 1974. Its measure with undoubtedly the greatest long-term impact was to oblige all schoolchildren to attend French-language schools, unless one of their parents had been educated in English, in Canada. The long-time anglophone minority’s acquired rights are thus protected, while the children of immigrants must go to school in French.²⁰ Immigrants had previously favoured English-language schools, firstly because English was considered to be more conducive to socio-economic and geographic mobility, and secondly because until 1998 the school system was based on religious affiliation. French-speaking Catholic schools generally closed their doors to children of other religions (Jews, Orthodox Greeks, etc.), who went instead to Protestant (English-speaking) schools where they did not mix with the majority ethnic group (McAndrew, 2003a). Bill 101 therefore forced the majority to share with new minorities an important and compulsory institution of socialization, the francophone state school system. The French language remains a crucial aspect of Québécois identity and has become an important vector for immigrant integration. Indeed, language is the second-most cited reason given by immigrants for settling in Montréal (the first being to join the social support networks of family and friends) (Chui, Tran and Maheux, 2007: 20). However, language remains a sensitive issue, particularly in Montréal where the vast majority of anglophones and „allophones” (i.e. people whose first language is neither English nor French) are concentrated, and there are regular academic and public debates over whether French could be losing ground in Quebec’s metropolis.

At the municipal level, the City of Montréal’s policies for the management of ethnic diversity have been described as an “adocracy” (Germain and Alain, 2006, 2009). Immigrant and minority ethnic populations are clearly concentrated in the City of Montréal, where just under 30% of the population was born outside Canada. Some City administrations have recognized

²⁰ In the early years, this met with significant organized if short-lived resistance from anglophone and/or immigrant communities (Levine, 1990). Nowadays, there are occasional challenges to the law from individual families.

the contributions that “cultural communities” of immigrant origin made to the City’s economic development and general heritage (Germain et al., 2008). The first explicit recognition was a 174-page report highlighting the special role they played in the revitalization of commercial streets and potentially in the promotion of tourism (Commission permanente du Développement économique de la Ville de Montréal, 1992). Mayor Bourque’s administration (1994-2001) fostered a certain ethnic clientelism and hatched the first schemes to „brand“ Montréal as a multiethnic, international city. Ironically, though, only 7.4% of the 1999 municipal workforce came from a minority background, compared to around 40% in the (pre-merger) City’s population (Ville de Montréal, 2000). More to the point, little formalized expertise and few policy orientations have been developed by the City in order to guide those involved in delivering municipal services. In areas such as leisure facilities and urban planning, immigrant and minority ethnic or religious groups do make requests for specific service provision such as separate swimming times for men and women, or religious zoning for new places of worship. But municipal responses have largely been on an *ad hoc* basis, varying greatly according to the actors involved and the neighbourhood context (Germain et al., 2003).

This variety of local responses to ethnic diversity is compounded by the local government restructuring that Montréal has undergone since 2000. This involved: 1) the compulsory merger imposed by the Parti Québécois provincial government on 1 January 2002 of all 28 municipalities on the island of Montréal to form “one island, one city”; 2) the de-merger by referenda in June 2004 of 15 of those municipalities, taking up an opportunity offered by the newly elected Liberal provincial government; 3) the reorganization of the City of Montréal into 19 different boroughs and the decentralization of many services (such as urban planning, public works, snow-clearing and garbage disposal) that had previously been organized centrally by the City; and 4) a corresponding (and understandable!) lag in consolidating inter-municipal collaboration at the level of the metropolitan region. As Germain and Rose (2000: 92) put it, the Montréal region is something of a “moving target” in terms of governance.²¹ One consequence relevant to my research is that the City’s centralized intercultural relations service has been whittled away, leaving very few central resources to which boroughs can turn for advice on matters such as interethnic conflict or intercultural communication. Meanwhile, as I noted in section 1.1, the City of Montréal uses the word “cosmopolitan” not to describe Montréalers”

²¹ The issues and consequences of Montréal’s restructuring at infra-municipal and metropolitan scales have been discussed in several recent scholarly articles and doctoral theses (Alain, 2007; Boudreau, 2003a, b; Boudreau et al., 2006, 2007; Tomàs-Fornés, 2007).

experience of cultural diversity but to try to brand Montréal as attractive to international tourists and investors.

The „adhocratic“ approach to the management of diversity came increasingly under fire in Quebec in 2006 and 2007 (as I was still conducting fieldwork²²). Media coverage of cases of „reasonable accommodation“ inflamed public opinion to such an extent that the Liberal government set up a public *Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences*.²³ „Reasonable accommodation“ is a longstanding principle of case law that allows a norm or a statute to be applied more flexibly in favour of an individual or a group of people that is threatened with discrimination for one of the reasons specified in Quebec’s Charter of Rights (e.g. religion, gender, pregnancy, age, physical disability), provided that the subsequent arrangement is „reasonable“, that is, that it does not impose excessive constraints on the accommodating party.²⁴ Of course, the idea behind reasonable accommodation – that some persons or groups run the risk of being excluded from society if norms are applied with no sensitivity to cultural difference – can also be put into practice on a voluntary rather than legally-enforced basis; reasonable accommodation *stricto sensu* can thus be distinguished from the “concerted adjustment” (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008) that people make in everyday life.

What happened in Quebec was that for various reasons, the media began to devote increasing coverage to cases of both reasonable accommodation and concerted adjustment that seemed to favour ethnoreligious minority groups, particularly Muslims and Orthodox Jews, or to take away privileges from Catholics. The Commission’s report identified a build-up period (May 2002 to February 2006) during which “a social context permeated by suspicion and insecurity established itself. [...] What began as local cases became veritable “affairs” whose legal developments society monitored closely” (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008: 50). These affairs included the long-running case of whether a Sikh boy was allowed to carry a kirpan to school²⁵

²² A few research participants did make reference to the controversy, as we shall see in Chapter 5.

²³ Many publications, including the report of the Commission (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008), give more detailed explanations and analyses of the principles and public debates surrounding reasonable accommodation in Quebec (Bosquet, 2005; McAndrew, 2003b; Potvin et al., 2008; Rioux and Bourgeois, 2008).

²⁴ For example, an employee could request time off work in order to honour major religious holidays, and this could be granted if it did not cost the employer too much or impinge on other employees’ rights.

²⁵ In December 2001, the boy’s parents and the school administration had negotiated the conditions under which the boy would be allowed to carry the kirpan. However, the school board objected and banned the boy from carrying it. A long sequence of appeals and conflicting judgments ensued but in March 2006 the Supreme Court of Canada ultimately authorized him to wear his kirpan in school (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008: 50, 53).

and a debate in Ontario over the validity of sharia law, all in an atmosphere of post-9/11 anxieties. The conclusion of the kirpan affair marked the beginning of the “time of turmoil” (ibid: 53) over reasonable accommodation (March 2006 to June 2007). Controversial cases included, for example, the decision of the YMCA du Parc in the Mile End neighbourhood to frost windows of an exercise room so that men and boys in the adjacent Hasidic synagogue would not see women exercising (November 2006) and the provision of a pork-free menu and space for prayers for a Muslim group visiting a „sugar shack” (March 2007).²⁶ Research has demonstrated that some cases were deliberately sought out and others entirely fabricated by the media²⁷ (Potvin et al., 2008; Rioux and Bourgeois, 2008), but true or not, the media coverage provoked province-wide public debate, not only about the place of religion and the integration of immigrants in Quebec society, but also about „Quebec values” and national/cultural identity.²⁸

Quebec’s Liberal government announced the public commission to investigate the crisis in February 2007, headed by two esteemed Quebec intellectuals, the philosopher Charles Taylor and the historian Gérard Bouchard. The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, as it came to be known, held consultations throughout the province during autumn 2007, including 22 spirited and often antagonistic televised citizens’ forums. Over the course of the Commission (and in part due to intervention by academics), media coverage of „reasonable accommodation” calmed down, and the publication of its report (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008) provoked curiously little public debate.

Given its timing, the reasonable accommodation controversy did not directly influence my research process, but it merits discussion here for a number of reasons. Firstly, it highlights the complexity of interethnic relations in a province where the ethnic majority has only recently gained control of major economic, political and cultural institutions and therefore still feels that its majority position is fragile, at times besieged. Secondly, many of the cases revolved around the place of religion in public space and civic life, leading to much confusion and conflation of

²⁶ A sugar shack is a restaurant at a sugar maple plantation that serves the traditional French-Canadian food of the maple syrup „sugaring off” season in March and April and is a popular out-of-town family outing for urban Quebecers.

²⁷ One „sought out” case was the „revelation” that same-sex examiners can be requested for the Quebec driving test; this has long been the case, so hardly constituted „news”. A fabricated case was the supposed exclusion of men from antenatal classes at the community clinic of Parc-Extension, a neighbourhood with many South Asian immigrants.

²⁸ The tiny rural municipality of Hérouxville even published a now infamous „life standards” document (*code de vie*) in January 2007, to make it clear that while everyone was welcome in the village, certain Québécois standards prevailed: no one stones women, no one covers their face except on Halloween, Christmas is celebrated in public institutions, and so on.

matters of immigration, ethnicity and religion. Thirdly, it exposed the popularity of a strain of secular republicanism, greatly influenced by the French model, among some Québécois, and a certain nostalgia for their French-Canadian Catholic roots among others. Fourthly, and most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, it powerfully demonstrated the connection between micro and macro levels. Reasonable accommodation and, even more so, concerted adjustments are grounded in particular cases in the kind of “micro-publics” imagined by Amin (2002; see section 1.3.2 below): schools, workplaces, sports tournaments and so on. Yet, under specific conditions, these micro-level cases ascended to the realm of macro-level public debate and were generalized as examples of the national *zeitgeist*. In the process, they became unmoored from the concrete circumstances that produced them, such that the Bouchard-Taylor Commission had to commission research in order to sort the grains of truth from the media chaff. This highlights the need for research into everyday intercultural coexistence, conflictual or not.

*

This section has outlined the evolution of Montréal's history as a multiethnic city. Flows of immigration and the patterns of settlement of immigrant and minority ethnic groups have changed over the years, such that a city of „two solitudes“ became one of „ethnic villages“ and then „multiethnic neighbourhoods“. The resulting ethnic diversity has been managed by policies of official multiculturalism at the federal level and interculturalism at the provincial level. Caught between two models, the municipal response to diversity has often been adhocism. However, since Quebec's ethnic majority is an ethnic minority (of diminishing proportions) within Canada, anxieties are periodically expressed about the encroachment of the ethnic religious, cultural or linguistic „Other“ on Franco-Québécois“ hard-won but apparently fragile cultural territory. Leloup and I have argued (Leloup and Radice, 2008) that debates such as those provoked by the reasonable accommodation controversy need to be brought back down to earth, reterritorialized, as it were, in all their contextual and intercultural complexity. This is all the more so since the highest levels of anxiety seem to be felt in places like rural Hérouxville, that have the least experience of cultural difference in the everyday. In other words, research into everyday cosmopolitanism, everyday “willingness to engage with the Other” (Hannerz, 1990: 239), is timely. We now need to know more about the processes by which people are perceived and constructed as „other“ or culturally different in the city. The next section therefore focuses on the theories of ethnicity that help us understand these processes.

1.3 The multiethnic city

Cultural difference is generally theorized using the concept of ethnicity, and this section aims to show how ethnicity has been understood in the multiethnic city. Firstly, I provide an overview of theories of ethnicity, also explaining what ethnic groups are and how they are constructed. Secondly, I explore how ethnicity is represented in the space of the city, both in terms of the marks ethnic groups make on the city and the models that social scientists have made of their inscription.

1.3.1 Defining ethnicity: boundaries, interests, symbols and salience

Although ethnicity has only become a really popular topic of research in the last forty years or so, it already preoccupied one of the founders of social science. In *Economy and Society* (published in 1922, two years after his death), Weber distinguishes ethnicity from race and nation:

We shall call “ethnic groups” those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists. (Weber, 1978: 389)

In contrast to ethnicity, Weber considers that „race“ is based on a genuine (as opposed to perceived) common origin, i.e. on physical characteristics, whereas „nation“ is based on the belief of a common origin but also on the “passion” that inspires claims to political power²⁹ (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008: 38). Although „race“ has since been thoroughly deconstructed and shown to have no basis in actual physical, biological or genetic differences, it has long been used to classify human beings into separate and hierarchically-ordered groups, particularly in the context of colonization, and is still associated with visible phenotypic differences (especially skin colour) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998).³⁰ As such, race can be

²⁹ Weber’s definition of a nation is highly debatable, but the vast literature on the social construction of the nation and the crucial role of ethnicity within this project is beyond the scope of this thesis (see Banks, 1996; Calhoun, 1993).

³⁰ The concepts of ethnicity and race are much more entangled than I imply here, as is suggested by the recent coinage and use of the qualifier “ethnoracial”. Ethnicity has been used like race to impose external, hierarchical classifications of groups too, and race can also be a rallying point of subjective identities, particularly in societies like the USA where it has been an organizing principle of social relations (see also Hall, 2000). Moreover, it has been suggested that the post-war focus on ethnicity in effect “euphemizes” race. This is because a) having deconstructed the biological basis for racial classification, social scientists often neglected to explain the social conditions of its creation and perpetuation, and b) in emphasizing the subjective cultural differences that construct ethnicity, they have often ignored the power relations that permeate it (Harrison, 1995).

seen as an externally imposed system of classification that was justified by recourse to „objective“ criteria. Weber’s early writings on ethnicity emphasize instead a *subjective* sense of belonging to a group. This captures three points that are crucial to understanding the complexity of ethnicity and ethnic relations (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). Firstly, ethnicity is not created by the common *possession* of a number of distinguishing features (whatever they may be – language, customs, history, territory, etc.), but rather by the activity that produces, maintains, reinforces and gives meaning to these features (while ignoring or forgetting others). Thus, ethnicity is not a given, primordial quality inherited at birth from one’s parents, but something that one acquires through processes of socialization. To paraphrase Simone de Beauvoir, one is not born but becomes ethnic. Secondly, ethnicity is based on – and generates – difference, since identifying with one ethnic group necessarily involves dissociation from other ethnic groups. Ethnicity can therefore be one of the organizing principles of social relations (which is why Weber was interested in it). Thirdly, for Weber, ethnic belonging is based on a specific kind of “honour”, namely, the belief that the ways of living or customs that (purportedly) constitute the basis for ethnicity are worthier than other customs, and by extension that those co-ethnics who practice them are worthier than those of other people, who don’t. This means that ethnicity can be the basis for hierarchical relations between groups. Ethnicity is therefore 1) a social construction that is 2) relational and 3) bound up in relations of morality and power.

Weber’s perspicacious theory did not prevent social scientists from devoting a great deal of research to making inventories of the cultural traits that constitute ethnic groups, particularly when these were studied in geographic or social isolation, as units in and of themselves (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). The article that really broke with this tradition is anthropologist Fredrik Barth’s introduction to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Barth, 1969), which remains a touchstone for almost all subsequent reviews and proposals of theories of ethnicity (e.g. Banks, 1996; Cohen, 1978; Juteau, 1999; Nagel, 1994; Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). In a nutshell, Barth argued that it is “the ethnic *boundary* that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (1969: 15). Moreover, ethnic boundaries persist in spite of the movement of people and “information” (cultural content) across them, and they only make sense in a situation of contact with other ethnic groups (i.e. he emphasizes the relational). Ethnic identity is therefore fluid rather than fixed, and is produced through interactions between members and non-members. Barth argued that studies of ethnicity should focus on how the dichotomies between members and outsiders are produced and maintained, and on what effect they have on actual behaviour. As he summed up 25 years later, “The cultural differences of primary significance for

ethnicity are those that people use to mark the distinction, the boundary, and not the analyst's ideas about what is most aboriginal or characteristic in their culture" (Barth, 1994: 12).

If ethnic groups are largely constituted by their boundaries, then it stands to reason that they may be perceived differently from opposite sides of those boundaries. Members of an ethnic group are likely to define their ethnic identity by means of different criteria than outsiders to the group. The „internal“ and „external“, or „endogenous“ and „exogenous“, definitions of ethnic identity are often asymmetrical, in terms of both *what* they cover (i.e. what traits or criteria make one a member of an ethnic group) and *who* they cover (i.e. who is allowed membership), particularly where there are unequal power relations between the groups. Typically, the more unequal the power relationship, the less the two perspectives will coincide. Ethnic identity is therefore both „achieved“ by insiders, through processes of identification, and „ascribed“ by outsiders, through processes of categorization. In multiethnic contexts shaped by immigration, exogenous definitions often „jump together“ ethnic groups considered quite distinct by their members. For example, the ethnic group labelled by many people and institutions as „Asians“ or „Asian Americans“ in the USA includes people who would define themselves and each other as ethnically distinct: Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Cambodian and so on. Likewise, the term „*Maghrébins*“ is applied indiscriminately as an ethnic label in France and Canada to people who are very different along national (Algerian, Tunisian, Moroccan) or linguistic (Arabic, Berber) lines (both examples cited by Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008: 158-60). That said, as these examples imply, and as noted above in my discussion of identity cosmopolitanism, people also adopt „nested“ ethnic identities, identifying simultaneously as, say, Cantonese, Chinese and Asian, and putting each identity foremost in a different kind of situation, in front of different interlocutors.

Even though endogenous and exogenous definitions are rarely isomorphic, they cannot be treated as analytically separate, since ethnic identity is in fact a product of the dialectic that operates between the two. One example is Gaelic identity in the Scottish Highlands, which can ultimately be understood as “a „hollow category“, created and maintained by the larger Scottish and English society and then „filled in“ or given substance by the self-conscious efforts of „Gael“ themselves” (Banks, 1996: 136, summarizing the research of Chapman). Thanks to an analogy made between the oppositions of language and people (Gaelic language : English language :: Scottish people : English people), Gaelic identity, once marginal *within* Scotland, has since been taken over as a symbol of Scottish *national* identity. Indeed, in the context of minority-majority relations, exogenous definitions are often adopted and their negative connotations inverted as a

basis for political action. Thus, Latin Americans in Toronto – a hugely heterogeneous group, in terms of both countries of origin and immigration trajectories, not to mention cultural practices – use “strategic essentialism” to legitimize their presence as a group, in effect reifying themselves in order to make their voices heard, gain access to political resources and counter negative stereotypes (Veronis, 2006, 2007). Both these examples of the endogenous/exogenous dialectic also highlight the great extent to which minority ethnic identities are shaped in relation to dominant majority identities and the state.

The very term „ethnic“ has often been reserved for minority populations within a state, in opposition to a majority whose culture, values and political position relative to the state are considered to be normal, and are therefore unmarked or mainstream. This is consistent with the etymology of the word „ethnic“, from the Greek *ethnos*, which referred explicitly to „foreign“ peoples („barbarians“ and those Greek peoples not organized into city-states). It also matches vernacular use of „ethnics“ („*les ethnies*“ in Québécois French) to refer to ethnic minorities and their members. But even if „ethnic“ has often designated the minority „others“ rather than a majority „us“, it is also true that any group of „us“ is always somebody else’s „others“. This relativistic perspective has led many scholars of ethnicity to argue that majority groups are „ethnic“, too (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008: 23), and I would agree with this: “if race and ethnicity have any significance at all, they have it on both sides of any boundaries they mark, so the illusion of not feeling touched by them is just that, an illusion” (Banks, 1996: 124-5). However, this point is constantly challenged in everyday life, when members of a dominant majority insist that their culture is not ethnic, or when aspects of majority culture go unnoticed – or are considered to be universal – because they are unmarked (Mackey, 2002).

The relationship between majority and minority ethnicities is complex because the former tend to have control over the way the latter are mobilized and treated as normal or deviant within the nation-state (or whatever other territory frames their majority-minority relations). This is why one sees the term „ethnicize“ and „ethnicization“, by analogy with racialization, criminalization and so on, to refer to a dubious or unwarranted ascription of ethnic identity. In my view, it is not necessarily helpful to erase ethnic qualifiers from the dominant majority, since ethnicity is still part of the equation even if it is masked. As Banks points out (using the framework of the nation), “all nationalisms, once state control is achieved, actively seek both to enhance and reify the specifically ethnic identities of deviant others within the nation state, and at the same time to efface the idea of ethnic particularism within the national identity” (1996: 158).

To sum up so far, ethnicity is socially constructed by groups who continually establish, contest and negotiate their own and others' defining boundaries in a context of unequal power relations. This synopsis goes some way to explaining what ethnicity „is“, but not necessarily what it „does“, or what purpose it serves beyond perpetuating certain social groups. Two schools of thought provide contrasting answers to this question: ethnicity is used either to compete for resources, or to organize meaning. The first school takes ethnicity to be an expression of common interests, mobilized in order to gain or maintain access to certain political or economic resources. Different scholars see different driving forces behind such mobilization: the interests of a group, the rational choice of individual actors, or even the collective struggle against „internal colonialism“. But in all these variants, ethnicity is seen as instrumental, as a rationalization in a competition whose real stakes are laid out on another plane. In pursuit of common interests, ethnicity serves to cement solidarity within the group and even to hide the actual nature of the interests that are being pursued (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). For instance, the anthropologist Abner Cohen argued that migrants of Hausa ethnic origin to the city of Ibadan in Nigeria organize themselves as Hausa in order to maintain a monopoly on the cattle and kola nut trades (Cohen, 1969 cited in Banks, 1996). Political scientists Glazer and Moynihan concluded that minority ethnic groups in New York (e.g. Italians, Irish) survive long after the cultural content of their identity has mutated from what it would be in their home country in order to gain political and economic advantage in the city (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970, cited in Banks, 1996). Theories of instrumental ethnicity thus set the mobilization of group identity in the context of competition for shares of resources in a larger entity, such as a city, state or market, and as these examples suggest, they have often been used to explain the enduring influence of ethnicity in multiethnic cities.

In contrast, symbolic theories of ethnicity take us back to its „cultural content“, over which I have so far passed rather briefly, in light of Weber's and Barth's emphasis on the intersubjective social construction of the boundaries of ethnicity. The kinds of things that are typically considered to be distinguishing ethnic features include shared language, religion, geographical or cosmological origins, current territory, claims to nationhood, historical experience and collective memory (e.g. of particular historical figures or events such as colonization or genocide), imagined future (e.g. of a return home for diasporic groups), and cultural forms or customs like cuisine, dress, art, dance, music, folk tales, ideal kinship patterns and so on. It is easy to see that this is neither an exhaustive nor an exclusive inventory: several ethnic groups can share the same territory or language or religion, and conversely, members of a single ethnic group may have a range of ideal relationships with mothers-in-law or ways of

celebrating the harvest, for example.³¹ Moreover, the features that are considered important can change over time. Nevertheless, the important point about the „cultural content“ of ethnicity is that it is what members and outsiders alike take to *symbolize* belonging to an ethnic group, and so to imagine the contours of that group.

What lay people talk about, then, when they talk about ethnicity, often consists of this “cultural stuff” (as Barth calls it, 1969: 15). It is therefore worthy of our attention because even if it is arbitrary, it is the focus of some of the „work“ of ethnicity: members of ethnic groups selectively interpret and transmit the symbols that make their ethnic identity meaningful to them (Cohen, 1985; Lapierre, 2008). At one level, these symbols are the easiest elements of ethnicity to exchange with others, and as a result they can seem utterly banal, superficial and irrelevant to the social problematization of ethnic relations. In this vein, for instance, Gans (1979) explained the 1970s revival of interest in ethnicity in the USA by the reduced „cost“ of ethnic belonging. Since being marked as ethnic no longer entailed significant negative consequences, everyone could „afford“ to cultivate and display the symbols of their ethnic identities. Previously, argued Gans, when ethnic identity was imposed from both inside and outside the group, the symbols were taken for granted and needed no upkeep, as it were.

Gans’s article is a product of a particular place and time – the USA during relative prosperity and peace – and as such it perhaps exaggerates in treating symbolic ethnicity as a trivial concern (cf. Zelinsky, 2001).³² But related to this point of view are contemporary criticisms of the folkloristic “saris, samosas and steel bands” celebration of “cultures” under the model of Canadian multiculturalism (Mogila cited by Mackey, 2002: 66). Here, the argument goes that the fact that one can eat an „ethnic“ meal – let’s say Jamaican ackee and saltfish – does not even begin to scratch the surface of the historical construction of Jamaican ethnic identity, let alone the colonial and postcolonial relations that have led to Jamaican immigration to Canada. In other words, eating ackee and saltfish, if you are not Jamaican, would be an example of commodified rather than personal cosmopolitanism. Nonetheless, at another level, it can be argued that these

³¹ Barth divides the “cultural content” of ethnicity into “diacritical” markers on the one hand, i.e. the signs that seem to show identity such as dress, language, house-form and so on, and “basic values and orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged” on the other ((Barth, 1969: 14). However, this seems to me to be a somewhat tenuous or even circular distinction, since a group’s preference for one “marker” – a way of doing weddings, for instance – often also implies a moral standard of authenticity.

³² Gans (1979) was clearly not dealing with questions of race and racism in this article. His argument about symbolic ethnicity in fact complements the instrumental view, since both treat ethnicity in utilitarian, cost-benefit terms.

apparently trivial symbols crystallize processes and problems of ethnicity construction, by means of debates about authenticity and belonging (Cohen, 1986; Greenhill, 1994; Nagel, 1994). Therefore, listening to how people talk about ackee and saltfish – how to make it, who can or can't make it, when and where and with what to eat it, whether it can be made „properly“ at all outside Jamaica – would indeed be one way of „getting at“ the processes of the construction of ethnicity, including who is and who is not Jamaican. Thus, paying attention to ethnic symbols can lead to an analysis of the making of ethnic boundaries and their implications in majority-minority and power relations.³³

The last theme of theories of ethnicity that I want to discuss here is salience. Ethnicity is just one of the variables that people use to differentiate each other and to organize social relations, other important ones being gender, social class or status and age. In earlier rounds of theoretical debate, there was some argument as to whether or not ethnicity was a supraordinate, primordial and universal dimension of identity that defined a person before all other identities (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008: 95ff.). The consensus now, however, is that the „primordialist“ perspective is somewhat outdated. Ethnicity is seen instead as one mode of identification among the many others that are available to a person at any given time as “resources for social action” (ibid.: 182, my translation). In some situations, depending on what is going on and who else is involved, a person's ethnicity will be highly relevant, the kind of difference that makes a difference. In others, different aspects of identity, such as gender, social class, sexual orientation, age or physical ability, not to mention lifestyle or point on a trajectory, will be emphasized instead. This idea is a logical implication of the different ascribed, achieved and nested identities I discussed above; it also highlights the dialectic between group and individual, structure and agency. Sticking with a Jamaican example, a Jamaican man in the USA might at different times identify or be identified principally in the US as black or Caribbean, in Jamaica as an emigrant or member of the elite (Patterson cited by Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008: 182). To this we could add other identities, such as father, heterosexual or artist, that may be “stressed or muted” (West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 30) at different times.

Such multiple senses of belonging, which echo the identity cosmopolitanism discussed above, reflect what many sociologists argue is a broader trend of late modern society: “radical individuation” (Bourdieu, 2004a, 2005; Grafmeyer, 1995). Individuation is not the same as individualism, in which each person acts in her own interests; rather, it means that each person

³³ See, for example, Gagné's (2004) analysis of the social construction of Maaori identity, including the debate over „authenticity“ and its political ramifications.

constructs her social identity less by means of automatic belonging to social groups than through choices and constraints that are applied at the individual level. This does not lead, however, to the end of social ties, but instead to “reflexive solidarities” (Ascher and Godard, 1999) that are thought through in connection with specific characteristics, lifestyles or trajectories, for example: being a baby-boomer or generation X-er; being a mother, a grandfather, or single; being gay or perhaps more specifically a „bear“ (large hirsute gay man); coming from the countryside; being a high-school drop-out or the first in the family to go to university. These kinds of traits can bring together people who do not share the same ethnic origins or social class, or they can separate people who seem otherwise alike, in the short or long term. As Simmel (1950) noted at the beginning of the twentieth century, the industrial metropolis was exactly the kind of place that allowed the proliferation of possible identities (a recurring theme in his work). The post-industrial metropolis, its economy driven by the service sector and its form shaped greatly by spaces of consumption and leisure, enables an even greater diversification of lifestyles (Zukin, 1998) in which “each person solicits his or her social and material environment in a unique way” (Bourdieu, 2004: 17, my translation; see also Ascher and Godard, 1999). Ethnicity is thus just one possible defining factor of situations or relationships, especially in the socially heterogeneous environment of the city – although it can be a highly constraining one. The dimensions of identity that are the most salient at any given moment vary according to what one is doing, with whom and where.

The pertinent question then becomes, why and how is ethnicity more salient in some contexts than others? The answer typically focuses on a close analysis of the mobilization (or not) of ethnicity in particular interactions. Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart (2008: 185-188) develop an example drawn from their own research of a Burkinabé student on a bus in Nice, who finds he has left his student discount card at home when his ticket is checked by a white French inspector. The inspector calls him a Cap-Verdean (a highly stigmatized ethnic group in Nice), opening him up to a whole range of negative stereotypes. The student resists this categorization, invoking instead both his status as a law-abiding (if forgetful) passenger and the legal limits of the inspector’s action. Each actor is attempting to define the situation along a different boundary: one ethnic, between Cap-Verdeans/„Africans“ and Niçois/French; one „functional“, as it were, between users and administrators of the transport system. Both are effectively also appealing to the audience of other passengers in their attempts. In analyzing such interactions, we can see how ethnicity is situationally accomplished, and how ethnic categories are established, maintained or resisted, rather than treating them as explanations in themselves. While this approach implies a certain methodological individualism, in that action is

situated at the individual level, it does not ignore the constraints imposed by the context of intergroup relations. West and Fenstermaker (1995) take up this point in their theorization of “doing difference”. They discuss how gender, race and class are accomplished in interaction with others by virtue of their “accountability” to particular norms (e.g. an action or attribute can be described as “unwomanly” or “too white”). They argue that:

while individuals are the ones who do [ethnicity], the process of rendering something accountable is both interactional and institutional in character: it is a feature of social relationships, and its idiom derives from the institutional arena in which those relationships come to life. [...] [Ethnicity] is obviously much more than a role or an individual characteristic: it is a mechanism whereby situated social action contributes to the reproduction of social structure. (West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 21)³⁴

In the example discussed above, public transport would be the institutional arena in which the idioms of the despised Cap-Verdean or the dignified passenger come to life, while the exchange between the student and the inspector is a social action that contributes to the reproduction of social structure in their own and the „audience“’s lives.

Ethnicity, then, is a socially constructed phenomenon, usually centred on the belief in some common cultural and physical heritage, that people use to distinguish between different social groups. Ethnic groups are shaped by the dialectic between internal and external boundaries; this implies that any study of ethnicity is at least to some degree a study of interethnic relations or multiethnicity. Groups or individuals may draw on ethnicity for instrumental purposes, to gain access to resources, or symbolic purposes, to find a sense of belonging and organize meaning, or both (as is often the case in practice). That said, ethnicity is by no means the only identity available to people for either of those purposes; it will be more salient in some situations, interactions and longer-term relations than in others.

1.3.2 Spatializing multiethnicity: from founding neighbourhoods to contact zones

Having discussed broad theories of ethnicity, I now turn to the spatialization of ethnicity in the city, looking at how ethnicity is made manifest and has been studied in urban environments. While studies of urban ethnicity are closely bound up with research into immigration and immigrant incorporation or integration, I try to maintain my principal focus on ethnic identity and difference rather than immigration. And since ethnicity in cities is almost necessarily plural at some level, this sub-section deals not so much with ethnicity as with multiethnicity.

³⁴ I have taken the liberty of replacing the word “gender” with “ethnicity” in this quote, to keep it close to my own argument. Since West and Fenstermaker (1995) put “race” on the same plane as “gender” in their discussion of “doing difference”, I consider my substitution to be acceptable.

Cities are magnets for diversity, and it is no accident that the field of urban studies was formed in large part through the investigation of immigrant and ethnic groups in the city. While ethnicity *per se* only became a really popular subject for research in the 1970s, questions of ethnic difference were at the heart of early research into urban social relations, in the booming immigrant cities of the USA in the early 20th century.³⁵ Since the end of the American Civil War, the rapid industrialization of cities such as New York and Chicago had attracted increasing numbers of immigrants fleeing persecution and poverty in Europe: one wave peaked in 1882, a year in which 789 000 immigrants were admitted, and the decade 1904-1914 saw an average annual admission of a million (Brogan, 1990: 414). These immigrants were increasingly different from the typically Protestant Northern Europeans who had previously populated the country (excepting the Irish Catholics who had arrived at the end of the 1840s, fleeing the potato famine). Most came from Southern and Eastern Europe and were Jewish, Orthodox or Catholic. By the first world war, “nativist” fears rose over whether the institutions of the “melting pot” of the USA would not be irredeemably transformed by what was then called the “new immigration” (Brogan, 1990: 512).³⁶ While at the political level, a series of (anti-) Immigration Acts (1917-1924) slammed shut the gates to the New World (*ibid.*), at the scientific level, scholars began to undertake ambitious research projects to investigate how the new immigrants were transforming America’s cities.

These studies were led by the members of the USA’s first department of sociology, at Chicago University, which came to be known simply as the Chicago School.³⁷ They sought to understand and explain the great social changes brought about by rapid urbanization and immigration, particularly in Chicago. Their object of study was urban society, or more specifically the city as a social laboratory, which they came to theorize through a new approach they called human ecology. This approach, as its name suggests, borrowed heavily from the natural

³⁵ Anthropological studies of ethnicity and interethnic relations were similarly inspired by rural-urban migration to cities in Central Africa (Banks, 1996; Hannerz, 1980). Although some of their insights are equally relevant to North American and European urbanization, the colonial political and economic contexts differ considerably, so I prefer to concentrate on the North American literature here.

³⁶ As we have seen with respect to the multiethnic evolution of Montréal, there is now a new “new immigration”.

³⁷ The best known of the Chicago school researchers are Thomas, Znaniecki, Park, Burgess, McKenzie, Wirth and Cressley; extended reviews of their work include those by Grafmeyer and Joseph (1979b) and Hannerz (1980: chapter 2). Their methodology and generally qualitative approach was very much influenced by Simmel (under whom Park had studied in Germany) and by anthropologists such as Boas (Park, 2004 [1925]: 85). Urban anthropologists can therefore also stake a legitimate claim to the Chicago School legacy (Hannerz, 1980).

sciences; it posited that social groups in the city adapt to their environment in much the same way as do plants or animals, competing for resources and finding their niche through processes of social organization and disorganization. As the city grew (a process seen as natural and inevitable), a given zone would be “invaded” by new occupants or new land uses, which led to the “disorganization” of the existing population, who then adapt by means of their capacity of organization, perhaps by moving to another area (Burgess, 1996 [1925]; McKenzie, 1979 [1925]). This process of “succession” means that the city is made up of many highly differentiated “social worlds” or “moral regions”, each populated by a distinct social group. The ethnographic research projects of the Chicago School explored many of these worlds, defining the people who populated them variously (and quite subtly) by their position in the division of labour, their immigrant status and trajectory, their „race” or ethnicity and their gender. The city came to be seen as “a mosaic of little worlds which touch but do not interpenetrate,” in the famous words of Park (cited in Hannerz, 1980: 26). Thus was coined one of the most enduring and powerful metaphors of spatialized social relations in the city.

The overall picture depicted by this mosaic, the ideal-type of the city as a whole, was schematized in Burgess’s (1996 [1925]) famous model of concentric zones radiating out from a central business district, through an industrial zone, a zone of “transition”, then a zone of working-class homes, a high-class residential zone and a commuter zone.³⁸ I want to set aside here the many criticisms that have been made of human ecology as an approach to urban studies (see e.g. Gottdiener and Budd, 2005; Hise, 2002; Lynch, 1981), as well as the debates over the accuracy or universality of Burgess’s model, and concentrate instead on what the Chicago School’s approach implied about the spatialization of urban ethnicity. The version of Burgess’s diagram tailored to Chicago is inscribed with the specifically ethnicized areas of Little Sicily, the Ghetto (still a Jewish rather than a black area) and Chinatown in the transition zone (along with „slum”, „vice” and „underworld”), Deutschland in the working-class zone and the Black Belt straddling the two zones.³⁹ The global model of the mosaic thus marks out some of the ethnicized worlds that make it up – but it also mirrors the sociospatial trajectory along which, at the time, they were understood and expected to travel. Immigrants would first settle near their

³⁸ This series of zones greatly resembles Engels’ description of the social geography of Manchester (1996 [1845]).

³⁹ One early adopter of Burgess’s model even made a Montréal version, kidney-shaped rather than circular on account of the Mont-Royal (Dawson, 1927). It included “Italian, Russian, China Town” in the east side of the transition zone of rooming houses (around boulevard St-Laurent) and “Negro” on the west side (around Griffintown and St-Henri). Westmount and Outremont are the high-class residential zone; the commuters’ zone includes the garden cities of Rosemont, Ville Mont-Royal and Hampstead.

industrial places of work in the zone of transition, but as they slowly learnt the language, saved money and found better employment they would work their way out to a less ethnically marked, more affluent area and a less ethnically marked, more „American“ social position. Burgess’s model thus provides a spatial representation of a theory of incorporation of immigrants into American society, understood to follow a trajectory from arrival, in a state of competition for resources and conflict, to adaptation, in an ethnic enclave, to assimilation, in a more morally and materially „decent“ area (Hannerz, 1980; Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008; Remy, 1998 [1990]; Vasishth and Sloane, 2002).

For the Chicago School sociologists, the ethnic enclave represented a necessary zone and stage of adaptation to American society; however, they did not conceive of assimilation as the erasure of all traces of the original culture (unlike their most immediate successors), but rather as participation by the immigrant in ever larger and more inclusive spheres of civic life (Grafmeyer and Joseph, 1979a; Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). The ethnic enclave, or to use a less charged term, ethnic neighbourhood afforded groups a base from which to experience a variety of lifestyles, both within and outside it, while also providing the political, economic and psychological resources of community life. These might include stores selling familiar goods, newspapers, places of worship, ethno-specific settlement organizations, and of course social networks, in which news would circulate of local jobs or housing, or friends and politics back in the country of origin. Even after immigrants and their children have moved away, they often return to the neighbourhood to celebrate holidays, buy goods and see friends, as long as the ethnic businesses, institutions and networks are still there (see for an early example Wirth, 1980 [1928]). Jean Remy, a Belgian sociologist greatly inspired by Simmel and the Chicago School, calls this kind of neighbourhood a “founding neighbourhood”, which:

allowed a link to be made between the country of origin and the country of arrival. It could thus serve as a place of safety and a space of translation from which the newcomer could learn to manage if not to find a job, at least to work out a minimum of the codes required to circulate in the new urban space. [...] The neighbourhood was thus a place of articulation between two worlds. (Remy, 1998 [1990]: 181, my translation)

After the heyday of the Chicago School, scholars of the 1940s-1960s took a somewhat different perspective on the incorporation of immigrants: they conceived of assimilation as a fuller transformation of the immigrant’s way of life, involving the disappearance of ethnic particularities (measured by such variables as languages spoken, intermarriage and residential desegregation) (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). This understanding was closely linked to one of the principal broader sociological hypotheses of the time, which posited that under the

influence of increasing urbanization, industrialization, scientific knowledge, mass education and mass culture, communal ties and cultural particularities would disappear as society became ever more universally „modern“. To use Tönnies“ terms, *Gemeinschaft* would become *Gesellschaft*, or in Durkheim“s, society would be bound by organic rather than mechanical solidarity. The ethnic mosaic would therefore melt. Many at the time viewed this projected homogenization of society as both inevitable and desirable social progress. However, expectations were confounded when studies in the 1970s discovered that ethnic ties endure in spite of long-term establishment in USA, and, moreover, that the grandchildren of immigrants were often intrigued by their ethnic roots and keen to explore what their parents had preferred to ignore. In spite of immigrants“ and their offspring“s adoption of many of the customs, values and aspirations of the „American way of life“, ethnic identity could still be a source of collective mobilization, to both instrumental and symbolic ends. This heralded something of a return to the ideas of the Chicago School. Ethnic identification and participation in the broader society were seen once more to go hand in hand, and ideas about the homogenizing forces of modernity began to change: it was recognized that communal ties can endure even in the modern metropolis.

The „mosaic“, then, endures, but how is it manifested – and studied – in spatial terms? It is worth making a distinction here between the „reality“ and the representation of the spatialization of ethnic groups and identities in the city. The concentration of ethnic groups or immigrants in a given geographical area is typically measured by census data on ethnic origin (or proxies for this) and place of residence, and broken down into sectors that are more or less equivalent to a neighbourhood. Actual degrees of concentration have historically varied widely from group to group, neighbourhood to neighbourhood, city to city and country to country (housing markets and policies being not the least of influential factors). Even the Chicago School ethnographers described both neighbourhoods that were associated with a single ethnic group (like the Jewish Ghetto, see Wirth, 1980 [1928]) and those that were decidedly multiethnic (e.g. Zorbaugh“s 1929 study of *The Gold Coast and the Slum* (Hannerz, 1980: 44-50)). Nevertheless, the trope of the ethnic neighbourhood has lasted a very long time, and with it that of the city as mosaic. The “premise of discontinuity” through which we associate one geographical area with one people and one culture (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992) has nurtured both academic and lay imaginations of the multiethnic city as a patchwork of ethnic neighbourhoods: Little Italys, Chinatowns, Greektowns, Banglatowns, Cabbagetowns and the like, that can change names from one to another with successive waves of immigration.

In some cities, and at some historical moments, this representation matches reality less accurately than at others, but it still greatly influences qualitative research into social relations in the multiethnic city. Following in the footsteps of the Chicago ethnographers, social scientists often study ethnic and interethnic relations in the city through the lens of the „community“ (the new „moral region“?), understood in either social or spatial terms.⁴⁰ Qualitative studies of the multiethnic city therefore often focus on either a single ethnic community, considered in relative isolation from other groups, or a particular neighbourhood, considered in relative isolation from other neighbourhoods (and sometimes both). Examples of the first approach, i.e. studies of ethnic communities (social communities), include Bilge (2004), Billette (2005a), Le Gall (2002) and Robichaud (2004), on Turks, Russophones, Lebanese women and Portuguese in Montréal, respectively, Chacko (2003) on Ethiopians in Washington, DC, and Garcia Lopez (2003) and Veronis (2006, 2007) on Latin Americans in Montréal and Toronto, respectively. Examples of the second approach, i.e. studies of multiethnic neighbourhoods (spatial communities) have been conducted in Belleville, Paris (Simon, 1995, 1997a), Rotterdam (Blokland, 2003), and Montréal (Germain et al., 1995; Meintel et al., 1997).

A related field of research on the multiethnic city is the study of ethnic economies (Light and Gold, 2000). Very briefly, the term ethnic economy (also termed ethnic business, ethnic enterprise, ethnic enclaves, ethnic enclave/niche economies, depending on the author’s approach) encapsulates the idea that some ethnic groups are concentrated in particular sectors of the labour market and/or in small enterprise. A striking example is the over-representation of ethnic minorities in the restaurant and catering trades in many immigrant-receiving countries (Hiebert and Pendakur, 2003; Zukin, 1995). Most literature on ethnic economies approaches the phenomenon from a „supply side“ perspective, discussing *how* members of a given ethnic minority group set up and maintain their own businesses, typically drawing on intra-ethnic networks and resources such as co-ethnic labour and sources of finance. It also investigates *why* they do so, whether for „pull“ reasons of aptitudes for commerce (sometimes treated as „cultural“) or „push“ reasons of discrimination in the general employment market (making

⁴⁰ Another influence here is the British tradition of community studies, which focused a great deal on new models of kinship and class solidarities in the context of changing patterns of urbanization, but less on ethnicity until much later (Bott, 1957; Cohen, 1986; Elias and Scotson, 1965; Young and Wilmott, 1957). See Yeo and Yeo (1988) for a discussion of the history and ambivalence of the concept of community and Albrow (1997) for a critique of the tradition. The US sociological tradition of community studies, such as the „Middletown“ studies (Lynd and Lynd, 1937, 1939), was also influential.

enterprise an attractive route potentially leading to upward social mobility).⁴¹ The *where* of ethnic economies has been investigated less thoroughly, although a series of studies by geographers in Toronto examine their spatial distribution and the extent to which they serve (co-)ethnic clientele, in relation to (co-)ethnic neighbourhoods (Fong et al., 2008; Fong, Chen and Luk, 2007; Preston, 2008; Preston and Lo, 2000; Wang and Lo, 2007). Some researchers also opt to circumscribe their object of study spatially, looking at „ethnic businesses“ within a given neighbourhood (Montréal case studies include Juteau and Paré, 1997; Paré, 2000; 2005 on Côte-des-Neiges; Robichaud, 2004 on the Portuguese sector of Plateau Mont-Royal). Research on ethnic economies thus mirrors research on ethnic communities, in that it tends to investigate either the entrepreneurial practices of particular ethnic groups or else all ethnic businesses within a particular neighbourhood.

There are three main problems with studies of single ethnic communities: firstly, they can fail to adequately capture relations with other ethnic groups; secondly, they can mask divisions and diversity within an ethnic community (although not always, e.g. Billette, 2005a); and thirdly, they risk overemphasizing ethnicity as a dimension of urban social relations at the expense of other variables, such as ties made through employment or religion (which is not always coterminous with ethnicity) or local belonging (De Rudder, 1991; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009). If the multiethnicity of the city is always seen through the “ethnic lens” (Glick Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen, 2006), other kinds of social relations may be hidden in the blind spots – particularly in the light of the “diversification of diversity” or “super-diversity” (Vertovec, 2007) that is currently transforming many large cities, arguably including Montréal.

Studies that approach the multiethnic city through the neighbourhood as opposed to the ethnic community are typically more sensitive to the myriad variables that can affect social relations (e.g. socioeconomic status, gender, access to public facilities, social services and voluntary sector resources, housing markets and trajectories, etc.). However, what they do not always capture well is the influence on social relations of one of the most important dimensions of city life: mobility. Indeed, Remy (1998) has argued that mobility is *the* defining characteristic of urbanization. A city is a city not only because of the density and heterogeneity of its population, but also by the latter’s short-term and long-term mobility: in the course of both their daily

⁴¹ This literature is reviewed by Aldrich and Waldinger (1990, mainly US studies), Berbagui (2005, on French research), Light and Gold (2000) and Zhu and Aboubacar (2008) and critiqued by Werbner (2001), Nederveen Pieterse (2007) and Jones and Ram (2007). Case studies of various aspects of ethnic economies abound (Bagwell, 2006; Bamfield, 2006; Basu, 2002; David, 2000; Deakins et al., 2009; Ley, 2006; Ma Mung, 1996; Panayi, 2002; Pang, 2002; Ram et al., 2002; Raulin, 1986, 1987, 1988, 2000).

activities and their residential histories, people traverse the city; they rarely live, work and spend their free time in a single neighbourhood. This means that in all but the most residential spaces of the city, one is likely to find people at work, at leisure or in transit who do not live locally. Conversely, residents of a neighbourhood are unlikely to share – or to want to share (Crow, Allan and Summers, 2002) – the same spheres of social relations. For instance, research conducted with residents of many different ethnic origins in the London suburb of Tooting found that:

These people inhabit different social spheres, coeval and overlapping in space, but with fundamentally different horizons and time-spans. The reality of Tooting is constituted by the intermeshing and interrelating of these spheres. (Albrow, 1997: 47-48)

While the neighbourhood can still be a base to which residents are quite strongly attached, they also easily venture elsewhere in the city – not only to central places, but also to other neighbourhoods (Authier, 2005). Due to increasing urban mobility, the space of the neighbourhood is not strictly reserved for communal ties of relative familiarity, but is also open to people who are complete strangers (Charmes, 2006). And as Wellman and Leighton (1979) predicted 30 years ago, communal social bonds can be forged well beyond the residential neighbourhood.

With respect to the multiethnic geography of the city, these points have contributed to cultural geographer Zelinsky's concept of "heterolocalism" (2001). Rejecting as inadequate the two models of both the eventual assimilation of ethnic groups into a homogenous urban landscape and the enduring mosaic of ethnic enclaves, Zelinsky argues that many ethnic groups – particularly recent immigrants – today are "heterolocal". This means, firstly, that they are residentially dispersed (even from time of arrival). Secondly, places of residence, work, consumption, leisure and socializing are spatially separated. Thirdly, "[d]espite the absence of spatial propinquity, strong ethnic community ties are maintained via telecommunication, visits, and other methods at the metropolitan, regional, national, and even international scale" (Zelinsky, 2001: 133). Zelinsky considers that heterolocal ethnic communities can coexist alongside ethnic enclaves and spatially assimilated ethnic groups. In one city, one might find high concentrations of particular ethnic groups in small sectors (ethnic enclaves), plus other ethnic groups (or even members of the same one) who prefer to disperse and not to leave any particular mark on the urban landscape, plus yet others who frequent ethnic institutions spread throughout the city. Today's multiethnic cities are thus shaped by several types of relations

between ethnic groups and urban space, and Zelinsky may be right in arguing that heterolocalism is now the most typical model of the present time, at least in North America.

This implies that almost any given public space in the city is, or at least has the potential to be, a site of contact with people from different ethnic backgrounds. In other words, the city is full of sites in which people who are socially distant from each other are brought into physical proximity (Remy, 1972, 1998 [1990]; Simmel, 1950 [1903], 1950 [1908]). My curiosity about the extent, the content and the quality of this contact is one of the things that has driven this research – and many others share this curiosity, as Wessel's (2009) recent overview shows. The fundamental question that urban researchers and policymakers alike are asking is: how does the co-presence of ethnically and socially diverse groups in urban spaces affect intergroup relations? Does it instil fear, inspire joy or induce indifference, and under what conditions? Can mere co-presence help us “live together with difference” in the city? As political scientist Caroline Andrew asks:

Do the interactions of daily life – being neighbours, using the same routes to work, buying coffee at the same store – lead to diminished stereotypes or increased stereotypes? What are the conditions under which some recognition of diversity leads to positive openness to greater recognition? (Andrew, 2004: 9)

These questions have no absolute answers: they must be sensitive to time, place and scale (not to mention socio-political and economic context), since different situations entail different registers of contact or relations. The picture one has of urban diversity will vary greatly depending on whether it is measured at a citywide, neighbourhood or micro-local scale (Wessel, 2009). Likewise, it will vary according to time and place of encounter: the collaborative relations one builds gradually over the long term with coworkers, or fellow students or activists, are not at all the same as the fleeting, anonymous encounters with strangers in the street or in public transit, nor as the accidental „bumping into“ neighbours or familiar strangers in one's residential area. Can we say that one register of contact better fosters harmonious group relations than another?

I want to argue here that it is well worth investigating the kinds of contact that occur in everyday public spaces such as commercial streets. In an influential self-confessed “think piece”, geographer Ash Amin notes that “Habitual contact in itself is no guarantor of cultural exchange. It can entrench group animosities and identities, through repetitions of gender, class, race, and ethnic practices” (2002: 969). In his view, the kind of contact made in public spaces is not particularly helpful as a basis for building positive interethnic relations, because those spaces can be appropriated by particular groups and because they are optional – the

marginalized or the prejudiced can stay away from them. Instead, he argues that “the ideal sites for coming to terms with ethnic difference are where „prosaic negotiations“ are compulsory, in „micropublics“ such as the workplace, schools, colleges, youth centres, sports clubs, and other spaces of association” (ibid.). Urban planner Leonie Sandercock (2003) shares this faith in organized “micropublics” such as neighbourhood projects like community centres and gardens, as well as participative urban planning.

While it is doubtless true that such sites are key places in which differences can be negotiated and made less strange or unsettling, two counter-arguments can be raised in favour of other kinds of places. Firstly, *pace* Amin, not everybody participates in the “prosaic negotiations” of micropublics either; people can refuse to attend or withdraw from them just as they can from public space. It is impossible to „plan“ everybody in. Secondly, and more importantly, there is something to be said for the encounters and, perhaps, negotiations or compromises, that arise in spaces that are *not* compulsory, or at least that have few consequences for the great stakes of urban life, like work, education, urban planning and social service provision. For instance, Wise (2005, 2009), finds that “hopeful” intercultural encounters occur above all in the informal “contact zones” of two Australian suburbs. These contact zones are the contexts constituted by means of gifts (e.g. garden produce), intercultural knowledge (e.g. greetings or codes of politeness in other languages) and other signs of care that are exchanged across backyard fences or shop counters. Watson (2009b) sees the potential for inclusive public sociability in public markets, and Pétonnet (1987) addresses instead more fleeting and anonymous kinds of encounters in public space and public transit. While on the one hand, anonymity protects city-dwellers from having to engage in conversation with each other, on the other, it can also protect them when they do communicate, even if they take up the most extraordinary points of view or make the most extraordinary confessions – because they never have to see their audience again:

In a situation of perfect anonymity, words are as free as the air, with no ties or guardians. They interfere with nothing, and are heard by nobodies, and are therefore not vulnerable to being distorted or betrayed. This is why they are true, whatever part of the real or fantastical self their bearer chooses to divulge with them. (Pétonnet, 1987: 256, my translation)

In his key article on interethnic relations in the city, Remy sums up this principle with what he dubs the “paradox of inconsequence”: “places can be all the more important when the encounters that happen within them have little consequence for the great stakes of social life” (1998 [1990]: 182, my translation). Precisely because these encounters occur between individuals and matter little in their outcomes, they lead to casual exchanges that amount to

intercultural “translations” (which Remy uses as a metaphor, but Wise [2009] confirms literally). Ideally, not only the content, but also the setting of these exchanges should be fairly inconsequential: the most propitious kinds of places for them are those which are situated on people’s everyday itineraries, and are not officially designed or designated to be meeting places but are instead „unprogrammed“ or „indeterminate“. Remy also posits that *interstitial* spaces perform this function particularly well, by which he means places that lie in-between two other kinds of places, and that therefore cannot easily be appropriated by any one social group as „their“ territory. Examples might include a commercial street on the border between two neighbourhoods or marking an important cultural divide in the city (such as Montréal’s „Main“), or a park located near the centre of town, or a café by a small bus interchange, or indeed the buses themselves (as in the example of the white French bus inspector and the Burkinabé student, above). All of these are places that are eminently urban, bringing people who may be very socially distant from each other into close physical proximity.

Following on from my overview of theories of ethnicity, in this subsection I have considered models of the spatial organization of ethnicity – or in fact, multiethnicity – in the city. Our picture of urban multiethnicity varies according to the scale at which we examine it. At the level of the city as a whole, we may perceive a mosaic of areas of ethnic concentration, as defined by residential data or the presence of ethnic institutions, which can change character over time as populations change and institutions follow. At the level of neighbourhoods, these areas of ethnic concentration, whether they constitute the whole neighbourhood or smaller „heterolocal“ clusters, can be important resources for particular ethnic groups, while also making them visible to other ethnic groups. Much research into urban multiethnicity has seen it through either the „ethnic lens“, which can fail to capture non-ethnicized social relations, or the „neighbourhood lens“, which can fail to capture less localized social relations. But because their activities engage multiple facets of their identities, and because they are mobile, city-dwellers experience their city and represent other city-dwellers through more than just their own ethnic groups and neighbourhoods. Multiethnicity and interethnic relations can therefore also be conceived and studied at the „micro“ level of place, in the workplaces, schools, stores, venues, public facilities, buses, trains, parks and streets in which city-dwellers find themselves as they go about their daily lives.

The question that then arises is, among those „micro-places“, which ones better foster what Remy (1998[1990]) calls the “socialization into pluriethnicity”, or what we might call harmonious interethnic coexistence? I argue that the relatively indeterminate, interstitial spaces

of the city that are dedicated to apparently banal, superficial contact are not as inconsequential as they might at first seem, and indeed can be crucial to interethnic relations. This is because they function as the stages on which some of the boundaries and components of ethnic identity can be performed and negotiated, by means of situated interactions involving diverse actors and audiences. In my case, the stage of interethnic social relations that I have chosen to study is the commercial street, and it is to the social science literature on this topic that I now turn. In Chapter 2, I will complete the theoretical road-map of my research by „taking to the streets“ and heading for the destination of my research proposition.

CHAPTER 2 TAKING TO THE STREETS

What are the commercial street's specific qualities as a key „figure“ of the city? Why is it an appropriate and interesting terrain for exploring the dynamics of the multiethnic city? What theoretical problems has research on the street helped to solve and what is still to be explored? In this chapter I answer these questions, beginning with a brief history of the role of the commercial street in the city identifying three periods of tradition, decline and renewal. I discuss the distinctive features of the commercial street as an urban form, before presenting it as a scene for social relations at both the individual and collective level. I then turn to the street's place in the city as a whole, as a destination and as an object of collective intervention. I end by drawing together all the arguments made so far in order to present my research proposition.

Curiously, there has been a particular resurgence of social scientific interest in the street in France in recent years, as evidenced by several collections and special journal issues (Augustin, 2008; Brody, 2005; Charmes and Sander, 2006), a conference¹ and an international exhibition, *La rue est à nous... tous!* (Ascher and Apel-Muller, 2007-2008). After decades during which *la rue* served merely as a metaphor for homelessness or disaffected youth (e.g. Roulleau-Berger, 2004), there now seems to be considerable interest in actual concrete streets. By comparison, North American scholars seem to have maintained a more constant concern for streets, probably for historical reasons: since „Main Street“ was a founding element of North American cities, it has always been highly symbolic, and its decline (inversely proportional to the rise of suburbia) has been all the more glaring (Francaviglia, 1996; Liégeois, 2008; Marling, 1997). In contrast, the European commercial street's form is perhaps less distinctive and more integrated into the general system of roads in old city centres.²

Before we start, a few words on terminology. I have chosen the term „commercial street“ in preference to several alternatives. „Main street“ and „high street“ are evocative but too specific, since they refer to the principal commercial arteries in small to mid-size cities and towns, as well as long-established suburbs of larger cities, in North America and the UK respectively. „Retail street“ (cf. Bridge and Dowling, 2001) seems to emphasize retail stores at the expense of other

¹ *Où en est la rue face à la globalisation ? Standardisation, singularisation et régulation*, organized by Djemila Zeneidi and André-Frédéric Hoyaux of CNRS interdisciplinary research unit 5185 – Aménagement, Développement, Santé et Sociétés (ADES), Bordeaux, France, 27-28 November 2008.

² Recent interest in commercial streets in the UK appears to be driven less by social science than by planning policy, as concerns arise about pedestrian accessibility (Gehl Architects, 2004) and loss of commercial diversity (New Economics Foundation, 2004).

kinds of businesses, services or entertainment; and „shopping street“ apparently has too strong a connotation of „centrality“ and of shopping (or window-shopping) for occasional goods rather than everyday ones.³ Commercial street therefore seems to have the most general and neutral coverage. Where necessary, I further distinguish between neighbourhood commercial streets and city-centre or downtown ones.

2.1 The rise, fall and rebirth of the commercial street

The history of the commercial street is bound up in the history of urbanization. In the preindustrial era, in Europe and North America, shops, workshops and dwellings were mixed together throughout the town, except for a clearly delimited public market which would attract vendors and customers from the whole town and its hinterland (Levitas, 1978). During the industrial revolution, as cities rapidly expanded and the division of labour became ever more specialized, the functions of production, residence and consumption came to be increasingly, if not quite completely, geographically separated in the city. Zoning was introduced to regulate the location of factories, which needed greater inputs of energy and outputs of harmful waste products, and there was a growing demarcation between the territories of the labouring and the bourgeois classes. Certain streets began to be dedicated chiefly to retailing, not only in city centres, where the first department stores and shopping arcades were built, but also beyond, in middle-class residential neighbourhoods and working-class housing districts (Glennie, 1998). As urban spaces became progressively more specialized, so did commercial streets. City-centre streets offered goods and services that were consumed from time to time, while neighbourhood commercial streets served more regular or daily needs, at the butcher’s, baker’s, grocer’s, cobbler’s, hairdresser’s and perhaps haberdasher’s or ironmonger’s. Aside from the contrasts in commercial activity or urban form (the size of stores or the breadth of the street), neighbourhood commercial streets differed from downtown streets in the density of social ties among their users. These streets, with all their smells, flavours, characters, routines, games and bargains were part of the daily life of local inhabitants, constituting a vernacular landscape in opposition to the “enchanted” landscape of downtown (Zukin, 1995). “Those were the days before neighbourhood delicatessens discovered Brie” (ibid.: 255).

Soon enough, this type of lively neighbourhood street, where business was, if not booming, at least ticking over nicely, would become little more than a memory. With the aim of

³ In French I prefer the term *rue commerçante* to *rue* or *artère commerciale*, since the latter implies a more central, occasional kind of street as opposed to an everyday local one (Radice, 2008).

building a more efficient and more pleasant and „hygienic“ city, functionalist urban planners and promoters of garden cities called for the demolition of existing commercial streets and the construction of distinct retail zones in which pedestrians would be kept separate from automobiles, from around the 1930s onwards (Choay, 1994; Glennie, 1998; Schoon, 2001). In the years following the Second World War, the baby boom and the rise of personal prosperity, plus, in Europe, postwar reconstruction led to a massive expansion of suburbs and „new towns“, which embraced the philosophy of the separation of urban functions and encouraged the construction of suburban shopping centres. This had a serious impact on central cities, particularly in North America. Like the neighbourhoods of which they were an integral part, commercial streets fell into decline as stores closed down or adjusted their range to serve a smaller and poorer population than before (Zukin, 1995).⁴ While the „doughnut effect“ of central city depopulation was not as widespread in Europe as in North America, even there, the „inner-city“ neighbourhood was often a synonym for „problem“ neighbourhood. The specific problem varied, of course, depending on the context: it could be poverty, unemployment, high crime rates, interethnic tensions, overcrowding, dilapidation of housing stock or a combination of the above (Bidou-Zachariassen, 2003; Schoon, 2001). The halcyon days of the commercial street seemed to be over.

However, from about 1970 onwards, following decades of flight to the suburbs, some central urban neighbourhoods and their commercial streets began to attract renewed interest among certain sections of the population, for several reasons (Bidou-Zachariassen, 2003; Remy, 1998 [1983]). Firstly, planners began to realize that urban sprawl was not necessarily the best solution to the needs of growing urban populations (Filion, 1995). This led to the emergence of the school of New Urbanism, which favoured high density and diversity of buildings and a mix of land uses, inspired by the analyses and recommendations of Jane Jacobs (1961). Having spent years building modernist monoliths, architects and urban planners rediscovered the virtues of working at a human scale, literally adapting to the perspective of the man or woman in the street (Remy, 1998). Secondly, at the same time, urban authorities began to abandon policies of slum clearance as a solution to the problems of poor inner-city neighbourhoods and to adopt instead policies of urban „revitalization“ (Bacqué et al., 2003). These policies have taken very varied forms, and produced equally varied results, but they include in many places projects focused

⁴ In the USA, this phenomenon of decline was strongly racialized: flight to the suburbs was typically *white* flight, while inner-city urban problems were those of *black* or sometimes other minority neighbourhoods (Zukin, 1995).

specifically on commercial streets. In Canada, the USA, the UK, France and elsewhere – including Spain and Poland (Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004), Singapore (Shaw and Ismail, 2006), South Africa and Serbia (Ward, 2007) – new policy instruments and programmes have emerged that offer funding and/or advice to merchants’ associations or other agencies that wish to take action to revitalize their streets (a topic to which I shall return). A third major catalyst for the renaissance of neighbourhood commercial streets is gentrification. In the 1960s and 1970s, well-educated though not always well-off fractions of the middle classes, attracted by the charms of the old, the challenge of renovation and cheaper rents, began to move into the kinds of central city neighbourhoods that their parents’ generation had rushed to leave. These pioneers of gentrification were often active in the „counter-culture” of new social movements, including the preservation of urban heritage, but in spite of their good intentions to conserve the physical and social milieus that they moved into, they inevitably changed them, and commercial streets in gentrifying neighbourhoods began to reflect the tastes and lifestyles of successive waves of new inhabitants (Ley, 1996).

The return to central neighbourhoods has once again shifted the relationship between downtown and neighbourhood commercial streets.⁵ While the former have either retained or regained their power of attraction as central poles of retailing and entertainment, the latter have often become “destinations of consumption” too, serving people who come from beyond the immediate local neighbourhood in search of specialized goods or atmospheres (Zukin and Kosta, 2004). This is due not only to gentrification and revitalization, but also to the diversification of lifestyles and modes of consumption, the increased mobility of city-dwellers, and the increasing role of „culture”, and particularly cultural consumption, as a driving force in the urban symbolic economy (Bourdin, 2005; Zukin, 1995, 1998).

This very brief history necessarily omits significant details and regional variations, but it presents a useful model of three phases in the history of the neighbourhood commercial street: a first phase where the street served traditional, local needs; a second phase of decline in which it suffered from the depopulation and impoverishment of central neighbourhoods; and a third phase of renaissance, whether sparked by „organic” gentrification or policies of urban revitalization. Since the third phase is where the story has taken us so far, I shall return in more

⁵ It has also shifted the relationship between commercial streets and shopping malls. In North America, suburban shopping malls large and small are now being redesigned after the fashion of the central main streets that had once been left to deteriorate (Southworth, 2005), in a nod to the “architecture of reassurance” pioneered in Walt Disney’s theme parks (Marling, 1997).

detail to the topics of gentrification and revitalization later in this chapter. For the time being, though, I describe what is special about the commercial street in terms of its urban form and functions.

2.2 The form and function of the commercial street

A commercial street, as I use the term, is a roadway or segment of one, plus its sidewalks and the buildings on either side. As such, it is a linear collection of micro-places that have a variety of uses: commercial, residential, industrial and transport (Fleury, 2004; Gourdon, 2002; Jacobs, 1961). It assembles and superposes elements such as stores, offices, dwellings, workshops, businesses, sidewalks, road surfaces, bus stops, benches, gardens, green spaces and so on. Two points can be made about this diversity. First, it is based on a system of subdivision into lots that allows a gradual evolution of what we might call the streetscape, the landscape of the street. So a bakery might turn into a restaurant which might turn into a clothes store. Except in the case of large-scale urban renovation or construction projects, it is unlikely that an entire street, or a large section of it, will change all at once (Gourdon, 2002). Secondly, the variety of functions enables the articulation and, to some extent, the interpenetration of private, public, semi-private and semi-public space (Charmes and Sander, 2006; Fleury, 2004; Gourdon, 2002; Gutman, 1978; Rykwert, 1978). I understand this continuum from private to public to be determined not by ownership, but by accessibility and visibility (Eveillard, 1994; Remy, 1979, 2001). Examples of these categories on a mixed-use street might include a house (private space), the sidewalk (public space), a café (semi-public space, since access is open more or less to all, but can be easily restricted by café staff), and a front yard (semi-private space, since access is in theory closed but the space is visible and in practice can be quite easily entered). Inside a semi-public space, there may be semi-private areas, such as behind the bar in a café. A café-terrace or a large store window allow communication between semi-public space and public space, while a front yard or balcony can extend semi-private space into public space. A commercial street therefore gathers together a range of smaller places with different functions and different statuses on the public-private continuum that change gradually over time.

A street's morphology also expresses – and intertwines – two different regimes of value: the exchange-values of land ownership, development and speculation, and the use-values of symbols of heritage, power and identity (Charmes and Sander, 2006; Gourdon, 2002; Zukin, 1995). Each layer of buildings or infrastructure points to a different historical vision of the „good city“ and what is valued in it, whether that be, for example, state prestige and easy military access, as on Paris's Haussmanian boulevards (Levitas, 1978), or picturesque vernacular

variety, as in the old working-class Parisian district of Belleville (Charmes, 2006). A street is also bound up in a system of land and property valuation that leaves certain legible traces (e.g. „for sale“ or „to let“ signs, construction activity or abandonment). As Gutman puts it, “No matter what the image of the street, it has always included a set of assumptions about who would own and control it, who would live on it or use it, the purposes for which it was built, and the activities appropriate to it” (1978: 249). The built forms of a street are, in a sense, crystallized economic and social processes, which can tell us a great deal about the organization of the city. But the street seen through this lens highlights dominant, normative visions of the city; these are important, yet what are missing are the contrasting perspectives of those who have not wielded sufficient power to mould the city (Hayden, 1995).

Although a commercial street or part of one can be circumscribed and seen as a place in itself, it is also inscribed in the city as a whole, and ultimately in the network of flows of people, goods and information connecting places all over the globe (Castells, 1998; Charmes and Sander, 2006; Fleury, 2004; Gourdon, 2002). A street is an artery that intersects with others, along which one might pass on the way to somewhere else; it is part of a “permeable” system of routes where there are many options for cutting through and across streets. This is what distinguishes a street from, say, an industrial park, a shopping mall or a residential cul-de-sac, all of which are usually destinations to which one travels and stops, instead of passing through (Demerath and Levinger, 2003; Jacobs, 1961).⁶ Another dimension of the street’s inscription in the city as a whole is that it fits into systems of infrastructure (e.g. sewers, communications cables) and surveillance (e.g. policing, zoning, inspection). It is thus an object of action by public authorities. Furthermore, any given street fits into a kind of hierarchy of urban places, from the prestigious and symbolically „central“, to the ordinary or unremarkable, to the marginal (Gutman, 1978; Remy, 1987). While such a hierarchy is neither invariable nor uncontested, it means that some streets are seen as more important than others at any given point in time. Thus, a commercial street is always part of a wider network, because it both serves as a channel for people and goods and is crossed and connected to other kinds of streets.

A commercial street, then, assembles a diversity of functions and kinds of spaces, embodies both economic and symbolic value, evolves slowly and is embedded in larger-scale

⁶ Rykwert suggests that the street is part of our cosmology, recalling the role of the pathway as quest or initiation. “Movement along a set way, and even the delimitation of the way as an extended public space, are very deeply embedded in human experience. That is why the persistent prophecies of the end of the street’s function as a locus of human communication have not been fulfilled” (Rykwert, 1978: 22).

systems that form the city and ultimately connect with all kinds of other places. This morphological perspective tells us what makes a street a street, in general and empirical terms, and the basic principles apply as much to commercial as others kinds of streets. However, it says little about the interaction between people and the built form of the street, our knowledge of which builds on the pioneering work of the late Jane Jacobs (1961) and William H Whyte (1988) in New York City. Jacobs' book was based on her own experience as a city-dweller and urban activist, whereas Whyte's was based on years of systematic observations of public spaces, but both shared the aim of making cities more "liveable" and came to similar conclusions about the kinds of urban environments that people most use and most enjoy using. They pinpointed people's preferences: buildings on a human scale; multipurpose street furniture, steps or bits of buildings on which to sit or lean; edges and enclosures rather than open space; and enough variety in the age and design of buildings to keep streets interesting. Their work was a repudiation of modernist urban planning, with its separation of functions and vast, monolithic designs. Jacobs' main argument was "the need of cities for a most intricate and close-grained diversity of uses that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially" (1961: 14). For instance, a functionally mixed street that is fully integrated into the road network is likely to generate a broader range of interactions between its users than an isolated shopping mall or a solely residential housing estate (Charmes, 2006).

Urban planners and architects continue to explore relations between humans and the urban environment, in search of "a fine city for people", as the title of one report puts it (Gehl Architects, 2004), or more specifically, the micro features of urban form that will best support pedestrian social activity. These include varied ground-floor façades, with good transparency (linking the outside with the inside), sensory contact with the environment (smells, sounds, textures), and architectural dimensions and rhythms (e.g. space between entryways) that are suited to a walking pace (Demerath and Levinger, 2003; Gehl, Kaefer and Reigstad, 2006; Mehta, 2007, 2008). Another example is that interstitial, accidental stopping-places on a street are often more successful as meeting places than the little squares or parks that are specially designed as such: "the meeting thus creates the meeting place, rather than the meeting place creating the meeting" (Charmes, 2006: 125, my translation). Since they are not too "programmed" or "over-determined", such places are more open to creative appropriation by their users (Germain, 1999a). Particular urban forms on the street can thus be understood as resources and constraints for social practices.

Nevertheless, this kind of research, focused as it is on the way individuals use their immediate environment, only hints at how such social practices and urban forms fit into broader societal relations. Once the „best“ (i.e. most socially or physically stimulating) urban forms have been identified, how are political decisions and resources directed towards building them (or not)? What symbolic meanings do the urban forms of the street carry for the people who use it? How do they experience the street in all its dimensions – its physical form, population and image? How do these experiences vary by people’s social positions, skills, resources and representations? To find out more about these matters, we need to turn to what sociologists, anthropologists and cultural geographers have had to say about commercial streets as a setting for social relations.

2.3 Social relations and public sociability in the commercial street

As I noted above, the morphology of a commercial street allows the articulation of public and private space, and this feature has profound consequences for its social life. The street brings different people – individuals and groups – into view of and into contact with each other. From a socio-anthropological point of view, this is what makes „public“ space public: not the question of who owns it, nor what function it fulfills, but the fact that it provides a scene where people from very different backgrounds are “on show” to each other (Foret and Bavoux, 1990; Remy, 1998 [1990]; Simon, 1997b). The key point here is that they are unlikely to know each other, or know each other only categorically as generic members of a group, such as bus-drivers, or teenagers, or panhandlers: they are strangers to each other (Lofland, 1998). Of course, a street is also traversed by other kinds of relations, namely, the private, intimate ties between family members or friends and what Lofland calls “parochial”, that is, “characterized by a sense of commonality among acquaintances and neighbors who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located within „communities”” (Lofland, 1998: 10). As we shall see in later chapters, both private and parochial bonds also help animate commercial streets. But for our purposes of exploring social relations in the multiethnic city, one of the most pertinent features of the commercial street is that it constitutes a stage for relations between strangers, in public. In other words, it is a space that brings into geographical proximity people who are socially distant (Remy, 1972; Simmel, 1950 [1903]).

The fact that streets are shared by people from different backgrounds is one reason that anthropologists and sociologists have been able to use streets, street corners, markets and cafés or restaurants in order to gradually gain access to the particular social milieus they wished to study (Bestor, 2002, 2003; Duneier, 1992, 1999; Liebow, 1967; Stoller, 2002b; Whyte, 1981).

This means of access to research participants is of course only possible where there is a certain culture of talking to strangers. In a different vein, Miller (2008) used a single residential street as his „sampling frame“, as it were, in order to gain access to the domestic material culture of 100 households of ordinary and very varied Londoners. However, with the exception of Duneier’s (1999) book on homeless black street vendors, in this research public space as such is more or less incidental to the actual object of study.

The co-presence of strangers in public space affects social relations at two interlinked levels. On the one hand, it has an influence on the immediate scope of action: it brings people into contact with each other at least visually and potentially verbally, and into bodily contact to varying degrees (they might not necessarily touch, but they alter each other’s physical behaviour). On the other hand, and simultaneously, it shapes longer-term representations of other individuals and groups, or as Charmes (2006) says, it mediates collective identities. I call these two levels „social interactions“ and „social dynamics“.

The importance of micro-level reciprocal social interactions as the basis for all other societal bonds was fully recognized by Simmel. A short example is his essay on the senses (1981, 1997d), and it is a recurring theme in his *Sociology* (1950, 1999). Simmel’s work was extended by Goffman (1959, 1963, 1971), whose close observation of interactions in public unpacked the great efforts that humans put into maintaining smooth social relations at the micro level. The tiniest gestures of gaze or body, as well as routine conversations, serve to “present the self” and to provide opportunities for contact – or avoidance, as the case may be. To give a couple of examples, a street newspaper vendor will engage in particular social interactions with passersby in order to capture a market in a context where most people are „busy“ with prior and ongoing activities (Llewellyn and Burrow, 2008), and people in a café will signal their receptivity or unavailability for contact, which contributes to the café’s particular atmosphere of conviviality or perhaps mere efficiency (Laurier and Philo, 2006).

The qualities of social interactions in public serve not only to present the self, but also to *protect* the self from the mental chaos and overstimulation that would result from paying full attention with one’s whole person (as opposed to segmented parts of it) to all who pass by or everything that happens on a street. As a sociologist of the Chicago School put it, the apparent reserve, indifference or anonymity of people’s social interactions “may thus be regarded as devices for immunizing themselves against the personal claims and expectations of others” (Wirth, 1996 [1938]: 192). It is important not to see this merely negatively, as a resistance to the onslaught of the city (Germain, 1997). Rather, a certain reserve is the foundation of a mode of

coexistence and communication between strangers that is often called “urbanity” or “civility” (Remy, 1998 [1990]). In a sense, following Goffman’s dramaturgical metaphor, public social interactions involve us in playing roles according to scripts, perhaps to an audience, suiting the front-stage or back-stage area in which we find ourselves. It could be said, then, that rather than engaging the whole person, social interactions on the street have us wearing “masks”, and it is through the play and study of these masks that people “learn public life” and are “initiated into urban diversity” (Foret and Bavoux, 1990: 38-39, my translation). This register of interaction can also be called public sociability, a concept to which I shall return in more detail in Chapter 4.

It is easy to take the „work“ of social interactions for granted, and Goffman has been criticized for insufficiently accounting for the broader context of social interactions, such as the unequal power relations between different social groups. But these macro-level social relations between, for instance, men and women, or ethnic groups, or the able-bodied and people with disabilities, are always being constituted and reconstituted through social interactions (West and Fenstermaker, 1995). Thus, the “interactional vandalism” that black “street men” in Greenwich Village commit when they harass white female passersby both reflects and reinforces structural inequalities between black people and white people, men and women, and the housed and the homeless (Duneier and Molotch, 1999). In a less troubled (but also geographically larger) context, Simon has studied the uses of street interactions in the multiethnic neighbourhood of Belleville, Paris:

Other people’s ways of living are accessible with a minimum of effort of observation. One does not need to enter into relations of proximity, to be invited into the domestic sphere, in order to get to know one’s neighbours, however superficially, because they „put on a show“ every day outside their building. Sitting on benches or chairs brought out for the occasion, strolling in the street, leaning on cars, they are seen and recognized by everyone. (Simon, 1997b: 62, my translation)

Simon argues that this public spectacle is instrumental in establishing the social order of the neighbourhood. “A seemingly open space but with rigidly codified rites of occupation, the street enables the newcomer to learn the collective order” (ibid.: 64, my translation).

The social order that is thus established on a street will vary according to its geographical centrality in the city. As we shall see, neighbourhood commercial streets can represent fairly fine-grained relations between specific groups. But the lines of social inclusion and exclusion are laid down differently in city-centre commercial streets. On the one hand, all kinds of diverse people are drawn to streets such as rue de la République, Lyon (Foret and Bavoux, 1990), Boulevard St-Laurent, Montréal (Podmore, 2001), or Queen Street, Auckland (Shantz, Kearns and Collins, 2008), and the pleasure of „people-watching“ in relative anonymity is one of their

great attractions. Young people use city-centre streets to meet their peer groups on „neutral territory“, far from their own neighbourhoods. On the other hand, although central city streets are theoretically accessible to all, in practice, local authorities, business people or other visitors often have an extremely low tolerance for particular behaviours, such as skateboarding, smoking, sleeping, panhandling or peddling. This ultimately means that particular groups such as young or homeless people can indeed be marginalized and excluded from downtown streets (Lees, 2003; Parazelli, 2002; Shantz, Kearns and Collins, 2008).

Social interactions between individuals thus participate in the creation of social dynamics between groups – groups that differ by variables such as age, class, ethnicity, role (e.g. workers or residents) and socioeconomic trajectory (e.g. one’s rung on the housing or career ladder). These groups can be visible in commercial streets because of their appearance, their casual use or more durable appropriation of space, and their internal interactions, such that people can witness the modes and codes of sociability of groups to which they do not belong. Streets are thus one of the kinds of public spaces that give different groups the chance to negotiate the conditions of their coexistence by various means, including unconscious micro-adjustments, exchange of insults, reasoned debate invoking universal values, give-and-take, etc. (Remy, 1998 [1990]).

Collective identities and difference are also inscribed in commercial streets by the presence of particular places and practices of consumption. The link between practices of consumption and the performance of identity has been intensively researched (Miller, 1995; Warde and Martens, 2000; Zukin, 1998). In the case of streets, the various types, names and styles of stores and services reflect and attract the presence of specific clienteles. A dollar store indicates that there is a local market of people on low incomes, whereas an American Apparel store suggests the presence of trendy young people willing to pay high prices for clothes that are ethically manufactured in the USA. This is one reason why commercial streets are such powerful symbols in studies of socially mixed neighbourhoods. Whether the neighbourhood in question is understood mainly to mix diverse social classes, ethnic groups, lifestyles, sexual orientations or some combination of the above, and whether it is seen as relatively stable or rapidly changing (e.g. due to gentrification or immigration), the mix is made manifest and experienced in commercial streets (cf. Massey, 1991). The facilities for commercial exchange are thus often taken to indicate the ongoing social exchanges in the surrounding neighbourhood.

There is a good deal of recent research on socially mixed neighbourhoods, usually ones that are undergoing considerable transformation. In this literature, material on commercial

streets is often used to represent the social dynamics between at least two of three kinds of groups: long-established, usually working-class white inhabitants; immigrants and ethnic minorities (sometimes new to the neighbourhood, sometimes recent arrivals, depending on the study); and white middle-class residents (typically recently arrived gentrifiers). Some of these studies focus on the neighbourhood as a whole, or residential streets (Bacqué et al., 2005; Butler and Robson, 2001; Charmes, 2006; Martin, 2005; May, 1996a; Rose, 2006; Simon, 1995, 1997a; Wise, 2005). Others specifically construct commercial streets as an object of study (Duruz, 2005; Fleury, 2004; Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; Lehman-Frisch, 2002; Miller, 2005; Van Criekingen, 1997; Zukin and Kosta, 2004). The principal themes illustrated are, on the one hand, the sense of loss and displacement among long-time working-class residents (Clerval, 2004; Lehman-Frisch, 2002; May, 1996a), and on the other, the aestheticization, i.e. the glorification in discourse but avoidance in practice, of both working-class and minority ethnic milieus by white middle-class residents (Butler, 2003; Charmes, 2006; Clerval, 2004; Fleury, 2004; May, 1996a; Miller, 2005). Curiously, minority ethnic voices are largely absent from this literature: where minority ethnic residents are involved, it tends to be as objects of white residents' views of the neighbourhood rather than as research participants themselves. The exceptions are perhaps those where the object of study is explicitly constructed as a multiethnic, as distinct from gentrifying, neighbourhood (e.g. in Simon's research).

On the theme of the loss felt by long-time working-class residents, one of May's working-class interviewees, „Paul“, expresses dismay at the changes in the commercial landscape of gentrifying Stoke Newington, London:

„There was a barber there, I remember he used to do a short back and sides, like haircut. He's gone, a lot of the old shops have gone. I mean, what the hell, what is there now? A kite shop! I never seen a kite shop before. And wine bars, I mean that's, that's a new thing... a kite shop, I can't see a kite shop serving any purpose, except I suppose yuppy people buy kites. ... it's upsetting, annoying.“ (May, 1996a: 204)

Similarly, on 24th Street in Noe Valley, San Francisco, when the upscale delicatessens and organic grocery shops opened along with chic bars and restaurants, the old-timers were left eating senior-citizen early-bird specials at the last remaining affordable diner (Lehman-Frisch, 2002). A long-time white working-class resident interviewed by Clerval deplors the ethnically marked businesses set up by immigrants in the rue du Faubourg du Temple, Belleville:

Before, we used to have real shopkeepers, clothes, a cheese shop, a wine shop... the butchers weren't Arab butchers, they were real butchers... there was a delicatessen... it was a real shopping street. *[Interviewer: But it's still a shopping*

street.] You're making fun of me [...] to me, they're not shops. (Clerval, 2004: 37, my translation)

In another permutation of this dynamic, Wells and Watson (2005) find that working-class traditional shopkeepers (most but not all of them white) treat immigrants and "asylum-seekers" as scapegoats for their own loss of clout in the changing commercial landscape around a London market.

Middle-class residents, on the other hand, tend to value both the authenticity of traditional, local shops and the exoticism of minority ethnic businesses – while not necessarily shopping at either. One of May's interviewees enthuses over the "postcardy" view of Stoke Newington Church Street; another over the ethnically mixed and more "real" Dalston Market (1996a: 203, 206). The middle-class residents of another North London street vigorously defend local shops in the name of their poorer neighbours, while not actually shopping there themselves – and in fact the working-class residents actually prefer to go to supermarkets, which they find to be better value (Miller, 2005). In Barnsbury (another North London neighbourhood), gentrifiers value the presence of ethnic and class „others“; but do not interact with them: "[t]hey are, as it were, much valued as a kind of social wallpaper, but no more" (Butler, 2003: 2484). On rue Oberkampf, in Paris, young people sit in trendy bars whose names bear witness to the street's industrial past (Café Coal, Mecano Bar, The Forge). They dip into local myths of working-class conviviality, simplicity and revolt, but do not make contact with working-class inhabitants (Fleury, 2004). Likewise, although gentrifiers are attracted to Belleville by the ethnic mix of the streets, they want commercial activity to conform to their own norms: it mustn't spill out onto the public domain of the sidewalk, and nor must the merchants ruffle their children's hair (Clerval, 2004: 40). In a recent study of Belleville, Charmes (2006) found that gentrifiers' enthusiasm for social mix seemed to be a way of salving their consciences about displacing poorer residents, rather than a straightforward account of their own social activities. Similarly, the sense of community "like a village" so prized by gentrifiers on 24th Street, Noe Valley, probably rests on a (petty bourgeois) class solidarity that dare not speak its name (Lehman-Frisch, 2002).

Other research has nuanced and sometimes contested these well-worn themes of working-class loss and middle-class aestheticization. Martin (2005) found that working-class residents of Notting Hill were much less concerned by the changes gentrification wrought on their commercial services than by the perceived redistribution of local community facilities and benefits to recent immigrants (echoing themes in Wells and Watson, 2005). In Auckland, gentrification has made Auckland's commercial landscape more inclusive, as cafés and bars that are open to women and men, gay and straight, diversify what was hitherto a patriarchal and

heteronormative pub culture (Latham, 2003). On the theme of ethnicity, research in Sydney has found that far from resenting or avoiding new ethnic businesses, some long-established white working-class residents – especially women – establish social ties with the shopkeepers, through acts of intercultural memory (the shops remind them of country stores in their childhood) and sociability (learning some of their customs or language) (Duruz, 2005; Wise, 2005, 2009). Conversely, middle-class white residents of the multiethnic Goutte d'Or neighbourhood in Paris express indignation over the declining quality of local stores, but since these stores are largely ethnically marked, it may be that this is thinly-disguised racism rather than genuine concern over local services (Bacqué et al., 2005; Kessous, 2007 for a similar controversy in the 11th arrondissement). These variations suggest that although certain patterns of relations between different groups are recurrent, they are not universally prevalent; close attention needs to be paid to the specific circumstances of each commercial street, with the ultimate aim of advancing intermediate-level theory: under what types of conditions are we likely to see what types of relations? They also point to a significant gap in the literature, namely, minority ethnic experiences of how collective identities are mediated in the commercial street.

Commercial streets can therefore be seen as stages for a range of social relations (in part thanks to the diversity of their built forms and functions). On the one hand, they host the particular exchanges of ephemeral social interactions between individuals, which are nonetheless crucial in forging the overall atmosphere of urbanity. On the other hand, they are settings in which intergroup social dynamics are signified and interpreted, both through visible symbols associated with particular groups (such as types of shops) and through the categorization as members of groups of the strangers with whom interactions take place. These social relations are further influenced by the commercial street's place in the city as a whole, as a destination whose power of attraction reaches beyond the immediate locality, and as an object of intervention by collective actors.

2.4 The commercial street as destination and object of intervention

Studies that focus specifically on commercial streets add two themes that are crucial to the construction of my research: mobility, or streets as destinations, and intervention, or streets as objects of action by state or other collective actors. These themes are important because they address the most novel trends affecting commercial streets, and they help explain further why the street – as opposed to the neighbourhood – is a relevant scale at which to explore the multiethnic city.

Neighbourhood streets began to be seen as destinations thanks in part to the impact of gentrification on the commercial landscape, which Remy described as early as 1983:

„Luxury“ workshops and businesses of various types will progressively displace strictly utilitarian workshops and businesses. The ironmonger who sells nails and screwdrivers will, unless he can „recycle“ himself, be displaced by one that sells the full range of household goods in copper, cast iron or Scandinavian glass. (Remy, 1998 [1983]: 341, my translation)

An increase in „luxury“ businesses has indeed been noted in many areas undergoing residential gentrification: more restaurants, cafés and gourmet grocery stores; more gyms, alternative therapists, and interior décor stores; more antique sellers, fashion boutiques and art galleries (Bridge and Dowling, 2001; Lehman-Frisch, 2002; Van Criekingen, 1997). As well as merely reflecting the local market of residents, commercial gentrification can become a force of change in itself, attracting new businesses such as “creative” enterprises (e.g. architecture firms or software design companies) that wish to relocate to a lively street (Bridge and Dowling, 2001), encouraging further concentration of emerging commercial trends (e.g. trendy cafés and bistros, art galleries, fashion boutiques), and potentially accelerating residential gentrification (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; Van Criekingen, 1997). A neighbourhood commercial street can thus become a “destination of consumption” (Zukin and Kosta, 2004).

Whereas “traditional” commercial streets are appropriated from the inside, as it were, by people who have long-term use and local knowledge of them, gentrifying commercial streets are necessarily oriented towards the outside, since they must be immediately legible for newcomers, whether they live locally or not (Remy, 1998 [1983]; Zukin et al., 2009). This leads to situations in which two distinct spatial logics are at work in the same street: one based on the practices of locality of the neighbourhood street, and another based on mobility and specialization (Fleury, 2004). Some commercial neighbourhood streets therefore attract customers from other neighbourhoods and even other cities who are seeking particular specialities. These specialities can include ethnicized goods or services, especially food and fashion. It has long been the case that members of ethnic groups will cross a city to find familiar flavours, sounds or styles unavailable elsewhere (Chacko, 2003; Mankekar, 2002; Raulin, 2000; Wirth, 1980 [1928]). What seems to be relatively new, however, or at least increasing exponentially, is the attraction of ethnicized destinations of consumption for people who are *not* members of that group (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; Raulin, 2000; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). Moreover, the commercial street as destination can have an impact on local social dynamics, exacerbating conflict between partying outsiders and sleeping locals, or encouraging the proliferation of restaurants at the expense of everyday grocery stores. Like the tensions in socially mixed

neighbourhoods discussed earlier, such problems can be ethnicized. For example, long-established Bengali residents of Brick Lane, London, do not themselves go to the many Bengali restaurants aimed at City workers and other customers who live outside the neighbourhood, and the proliferation of restaurants leaves fewer premises available for the affordable grocery stores that they need (Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004).⁷

While neighbourhood commercial streets can emerge as destinations of consumption „organically“, they can also be explicitly promoted as such, which brings us to the final theme of the street as object of intervention. In the light of intra-urban competition for investors throughout cities in North America and Europe, various organizations have been created in order to set up strategies to consolidate, revitalize and promote commercial streets. Such strategies are a kind of “place marketing” (Kearns and Philo, 1993), a concept that I shall develop in Chapter 6, and they can be seen as part of a broader trend towards the “reenchantment” of public space (J-P Garnier, 2008), that is, the idealization of the virtues of public space as a kind of moral panacea to the ills of urban anomie. “From civic and leisure spaces with important, but to some extent discrete, roles to play in cities and urban life, public spaces have become urban policy tools with a much wider and pervasive significance” (De Magalhães and Carmona, 2006: 292).

Place marketing organizations can be exclusively voluntary (e.g. merchants’ associations, heritage societies) or exclusively state-run (e.g. municipal tourist boards), but they typically involve both private and public actors in coalitions including municipal officers and politicians, business people, property owners and land developers, urban revitalization consultants, regional or national agencies⁸ and (sometimes) residents’ associations (Desjardins, 2007a, b). As such they constitute novel instances of urban governance, and are usually mandated to improve physical, promotional and surveillance infrastructure (although details of programmes vary greatly from place to place (Ward, 2007)). The target audience for promotion can be general consumers, tourists or business investors, or even locals themselves (Philo and Kearns, 1993). Some programmes promote local residential gentrification (Rose, 2006), while other are still chiefly concerned with rescuing inner-city streets from decline (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2000). The principal „selling point“ of the street can be a particular sector of activity (such as restaurants or fashion boutiques (Bacqué and Fijalkow, 2006; Jacobson, 2005; Shaw, Bagwell

⁷ There is also a gendered dimension to tensions on Brick Lane: while Bengali men find employment in the restaurants, Bengali women do not, and especially do not appreciate the rude, rowdy and sometimes drunken atmosphere that the restaurant crowds can generate (Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004).

⁸ For example, the not-for-profit *Fondation Rues principales* promotes and assists „main streets“ throughout Quebec (Desjardins, 2007a; Fondation Rues principales, 2005).

and Karmowska, 2004)), a dimension of its history (de Oliver, 2001; Shaw and Ismail, 2006), an ethnic – or multiethnic – identity conferred upon the street by the long-term presence of particular ethnic groups in the local area (de Oliver, 2001; Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004), or indeed an intangible sense of „cool“ or conviviality (Zukin et al., 2009). The aim, above all, is to give the street an identity distinct from all the other possible destinations in the city.

The impact of place marketing on the social dynamics of commercial streets is as ambiguous as that of gentrification, and often follows the same themes of displacement and aestheticization. In particular, the ethnic communities that in effect lend their identity to place marketing strategies may find themselves deprived of stores or housing that suit their budgets, not to say diminished by reductionist and stereotypical representations of their cultures (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). The ethnic branding of commercial streets can thus be understood as an example of commodified cosmopolitanism. From the outside, however, the ethnic branding of streets can be interpreted as a sign of success and somewhat envied by ethnic groups who do not have such a spatialized presence in the city, as Veronis (2007) shows in her work on Latin American communities in Toronto. What is lacking in research on place marketing is an effective problematization of the setting up and rolling out of collective interventions. The literature so far tends to give a rather „top-down“ picture, focusing on policy documents, media reviews and interview with leading members of the coalitions (Kearns and Philo, 1993; Ward, 2007). In actual fact – as a very few studies indicate (Bacqué and Fijalkow, 2006; Gilbert and Brosseau, 2002; Stoller, 2002b) – there may be disputes over alternative strategies, involving participation or protest from merchants, residents, and even the media. These extra twists and turns to stories of collective intervention on commercial streets deserve greater scholarly attention.

*

To sum up this chapter so far, I have provided a potted history of the commercial neighbourhood street, highlighting its rise, decline and resurgence. I then reviewed literature on the general urban form and function of commercial neighbourhood streets, their role as stages for social relations and the recent specific focus on neighbourhood commercial streets as destinations and objects of collective intervention. In the following section, I show how the multiethnic commercial neighbourhood street corresponds to the understandings of cosmopolitanism and urban (multi)ethnicity that I favour, as I delineate my research proposition.

2.5 Research proposition

I will now recap and draw together the main arguments that I have made so far in Chapters 1 and 2, in order to set out the main questions and objectives of my research.

The contemporary city is a site where people who are socially distant from each other are brought into physical proximity. I am curious about the extent, the content and the quality of contact between these people who are strangers to each other, particularly where one of the axes of their strangeness to each other, or social difference, is ethnicity. Ethnicity and interethnic relations in the city have often been studied from the perspective of ethnic or spatial communities. However, the ethnic lens can fail to capture diversity within ethnic communities, and also risks overemphasizing ethnicity at the expense of other axes of difference. The neighbourhood lens pays insufficient attention to the effects of city-wide daily mobility. I therefore opt to study practices and discourses of „living with difference“ among a very broad range of city-dwellers, of diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, as they go about their everyday activities in particular public places at the „micro“ scale of the city (that people from all over the city may visit). This entails paying close attention to the mobilization of ethnicity at the individual, interactional level, as well as in the immediate environment (through signs, décors and so on). Overall, I wish to find out more about people’s “willingness to engage with the Other”, i.e., their personal cosmopolitanism, in everyday urban life, while recognizing that this openness can be commodified in that it can be used for personal profit or distinction (commodified cosmopolitanism).

In light of Remy’s (1998[1990]) paradox of inconsequence discussed in Chapter 1 – that the apparently inconsequential spaces of the city can be surprisingly important for fostering interethnic contact – I have chosen to study social relations in the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street. This decision can be justified on several grounds. Firstly, I prefer such sites over other public or semi-public spaces, like parks, squares or shopping malls, because their form and functions make them part of the urban networks along which people and goods circulate, as opposed to end-point destinations or „pockets“ adjacent to those networks. This means also that they can be seen as microcosms in which much broader economic, social and political dynamics of the city crystallize. Secondly, I prefer neighbourhood as opposed to city-centre streets because the former both symbolize and shape the social dynamics of local residential populations. As apparently inconsequential spaces of people’s everyday lives, they are one of the key sites in which city-dwellers relate to each other as situated actors with particular identities. Thirdly, I choose to study neighbourhood commercial streets, as opposed to

neighbourhoods themselves, because they have recently become highly privileged sites of the urban symbolic economy, as both destinations of consumption for those who live beyond the immediate surroundings and as objects of intervention on the part of official agents of urban planning. These interventions can also express and influence the identities of different social groups and relations between them.

I have chosen to study commercial streets in the multiethnic neighbourhoods of one particular city. Montréal makes an excellent „laboratory“ for my research, not only because its population is highly ethnically diverse and relatively intermingled, but also because the complex and sometimes contradictory set of politics and policies that „manage“ this ethnic diversity make it important to see how openness to the Other plays out at street level.

This thesis therefore explores the following questions.

- *How do people interact with each other in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets in Montréal?* What types of public sociability do people engage in? Which kinds of spaces and places foster which kinds of sociability? How are social interactions traversed by ethnicity and other kinds of difference?
- *How is ethnicity mobilized in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets?* In what ways is the built environment marked by symbols of ethnicity? To what extent do people „perform“ their own ethnic identity or recognize that of other people in the social environment of the street? How does ethnicity come into play in practices of consumption?
- *How are multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets produced as spaces?* Are they the focus of targeted interventions, *as streets*? Who are the main institutional or collective actors shaping streets? How are streets shaped by individual actors? What forms do their visions and actions take? Is (multi)ethnicity relevant to the way in which streets are imagined and produced?

The overarching framework for this research is that of urban cosmopolitanism; one could say that I wish to investigate the production of cosmopolitan space – or perhaps the production of cosmopolitanism *in* space. This raises a last question:

- *What kinds of cosmopolitanisms are produced in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets in Montréal?*

In a sense, I seek to understand these streets as a kind of “total social phenomenon”, a term coined by founding French anthropologist-sociologist Marcel Mauss (1923-24: 102ff.; 1996[1924]: 111ff.) to characterize the place in society of the gift, a phenomenon he considered “total” because it touches on many fields of social relations, “at once legal, economic, religious, aesthetic, morphological and so on” (ibid: 112). The advantage of considering social phenomena in their totality is that:

We see social facts in the round, as they really are. In society there are not merely ideas and rules, but also men [sic] and groups and their behaviours. We see them in motion as an engineer sees masses and systems, or as we observe octopuses and anemones in the sea. We see groups of men [sic], and active forces, submerged in their environments and sentiments. (ibid.)

I approach the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street from several perspectives in order to capture it as a whole, paying attention to its multiple components such as social interactions, commercial transactions, urban form, governance, symbols of identity and so on.

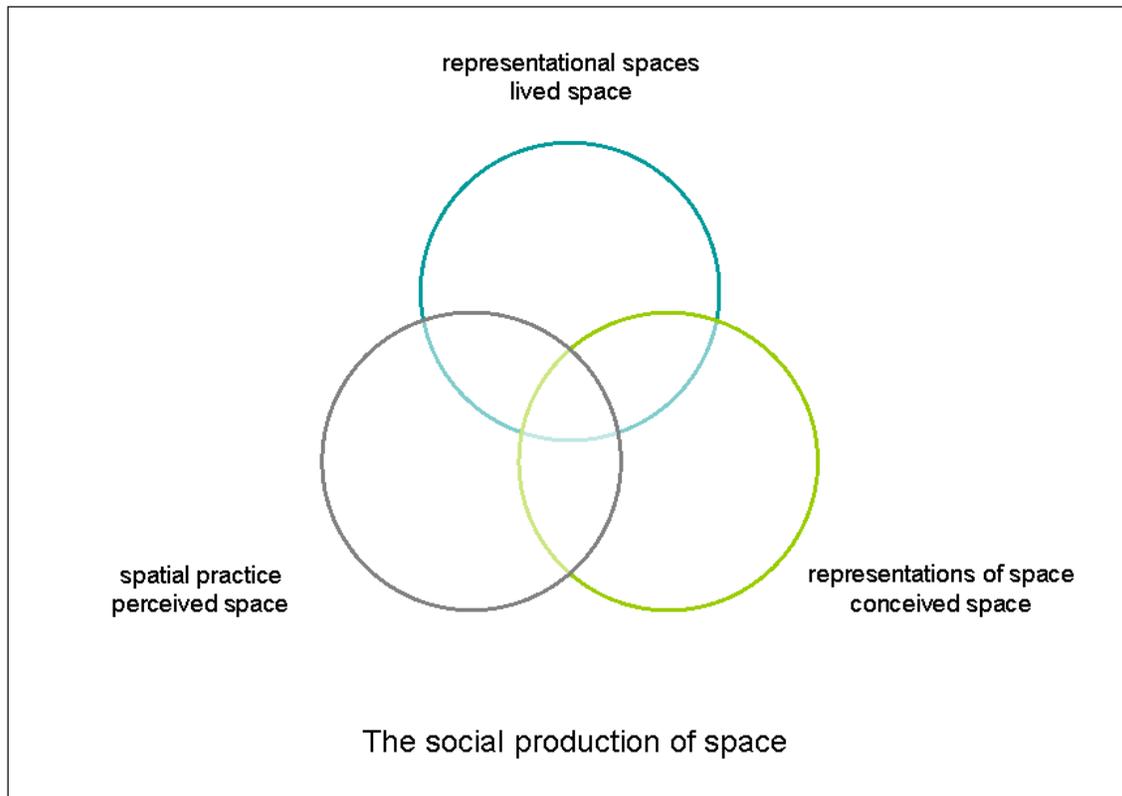
One way of bringing together the three perspectives on the neighbourhood commercial street indicated in the questions above – the street as a site of social relations, a place where symbols circulate, and an object of planned intervention – is to use Henri Lefebvre’s (1974, 1991 [1974]) triadic approach to the social production of space. Lefebvre’s groundbreaking book theorizes in considerable detail the sociospatial dialectic, that is, the idea that the organization of society is necessarily expressed in and constituted by the organization of space. The relationship is by no means static: transformations in the one effect change in the other. “Space is at once result and cause, product and producer; it is also a stake, the locus of projects and actions deployed as part of specific strategies, and hence also the object of wagers on the future” (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 142-143, emphasis removed). Unpacking the processes by which space is produced – organized, used and imagined – is therefore a key to understanding society:

Social relations, which are concrete abstractions, have no real existence save in and through space. Their underpinning is spatial. In each particular case, the connection between this underpinning and the relations it supports calls for analysis. Such an analysis must imply and explain a genesis and constitute a critique of those institutions, substitutions, transpositions, metaphorizations, anaphorizations, and so forth, that have transformed the space under consideration. (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 404, emphasis in original)

Lefebvre’s conceptualization of space as both “the basis and result of productive activity” (Kerr, 1992: 1021) leads him to make a sharp analysis of spatial organization as intrinsic to property relations and the mode of production. However, he does not achieve this at the expense of a

sensitivity to symbolic, affective, lyrical and embodied relations with space, since the latter always begin with the body (ibid.: 405).

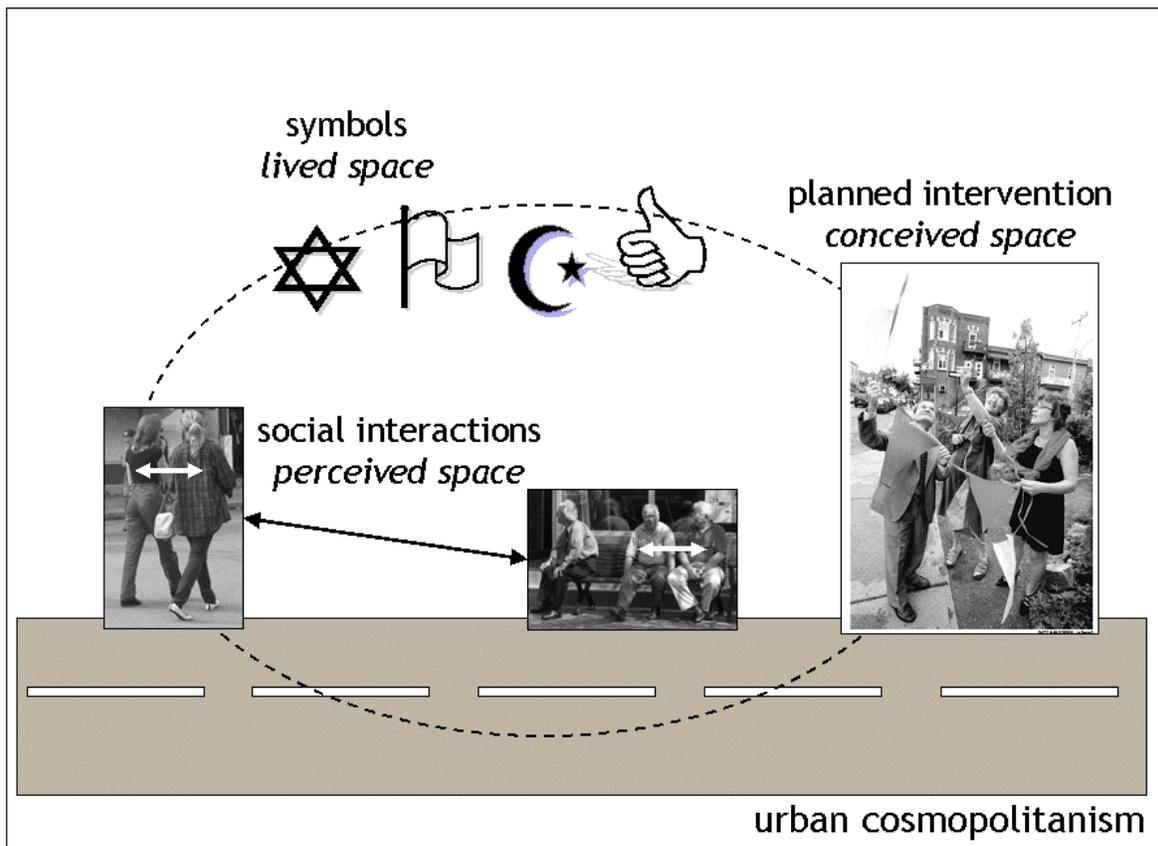
Figure 2.1 Lefebvre's (1991 [1974]) conceptual triad



Lefebvre analyzes the production of space by means of a “conceptual triad” (ibid.: 33) of spatial practice, representational spaces and representations of space (see Figure 2.1). *Spatial practice* is construed as the everyday experience of society through space: it embraces the ordinary activities we undertake and the routines and itineraries that connect them, and the “particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation” (ibid.). Lefebvre also calls it *perceived space*, referring to sensory and physical perceptions rather than mental ones. *Representational space* is the realm of symbols, the space “which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (ibid.:39). It is also called *lived space*, in the sense that spatial symbols are felt to be meaningful because they are „lived”, rather than described or articulated –indeed, they are often non-verbal,

even “clandestine or underground” (ibid.: 33).⁹ Lastly, *representations of space* refers to space as represented by those who have the power to shape and define the space of society: urban planners, technocrats, scientists, etc. Also called *conceived space*, this is the view from above, “tied to the relations of production and to the „order” which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to „frontal” relations” (ibid.: 33). The three perspectives on space are all intimately related; one cannot be fully understood in isolation from the others.

Figure 2.2 Conceptual model of the neighbourhood commercial street



I propose to use Lefebvre’s conceptual triad in order to organize my investigation and analysis of social and spatial relations in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets. The questions regarding public sociability and social interactions correspond to the rubric of spatial practice or perceived space, since they deal with the everyday use of the streets. The

⁹ In English, one might expect „perceived” to refer to representational spaces and „lived” to refer to spatial practice, instead of the other way round. However, the French *perçu* and *vécu* seem to match the definitions Lefebvre gives more closely.

exploration of the mobilization of ethnicity is part of the realm of representational space or lived space, since it is concerned with the situated deployment of meaningful symbols of identity. The questions regarding the street as an object of planned intervention correspond to the representations of space, since they deal with how the streets as a whole are conceived by groups who are able to act on them. Lastly, all three questions are situated within the overall framework of urban cosmopolitanism. This organization of my research in terms of Lefebvre's triad is summed up by Figure 2.2.

Each of the three themes – public sociability (perceived space), the mobilization of ethnicity (lived space), and planned interventions (conceived space) – will be discussed in turn, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis. Chapter 7 is devoted to the theme of cosmopolitanism. Before engaging with my empirical material, I explain in Chapter 3 how I operationalized the key concepts in my research methodology.

CHAPTER 3 THE FIELD OF THE STREET: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research questions that I set up in the preceding chapter lead inevitably to another question: where and how to investigate them? I respond by firstly explaining my choice of streets, or field sites, and giving a brief description of each one. I go on to describe and justify the methods I used on to collect my data, which came principally from various types of observations and interviews but also from complementary sources. I then discuss the particular ethical issues implicated in my research. I describe the process of data analysis and discuss the limits of my methodology. I close with a discussion of the street as research object in and of itself.

3.1 Choosing the streets

The choice of these four commercial streets was made through a purposive sampling strategy on the basis of three key theoretical concerns, in order to offer a suitable variety of contexts in which to explore the social relations that interest me (Beaud, 1997). Firstly, all four streets are clearly multiethnic, allowing me to study a variety of juxtapositions of ethnic identities, interethnic relations and „Others“ to be open or closed to. Multiethnic here means representing more than one or two predominant ethnic groups, like predominantly Italian, or „mainstream“ white French-Canadian plus North African, which are both cases that can be found on streets in Montréal. In the first instance, I gauged the multiethnicity of the streets in terms of the visible ethnic marking of the landscape, such as signs of ethnicity in businesses and institutions, and the apparent ethnic origins of the people actually observed on the street, who may or may not live locally. I then checked statistics on the residential population of adjacent census tracts in order to make sure that they were indeed multiethnic, with at least an average proportion of immigrants for the city.¹

A second criterion for the choice of streets was their form and function in the built environment, and, specifically, their interstitiality. Differently-formed spaces may foster different kinds of social and spatial relations among people, and between people and their environment (cf. Gehl, Kaefer and Reigstad, 2006; Jacobs, 1961). Following the arguments of Jean Remy (1987, 1998 [1990]) evoked in Chapters 1 and 2, we can suppose that contact and interactions between different social and ethnocultural groups would be easier and more common in an

¹ Section 3.3.3 explains which census tracts I chose; Chapter 5 presents statistics on ethnicity in more depth.

interstitial place, since people would be used to sharing the space with people from many different backgrounds, and since an interstitial place by definition belongs to no group in particular. In contrast, in a non-interstitial place, one would expect social exchanges to be of a different order, since it is more subject to appropriation by local residents (or subgroups within them) – it is „their“ territory. Social relations in a non-interstitial place would likely vary more according to the background and status of „belonging“ of the people involved. One might also expect that ethnocultural origin would be less important in an interstitial place, which would engender more egalitarian relations, than in a non-interstitial place, where markers of belonging would be more loaded with meaning. Thus, two of the streets are major arteries, broad thoroughfares that cross the city or a large part of it and have a high flow of traffic; the other two streets are small commercial streets, with a high density of population and businesses but a relatively low flow of traffic. Moreover, the two major arteries are somewhat interstitial streets, that is to say, they mark something of a social boundary between distinct parts of their surroundings and represent places that are less likely to be appropriated by any one group. In contrast, the two smaller streets are situated in the heart of their respective neighbourhoods, and have been strongly associated with them by other observers (Comité des citoyens du quartier Mile End, 1986; Dansereau et al., 1995).

The third criterion for choosing the streets is the prevailing local socioeconomic conditions. As I explained in Chapter 2, recent literature, particularly in human geography, suggests that economic status and class are bound up in special ways with interethnic relations and the mobilization of ethnicity. Researchers in Paris (Clerval, 2004; Simon, 1995), London (Butler, 2003; May, 1996a, b), Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Kloosterman and Van Der Leun, 1999) and Toronto (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005) have found that ethnically diverse neighbourhoods are often attractive to the kinds of white, middle-class residents who are agents of gentrification, although they may be more interested in watching or consuming the spectacle of diversity than in engaging with it. In other words, these studies implicitly postulate that gentrifiers engage in commodified cosmopolitanism in relation to these neighbourhoods. It therefore seemed important to explore my research themes both in poorer or average-income areas and in better-off or gentrifying areas. As with multiethnicity, gentrification was identified by reference to both the residential population of adjacent census tracts the visible signs of gentrification among shops and businesses. Following the literature (Ley, 1996), I have used two simple statistical indicators of residential gentrification from the Canadian census: change over ten years in average income for men and women in full-time, full-year employment, and percentage of the population aged 15 and over with a university degree or above, relative to the

metropolitan area as a whole. Indicators of commercial gentrification include the kinds of shops and businesses that are present, their style of decoration and the rough price bracket of their products or services. Bridge and Dowling (2001) identify three commercial genres that are bound up in gentrification: cafés, restaurants and caterers; home-decoration shops; and businesses that deal in the management of the self (clothing boutiques, gyms, alternative therapies, hairdressers). I was able to identify some changes in commercial composition of the streets over ten years, since 1996, using the Lovell's Street Index (see the section on complementary sources of data below). Thus, two of the streets (one thoroughfare, one small neighbourhood street) are in neighbourhoods with average or below-average incomes and education levels and for the Montréal census metropolitan area (CMA), and show few signs of commercial gentrification. The other two are in neighbourhoods where incomes and/or education levels are higher than the CMA average (and incomes have also increased more than the CMA average) and show signs of commercial gentrification.

The use of these criteria for choosing which streets to study (or field sites) constitutes a purposive or theoretical sampling strategy, that is, one based on theoretical concerns rather than aiming for representativity. In applying this strategy, I did not conduct an exhaustive statistical and observational study of every single commercial street in Montréal that was a potential field site. Rather, I drew on my supervisors", my colleagues" and my own prior knowledge of the city in order to select candidate streets that would offer a rich terrain for the research themes. I also took advice from an urban consultancy company, Convercité, that has helped facilitate commercial street revitalization in Montréal since the 1980s. I explored candidate streets through visits on foot, followed by statistical investigation when they seemed particularly suitable. The table below shows the four streets that I finally selected.

Table 3.1 Final choice of streets to study

	Traditional	Gentrifying
Heart of neighbourhood	rue de Liège Ouest, Parc-Extension	<i>rue Saint-Viateur Ouest, Mile-End</i>
Interstitial	<i>rue Jean-Talon Est, Villeray</i>	<i>rue Sherbrooke Ouest, NDG</i>

Having made this choice, I had to identify a more specific section of each street to study. This was relatively easy with the smaller neighbourhood streets, de Liège and St-Viateur, since they have obvious start and end points formed by barriers or other changes in the immediately surrounding urban morphology (such as railway tracks or changes in land use, as I will describe below). These were easily identified by research participants as well as myself. As for the major

thoroughfares, Sherbrooke Ouest and Jean-Talon Est, there are some „natural“ boundaries that divide them into sections, but these are less obvious, particularly on first examination of the sites. The main criterion I used to identify an appropriate section was the presence of a range of ethnically marked businesses. This led to the choice of the following specific field sites:

- rue de Liège Ouest, between avenue Querbes and the railway to the east and boulevard de l'Acadie (the border with Ville Mont-Royal) to the west, a section eight blocks and 520m long;
- rue St-Viateur Ouest, between boulevard St-Laurent to the east (beyond which is an industrial district) and avenue du Parc to the west (close to the Outremont boundary, one block further), a section six blocks and 500m long;
- rue Jean-Talon Est, between rue D'Iberville to the east and rue Fabre to the west, a section twelve blocks and 1km long that runs between two metro stations of those names and represents a section of fair commercial concentration and the greatest commercial ethnic diversity (relative to the rest of this street in Villeray);
- rue Sherbrooke Ouest, between avenue Harvard to the east and Grand Boulevard to the west, a section ten blocks and 775 metres long that has the greatest commercial concentration and ethnic diversity (relative to the rest of this street in NDG).

The selected sections of the two main arteries are longer and include 80 to 100 businesses each, whereas those of the two smaller streets are shorter and cover 40 to 50 businesses each. Figure 3.1 shows the location of all four streets on the island of Montréal; a map of each section of street studied can be found in Appendix B. A selection of photographs of each street is provided in Appendix C.

3.2 A quick tour of the field sites

Below, I briefly present each street and explain how each matches the selection criteria.

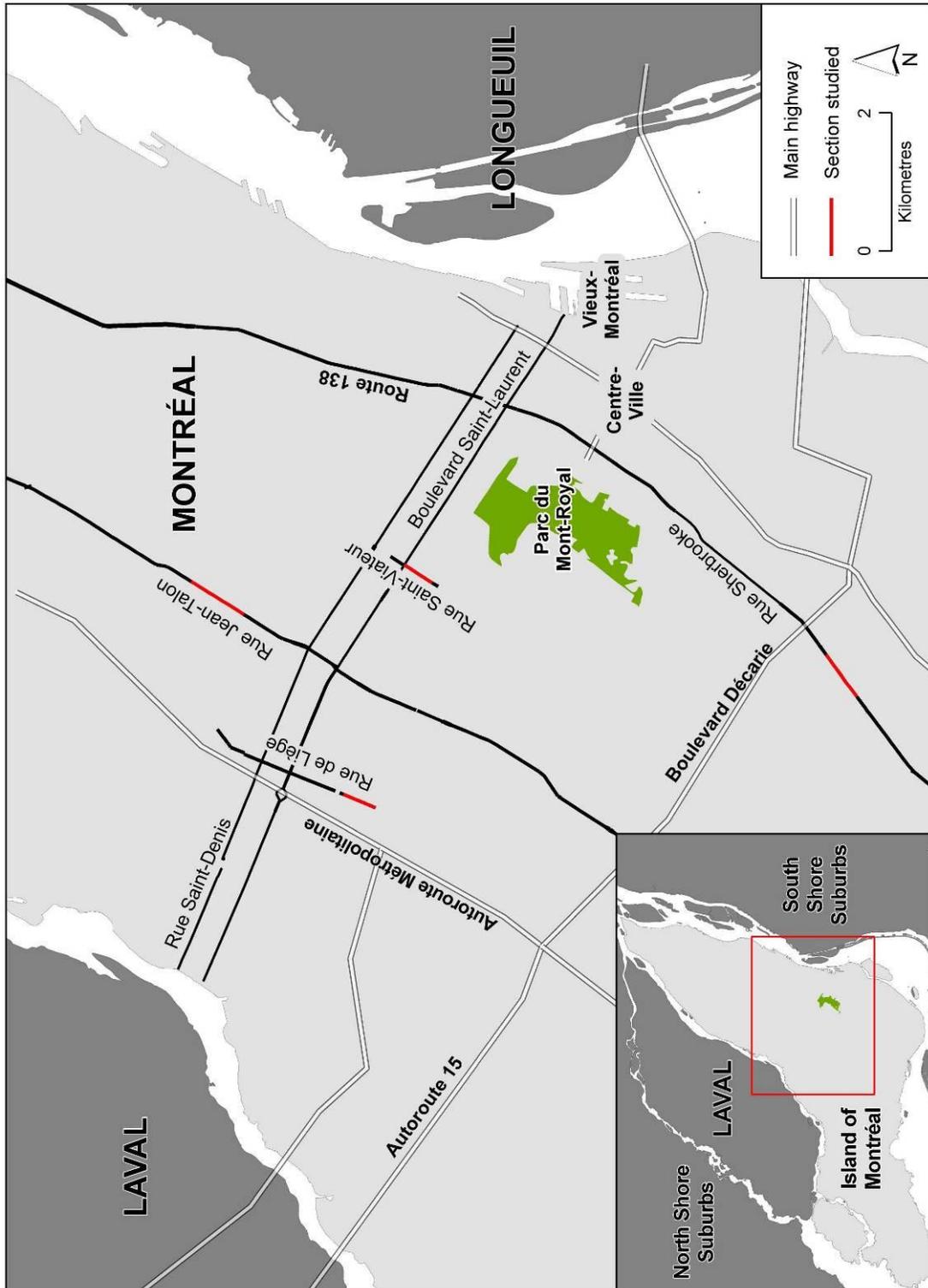


Figure 3.1 Relative location of streets studied on the island of Montréal

3.2.1 De Liège Ouest: traditional and in the heart of the neighbourhood

Rue de Liège, named in 1922 in honour of the Belgian city that resisted the German invasion of 1914, runs 2.4 km from rue Boyer in the east to boulevard l'Acadie and the border of the Town of Mount-Royal (a separate municipality) in the west, but it is interrupted by the railway track between Jeanne-Mance and Querbes. In the Parc-Extension neighbourhood, it is the northernmost street before the Boulevard Crémazie highway (autoroute Métropolitaine). The nine-block (520m) stretch between Querbes and de l'Acadie with its forty-odd businesses formed an obvious section for me to study. Similar in length and width to the section I chose in St-Viateur, it nonetheless has quite a different atmosphere. The blocks are short, and there are narrow paths rather than full laneways between the back yards. While Parc-Extension was first populated in the 1920s, buildings in the north end of the neighbourhood often date from later decades and there are signs that some buildings on de Liège were built as late as the 1960s (Benoît and Gratton, 1991). They are typically clad in white, red or yellow brick, two-, three- or four-storeys high, with apartments above the commercial premises and balconies that overlook the street. There are some wholly residential buildings, but typically, Rue de Liège's stores are on the ground floor or half-basement of two-, three- or four-storey apartment buildings. The businesses almost all sell basic, everyday goods: they are mainly *depanneurs* and grocery stores, a few very ordinary *cafés* and restaurants, a few clothing and fabric stores and hairdressers, a few bakers and butchers, a daycare centre and a pharmacy that recently joined the Uniprix chain. Two businesses stand out for their stylish shop-fronts: a Syrian pastry shop and an Armenian take-out pizza (*lahmajoune*) place. Parc Howard, the Howie-Morenz indoor skating rink, the terminus of the well-used and frequent number 80 bus line and the Parc Jean-Valets can be found at the east end of de Liège, and the Sinclair-Laird primary school field doubles as a public park towards the west end. One restaurant has a terrace and some of the *cafés* put out chairs on the sidewalks in summer.

The people who use the street are visibly and audibly of many origins – European, South Asian, West African, Caribbean (especially Haitian) and Middle Eastern. Businesses at first glance seem to be either Greek or Italian or South Asian: more attention or knowledge is required to find out whether the latter are more Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan or, in one case, Guyanese. The Middle Eastern businesses are also not easy to identify at first. Although de Liège is at one end of the neighbourhood, nearby streets are not commercial, so its merchants benefit from both the distance of other stores and the high density of population. It can therefore be said to be at the heart of its neighbourhood.

Parc-Extension is a very poor neighbourhood and is widely known as such (Dansereau et al., 1995; Groupe de travail sur les portraits des quartiers Villeray Saint-Michel et Parc-Extension, 2004; Poirier, 2006). Men working full-time, full-year earn half the average employment income of the CMA; women's employment income as a proportion of the CMA average has risen from 56% in 1995 to 64% in 2005 (see Table 3.4). Likewise, education levels are lower than in the CMA as a whole; the proportion of the population with a bachelor's degree or above is a little under half the average for the CMA (see Table 3.5). While there are some new condominium and commercial developments in the south end of Parc-Extension (e.g. the new Loblaw's supermarket by the renovated Gare du Parc), rue de Liège is not undergoing gentrification by any stretch of the imagination; the distinguished and highly-esteemed pastry and lahmajoune stores have both been there for decades.

3.2.2 St-Viateur Ouest: gentrifying and in the heart of the neighbourhood

St-Viateur owes its name to the religious order whose Canadian motherhouse is located just nearby. It runs just one and a half kilometres from avenue de Gaspé, three blocks east of boulevard St-Laurent, to avenue Stuart in Outremont to the west. But although it is so short and narrow, it is remarkably well-known among Montréalers, thanks in part to its eponymous bagel business. East of boulevard St-Laurent, St-Viateur has a few small businesses but is dominated by large industrial buildings and west of du Parc there are only a couple of shops before the Outremont border; it was therefore easy to choose to study the section between St-Laurent and du Parc. The buildings on and abutting the street are mostly three, sometimes two storeys high, with apartments above ground-floor business premises, although commercial use is not entirely continuous. They are mostly red brick constructions dating from the period 1890-1914 (Benoît and Gratton, 1991). The City's recent *Plan d'urbanisme* characterizes the street as of interesting architectural value (Ville de Montréal, 2005a) and lists one stone-clad commercial and residential building – housing the Café Olimpico – as having particular heritage value, doubtless because of its elegant corner turret, decorative cornice and other original features (see Figure C.5).

There are roughly fifty businesses in all, about thirty of which deal in food in some form – grocery stores, bakeries, caterers, restaurants and cafés. The others include two bookshops, a few clothing stores, and the ubiquitous hairdressers and *depanneurs*. Some of these businesses are marked as Italian or Jewish (Ashkenazi in the case of the bagel stores, Orthodox kosher for a butcher's and fishmonger's); other businesses are easily identifiable as Polish, Senegalese, Caribbean or Greek. While the vast majority of the faces on the street are white, it is not unusual

to hear Italian, Spanish and Yiddish spoken as well as French and English. One of the most prominent symbols of St-Viateur's multiethnicity, however, is St. Michael's Church, built in 1914. Originally an Irish Catholic parish, it now serves the Polish community (although it is „borrowed“ by Italians for the festival of San Marziale). But its distinctive Byzantine architecture means it is often mistaken for an Orthodox church or a synagogue, and its dome and minaret evoke images of mosques (although it was not built as one).

St-Viateur is indubitably in the heart of Mile End, the western part of the borough of Plateau Mont-Royal. Bernard, the parallel street one block north, and Fairmount, one block south, are also commercial, but St-Viateur is more densely so and more lively. The borough puts public benches back on the street each summer, and the cafés and restaurants that do not have terrasses on side streets put a table or two outside. It has long been used for summer festivals and seems to symbolize and typify the neighbourhood – and even Montréal – for many people, journalists, writers, academics and activists alike (e.g. Comité des citoyens du quartier Mile End, 1986; Courtemanche, 2006; Olazabal, 2006; Radice, 2000: 162; Simon, 1999).

Mile End shows clear signs of both residential and commercial gentrification. In 2005, men and women working full-year, full-time earned roughly double the incomes of their counterparts in 1995, whereas for the CMA incomes have only multiplied by about 1.6 (see Table 4). Incomes have shown a dramatic rise: while men were earning only 71% of the CMA average in 1995, they now earn 93% (see Table 3.3); women earned 91% of the CMA average in 1995 and 109% in 2005. Education levels have been consistently high: roughly twice as many residents of Mile End hold a bachelor's degree or above as in the CMA as a whole (Table 3.5). At the commercial level, ten new restaurants or caterers have opened on St-Viateur since 1996; one of the main grocery stores won a design award for its thorough renovation; and the street now boasts a chocolatier, an expensive stationery shop, two bookshops and an art gallery which has taken to advertizing local real estate for sale in its window.²

3.2.3 Jean-Talon Est: traditional and interstitial

Rue Jean-Talon, named in 1927 after the first intendant of New France, is another of Montréal's major east-west thoroughfares, stretching 14 kilometres across the central city from the Décarie expressway (autoroute 15) in the west to Boulevard Louis-H-Lafontaine (autoroute 25) in the east. I chose to study the twelve blocks (about 1km) between rue Fabre and rue D'iberville, in

² Another art gallery, which seemed to specialize in exhibiting work by various local artists, opened in September 2007 but had closed by May 2008.

the neighbourhood of Villeray and borough of Villeray – St-Michel – Parc-Extension. Underneath this section of street rumbles the blue line of Montréal's metro system, between Fabre and D'Iberville stations. Although the two-storey red-brick duplexes that line the residential cross-streets of this stretch of Jean-Talon Est mostly date from the 1920s, when the neighbourhood was populated, many of the commercial buildings on the street seem to be more recent, probably ranging in construction date from the 1930s to the 1980s. Commercial use is not entirely continuous: the section includes some residential addresses (including red-brick duplexes and more recent, larger apartment blocks clad in white ceramic), a park and two churches. The intersection at Papineau is particularly busy, thanks to the metro entrance at the northwest corner (and bus stops at all corners), the Italian church Notre-Dame-de-la-Consolata at the southwest corner, and a bank and shops at the northeast corner (and in spite of a vacant lot at the southeast corner). There is also a small hospital, Hôpital Jean-Talon, in the block between Garnier and de Lanaudière, one and two blocks west of Fabre respectively.

The commercial mix includes grocery stores, cafés, bakeries, some restaurants, offices of varying sizes (accountants, a trade union), pharmacies, depanneurs, hairdressers, a few clothing stores, banks, a daycare centre and a handful of extremely specialized stores selling such things as tropical fish, magic tricks, fur coats and espresso machines. The sidewalks are fairly spacious, but there are few trees or café-terrasses. The street is ethnically marked by businesses easily identifiable as Italian, Vietnamese, Haitian, North African, Sri Lankan and Mexican, as well as some others that have certain „ethnic“ signs, such as „foreign“ names or non-roman alphabets, but less explicit origins.

Jean-Talon Est in this area can be considered interstitial because it is a major thoroughfare, both above and below ground, but also because it seems to be almost at the frontier between two neighbourhoods. To the west of Papineau, Jean-Talon constitutes the boundary between the boroughs of Rosemont – Petite-Patrie and Villeray – St-Michel – Parc-Extension; to the east this boundary is one block further south, on Bélanger.

The census tracts surrounding Jean-Talon Est show no signs of gentrification. Incomes are somewhat lower than average and education levels are below-average or average, in comparison with the CMA as a whole. The average full-time, full-year income in the adjacent census tracts has remained fairly stable: men earn about 70% and women earn about 87% of CMA averages for each group in each census year (see Table 3.4). While the increase in income from 1995 to 2000 lagged behind that of the CMA, by 2005 it had caught up (see Table 3.3). As for education, in 1995 and 2000 the local area had somewhat less than the CMA

average proportion of residents with bachelor's degrees or above; in 2006, it is now almost exactly the same as the CMA average (see Table 3.5). Turning to the commercial landscape, although Jean-Talon Est has some food stores and restaurants that might be considered „fancy“, such as the homemade pasta store and the espresso machine specialists, they are not recent additions and many were originally opened to serve the long-established working-class Italian community. Neither poor nor rich, neither run-down nor classy, Jean-Talon Est is a rather average – albeit very multiethnic – Montréal commercial street.

3.2.4 Sherbrooke Ouest: gentrifying and interstitial

Sherbrooke Street was named in about 1817 in honour of Sir John Coape Sherbrooke (1764-1830), an early governor of British North America. It is one of the most important east-west arteries of Montréal, and at 32km is one of the longest. It also has a provincial road designation as Route 138, which leads all the way to Natashquan, over 1200km away along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River in the Côte-Nord region. Within Montréal, from Notre-Dame in the east to Westminster in the west, Sherbrooke Street traces a key geological feature of the island and stitches together a variety of architectural styles, land uses and urban atmospheres (Smith, 2006), although it fails to generate a sense of overall continuity (Capelier, 2005). That said, the section that I chose to study, the ten blocks that run between Rue Harvard and Grand Boulevard in the west end neighbourhood of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) (located in the borough of Côte-des-Neiges – Notre-Dame-de-Grâce), is visually quite cohesive. The sidewalks are broad and well-shaded by trees, recalling the neighbourhood's previous incarnation, before 1850, as Montréal's orchard (Benoît and Gratton, 1991). NDG was annexed by the City of Montréal in 1910 and became an attractive suburb for the mostly anglophone middle classes once the streetcar route could ferry them quickly to jobs and amenities in the centre of town (Choko, 1994). The residential streets that cross Sherbrooke Ouest are lined with handsome red-brick duplexes, terraced and semi-detached houses, mostly built in the period 1910-1930 (NDG having been annexed by the City of Montréal in 1910). The relevant section of rue Sherbrooke Ouest itself is made up of three- or four-storey apartment buildings, most of which have ground-floor businesses. They are of more or less the same rather elegant architectural style, including several *maisons de rapport* (Benoît and Gratton, 1991: 243; Choko, 1994), grand old apartment buildings of four storeys or more with some shared services for tenants, built at the beginning of the twentieth century for the anglophone bourgeoisie. There are some exceptions, such as the modern block between Hingston and Beaconsfield that shelters such amenities as a provincial liquor store and a Dunkin Donuts. Commercial use is not unbroken: a small park fills in a

triangular space between Royal and Hampton, where Côte-St-Antoine meets Sherbrooke and several buildings on each side are solely residential. The commercial mix includes grocery stores, restaurants, a few bars, *depanneurs*, a chain and an independent pharmacy, hairdressers, a Salvation Army store, a second-hand bookshop, a piano shop, a guitar shop and a few clothes shops of varying price ranges. Lately, the borough has encouraged restaurateurs to take advantage of the wide sidewalks to put out terrasses in summer, and many do so.

Avenue Harvard in the east and Grand Boulevard in the west mark the boundaries of the section of Sherbrooke Ouest I studied. If my main criterion for this choice had been commercial density, these would be somewhat arbitrary cut-off points, since although shops and businesses tail off west of Grand (as identified also by Daniel Arbour & Associés, 1982), there are a few more blocks of shops to the east of Harvard. However, these cross-streets do mark the start and end points of a zone with a high density of ethnically marked businesses, from *Brochetterie Persepolis* and *Coiffeur Seoul* at Harvard to the *Marché Akhavan* and *Épicerie coréenne et japonaise* at Grand. Shops or restaurants marked as Iranian, Korean, Indian and Jamaican (or generally Caribbean) are immediately obvious.

Sherbrooke Ouest can be classed as interstitial because it is a major thoroughfare carrying road traffic across the city; it is an obvious route to take to go downtown, particularly on public transit, as frequent bus services extend possible journeys from Vendome metro station. But it also marks a social boundary, as Capelier notes: “Sherbrooke Street must be studied [...] as an interstitial space always separating a north side from a south side” (2005: 95, my translation). Long-time residents of NDG (and other neighbourhoods traversed by the street) use “above Sherbrooke” and “below Sherbrooke” as a marker of social class: above, there are more one-family houses and below there are more duplexes and apartments. Statistics Canada uses Sherbrooke as a boundary for census tracts (see Appendix L), which indicates that the populations on each side of the street have different social profiles. Since there is no easily accessible commercial street to the south of Sherbrooke (in part due to the railway tracks just below de Maisonneuve), people on both sides of the street use it for their shopping. In contrast, a street like Avenue Monkland to the north of Sherbrooke (see maps in Appendix B) is clearly not interstitial, running as it does through the heart of the wealthier part of NDG.

Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, with its generous single-family homes and duplexes, has always been a relatively affluent area. It is therefore difficult to argue that it is undergoing residential gentrification, if gentrification is associated with a disproportionate increase in income (relative to the average increase for the CMA). While the census tracts surrounding Sherbrooke Ouest show

the highest levels of income of the four streets, they also only increased by roughly the same proportion as incomes across the CMA (see Tables 3.2 and 3.3 below). In other words, according to the censuses of 1996, 2001 and 2006, men and women working full-time, full-year in the area around Sherbrooke Ouest have consistently earned roughly 115% of the average employment income for the CMA (although men's incomes for 2000 were only 106% of the CMA average). Similarly, the indicator of gentrification based on level of education shows little change: from census to census, the local population has about double the proportion of people with a bachelor's degree or above than the Montréal CMA (see Table 3.5). Using these population-based indicators, Sherbrooke Ouest therefore shows a pattern of stable affluence rather than gentrification as such.

In contrast, changes in two kinds of businesses indicate a certain level of commercial gentrification on Sherbrooke Ouest. Firstly, there is an abundance of restaurants or delicatessens/caterers providing cuisine from a particular country or region, and their numbers have increased since 1996 (even if some have been established for many years). Secondly, a few businesses symbolizing a certain kind of lifestyle have recently been established, such as a cooperative selling environmentally-friendly and fairly-traded household products, clothes and coffee, which opened in November 2000, a café and private resource centre for parents and toddlers, which opened in January 2007, and a gallery for local artists which was open from 1999 to 2007. Such businesses all serve a niche market that chooses to put quality of life (defined in various ways) before income, as it were. That said, Sherbrooke Ouest is by no means entirely consumed by gentrification, since many shops are oriented towards customers of slenderer means (Salvation Army thrift store, dollar stores, Dunkin Donuts). Still, the street is widely reported to be „doing better“ since 1996, when it reportedly had a high vacancy rate.

Table 3.2 Average full-time, full-year employment income in constant dollars (weighted averages calculated from census statistics) (20% sample data)

	Montréal CMA		Census tracts adjacent to...							
			St-Viateur		De Liège		Sherbrooke O		Jean-Talon Est	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
1995	36 506	26 230	25 775	23 953	18 957	14 728	41 019	30 211	27 081	23 386
2000	45 159	32 773	36 832	30 461	24 000	19 358	48 025	39 132	30 673	27 460
2005	59 107	42 883	54 753	46 550	29 474	27 475	68 469	50 228	41 449	38 191

Table 3.3 Increase in average full-time, full-year employment income in constant dollars, expressed as a proportion of 1995 income for each group (20% sample data)

	Montréal CMA		Census tracts adjacent to...							
			St-Viateur		De Liège		Sherbrooke O		Jean-Talon Est	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
1995	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2000	1.24	1.25	1.43	1.27	1.27	1.31	1.17	1.30	1.13	1.17
2005	1.62	1.63	2.12	1.94	1.55	1.87	1.67	1.66	1.53	1.63

Table 3.4 Full-time, full-year employment income expressed as a percentage of the CMA average for that year (20% sample data)

	Census tracts adjacent to...							
	St-Viateur		De Liège		Sherbrooke Ouest		Jean-Talon Est	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
1995	71	91	52	56	112	115	74	89
2000	82	93	53	59	106	119	68	84
2005	93	109	50	64	116	117	70	89

Table 3.5 Percentage of the population with university bachelor's degree or above (20% sample data)

	Montréal CMA	Census tracts adjacent to...			
		StV	DeL	ShO	JTE
1996 (pop. 15 years and over)	15.4	29.6	7.8	32.2	11.5
2001 (pop. 20 years and over)*	19.1	38.5	10.7	40.1	15.7
2006 (pop. 15 years and over)**	21.0	41.6	12.1	41.3	21.6

* Statistics for 2000 refer only to population aged 20 and over. However, since bachelor's degrees are typically only obtained after the age of 20, these figures remain roughly comparable.

**Statistics for 2006 are given separately for the age ranges 15-24 years, 25-64 years and 65 years and above. I added up these figures in order to calculate the percentages shown above.

3.3 Data collection

The research proposition presented in Chapter 2 could only possibly be approached through the use of qualitative research methods. In order to capture people's use of and discourses about neighbourhood commercial streets, I favoured a quasi-ethnographic approach, involving flexible, open-ended techniques. Two main methods served to collect data for this thesis: observation and interview. I also drew on diverse complementary sources of data, in order to deepen the historical and statistical background of the streets and, in the case of printed media articles, to broaden the range of representations available for analysis. I undertook intensive observations in all streets during summer 2006, and continued to observe them regularly until autumn 2007 (and on occasion since), in order to see all the streets in all seasons and to track changes on them. In contrast, I carried out the interviews more or less on each street in turn (Sherbrooke Ouest, St-Viateur, Jean-Talon Est and de Liège), so as to immerse myself in each environment and to be able to follow up leads quickly.

3.3.1 Observation

The purpose of observation is to capture activities and interactions in their natural settings (Adler and Adler, 1994; Chapoulie, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Jaccoud and Mayer, 1997; Jackson, 1983; Laperrière, 1997; Richardson, 1982; Zeisel, 1981), and in this case it involved three main types of tasks. The first was to take an inventory of all businesses and to create maps of the streets. The second was to undertake what I call „static“ observation, that is, to watch what was going on in the street from fixed points, following the classic model of direct observation that focuses on description of events without intervening in them (Jaccoud and Mayer, 1997; Zeisel, 1981). The third was what I call „mobile“ observation, which can be seen as a variant of participant observation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Jackson, 1983): walking along the street, using shops and services. Each observation session typically lasted two to three hours and combined static and mobile observation (the latter including checks to update the inventory). I tended to spend longer periods of time at the streets furthest away from where I live (Sherbrooke Ouest and de Liège). Observation was more intensive and structured at the beginning of fieldwork, especially during summer 2006, and became more occasional and complementary towards the end (when I tended to carry out shorter observations in combination with interview appointments). Appendix D sums up the number and timeline of observation sessions.

The inventory – a kind of environmental observation (Zeisel, 1981) – took the form of a spreadsheet including the address, name and type of each ground-floor or basement business,

arranged in order of address, block by block, such that it formed a kind of „map“ of each street. Other columns were added during fieldwork to record various ethnic markers, to further categorize business types or to make other store-specific notes (openings and closings, for instance). The inventory evolved and was updated often during my fieldwork, and it provided the main reference for some of the analyses I present in later chapters. I also created maps of each street using the City of Montréal’s online Navigateur urbain tool,³ adding significant points such as bus stops and benches. I used these maps more as an aide-memoire for writing up fieldnotes than as a base document for observation.

The second observation technique I used was „static“ direct observation – sitting at a fixed point for about an hour and watching activities without getting involved in them. I aimed to get a general sense of what kinds of people were using the street in what ways. I focused on their characteristics such as age, sex, ethnic appearance; whether they were alone or with others; and their apparent activity, such as walking with purpose, strolling, resting, running local errands, sitting, hanging out with friends. I observed each street at different times, days and months and from various points: on public benches, at bus stops, inside cafés or restaurants, on terrasses, in green spaces and so on. Some points seemed to be more propitious for observation than others, because they offered a good view or were close to a lively spot of the street, or because they had invited either a high turnover or long stays among users (e.g. benches at bus stops or under shady trees, respectively). Of course, these points attracted other users for exactly the same reasons. I did not conduct the highly structured environment-behaviour mapping that urban anthropologists have often used in squares and plazas (Low, 2000; Whyte, 1988; Zeisel, 1981). As Mehta’s recent article (2007) makes clear, one can only systematically observe a very short section of any given street, and often only one side of the street at that, so it would have consumed all my field research time to adequately cover the four streets. More importantly, such quantitative data would have revealed little about the key concepts of this research, namely, the nature and quality of public sociability and the mobilization and meanings of ethnicity. Thus, once I had acquired a general sense of the use of the streets, my „static“ observation often zoomed in on particular social interactions, especially non-verbal and verbal communication between friends or strangers.

The third type of observation I call „mobile“ observation, as it involved paying attention to the streets’ activities while walking along them and also while entering and using various

³ <http://www.navurb.com/>, last consulted 5 May 2009.

businesses as would an ordinary user. The aim of this was to gain a deeper knowledge both of the micro-settings that make up the street (interiors of businesses, typical activities) and of the particular situations and interactions that arise in them (see Table 6).

Observation techniques in natural settings can be situated somewhere on a continuum from „direct“, in which the observer is not involved in the activities she observes, to „participant“, in which the observer tries to behave in the manner of a typical participant in the setting, learning from her own experience as she does so (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Jaccoud and Mayer, 1997). The scientific construction of this continuum is partly a response to the observer’s paradox, namely, that the observer cannot help but affect the situation that she is trying to observe. It recognizes that even when the observer participates in the observed setting, she can collect useful and valid material, as long as she reflects on the ways in which she may be affecting the setting (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Jaccoud and Mayer, 1997; Jackson, 1983; Semi, 2005). For instance, as I queue for coffee, paying attention to the conversation between the bartender and the person in front of me, these two might adjust their behaviour to their „audience“ (i.e., me), perhaps by speaking more quietly or more loudly, which I might interpret as their being discreet or putting on a performance, respectively. Of course, this kind of adjustment happens in the course of „normal“ interactions in cafés, not just when there is a researcher in the queue. Whether or not others were aware of my research role, I tried to behave with tact and diplomacy when conducting observation.

Table 3.6 Guide for observing social interactions

actor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>individuals</i> • <i>groups</i>
actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>activities e.g. use of businesses, purchases</i> • <i>body language</i> • <i>sharing of space – fluid / blocked</i> • <i>conversations</i>
significant others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>e.g. presence or absence of an „audience“ or a „controller“ who may influence actions</i>
relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>between actors</i> • <i>between actors and significant others</i>
sociocultural context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>rules of the setting, e.g. size of personal private space</i> • <i>cultural rules, e.g. habits of going for a stroll at particular times of day</i>
physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>constraints on or opportunities for interaction</i> • <i>objects used</i>
duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>long-term or ephemeral activity</i>
<i>(adapted from Zeisel, 1981: Chapter 8)</i>	

As is often the case with long-term fieldwork, over time my observations evolved from being largely passive and static to more participant and mobile (cf. Low, 1997). It was not rare

for them to turn into participant observations or opportunities for interviews as other users of the street struck up conversations with me. In fact, the impact of my presence – as well as my own experience of observation – provided useful information about what constitutes the codes of „normal“ behaviour on each street and what kind of place it is. When I conducted static observation from the same spot for an hour or more, I sometimes became an object of curiosity rather than fading into the landscape. The resulting interactions, whether non-verbal (looks, stares, nods) or verbal gave me some useful cues as to norms of sociability on the streets. The intense discomfort I sometimes felt when I stayed on one bench for over an hour also made me aware of the gendered nature of public space, since younger women with no children in tow rarely stay in a single place for any length of time. My noting business names and addresses for the inventory in rue de Liège and rue Jean-Talon was met with suspicion by some shopkeepers, who asked me if I was working for the City or looking for illegal businesses. (Only later did I learn that the City’s urban planning services do indeed employ students to check up on occupancy permits.) By making notes, I was doing something „out of place“: few people ever write or even read in public on these two streets, so in a sense I was unintentionally conducting a small ethnomethodological breaching experiment *à la* Garfinkel.⁴ In contrast, writing, reading, sketching and taking photographs are common activities on Sherbrooke Ouest and St-Viateur, so no one batted an eyelid at my notebook and pen or camera. That said, once I had created the inventory, I rarely made more than a few quick jottings when in any of the streets, not only in order to be discreet but also because writing more often means observing less. Instead, I wrote up clear and complete field notes and as soon as possible afterwards, telling the story of the events, interactions and conversations of the observation period – including my own experience of it (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995). These notes constitute raw data for analysis, as do interview notes and transcripts.

3.3.2 Interviews

I used several kinds of semi-structured interviews with a variety of users in order to explore people’s representations, experiences and understandings of each street. These were in-depth interviews conducted with „workers“ and „users“, brief interviews conducted with passersby and in-depth interviews conducted with municipal civil servants.

⁴ This recalls Lévesque’s (2008) experiments with street furniture, which explicitly test the codes and limits of interstitial public spaces in a playful and artistic manner, abstracted from everyday life.

I interviewed 47 shopkeepers and employees, to whom I refer collectively as „workers“. My sampling strategy here combined breadth and depth. I mainly interviewed owners or employees of grocery stores, cafés and restaurants, since these kinds of businesses are particularly closely associated with sociability, ethnic identity and interethnic contact. However, I also interviewed people in other kinds of stores (bookstores, clothing boutiques) when they played a special role in the street (e.g. in the merchants“ association) or could provide a particularly relevant perspective on the street (e.g. as a recently-opened business). On four occasions, I interviewed two or three workers in the same place of business (owner(s) and/or employee(s), together and/or separately, often depending on the flow of work and customers). These multiple interviews were spontaneous rather than planned, but broadened the range of perspective to which I had access. I aimed to interview merchants and employees of varying age and a range of ethnic origins (as appropriate to each street). Although immigrant status was not a criteria for selection, at least 25 of the „worker“ interviewees were immigrants, and at least another seven the children of immigrants. Most of the „worker“ interviewees were male.

I approached workers for interview in their places of business, usually after I had become familiar with the store from my observations of the street. Although merchants and employees were a „captive“ population in that they were easy to find in their workplaces, they were often very busy. I had to be flexible and ready to wait a long while for the interview, if not postpone it altogether. The shortest interview, severely hampered by language difficulties, was about ten minutes long and the longest well over two hours; more usually, they lasted between 45 and 70 minutes. Interviews were typically conducted in the workplace, often at the counter but sometimes in a back corner, with frequent interruptions. These interruptions were actually quite useful, in that they offered further opportunities to observe merchant-customer or co-worker interactions (Lee, 2002, 2006; Semi, 2005). Of course, some of the employees and shopkeepers I approached did not wish to be interviewed, typically citing lack of time and/or lack of authority („I“m not the boss, you don“t want to talk to me“) as their reasons.

I conducted a total of five in-depth interviews with local (or ex-local) residents, referred to as „user“ interviews throughout the text (although of course all the kinds of interviewees „used“ the street in some way). However, the emerging themes of fieldwork led me to concentrate my in-depth interviews on merchants and employees, many of whom were also local residents. I reached other local residents by means of the second type of interview.

The second type of interview was a short interview schedule designed for use on the streets or in parks with passersby.⁵ This method allowed me to hear from visitors to each street, as well as local residents and some workers, which was a great advantage, given the importance of the themes of urban mobility and the street-as-destination to the research. I approached people who varied by age, sex and apparent ethnic origin; most were alone but a few were interviewed in pairs or small groups. Approximately ten brief interviews lasting about ten minutes were conducted on each street; in this way, I interviewed a total of 32 people on de Liège, Jean-Talon Est and Sherbrooke Ouest streets, and 20 people at a festival on St-Viateur Street (see below). Again, questions were adapted to the interviewees (for instance, if their time and inclination permitted, I added questions from the longer interview schedule). The utility of this kind of „on-the-spot“ interview, in spite of its brevity, has been demonstrated in the bundle of methods known as “rapid ethnographic assessment procedures” or REAP, which have been employed to evaluate people’s use of and relationships to places such as neighbourhoods and public parks (Low, Taplin and Lamb, 2005; Taplin, Scheld and Low, 2002).

These interviews with different kinds of users covered their own use, experience and images of the street; for shopkeepers and employees this included, of course, talking about their business. The questions were also designed to solicit accounts of collective experience of the street, including relations between different social or ethnic groups, changes in the local context and group initiatives such as festivals or merchants’ associations. The interview schedules (see Appendices E, F and G) were adapted to each participant and setting. I collected similar material in a spontaneous, informal way during participant observation, introducing questions from my interview schedules into conversations with people wherever it was possible and appropriate.

In addition, I carried out a series of interviews with professional „experts“ on the streets, namely, officers working in urban planning and economic development for the municipal government.⁶ Interviewees were identified through phone calls to the relevant departments and initially approached by letter or e-mail. My aims were to find out about institutional intervention in the streets and to gain insight into institutional discourses about these and other commercial streets, on matters ranging from zoning to accessibility to place marketing and branding (see

⁵ Half of the brief interviews on rue de Liège were conducted at a summer festival in Parc Howard.

⁶ As I explained in Chapter 1, Montréal has undergone considerable municipal restructuring since 2000. The urban planning and local economic development services have been decentralized to borough level, although some projects are still initiated and overseen from the central City level. I therefore interviewed municipal civil servants in the three boroughs in which the streets are located and at central City Hall. I have been deliberately vague about their job titles here in order to protect their anonymity.

Appendix H). I also wanted to know whether and how ethnocultural diversity was implicated in these institutional perspectives. In all, I conducted eight in-depth interviews with civil servants (one of which was with two people) and a brief but informative interview with another.

The vast majority of interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim.⁷ If the interviewee preferred, or if the opportunity to interview arose when I had no recorder to hand, I took detailed notes. All interviews were conducted in French or English, depending on the interviewee's preference. When an interviewee had limited knowledge of French or English, it turned out to be much easier to take notes than to record the interview. I think this was because the interviewee felt less under pressure to speak correctly and could see by my notes that I was listening attentively; for my part, writing the interviewee's words and ideas down meant that I took more time to check what he or she meant.

Last but not least, I had the opportunity to experiment with an innovative kind of data collection by running a „research kiosk“ at a one-day street festival held on rue St-Viateur on 1 June, 2006. Having been alerted to the event in the spring by a municipal civil servant and by a couple of shopkeepers during fieldwork, I contacted and interviewed the festival organizers, who agreed to my proposal to have a stand at the festival. I invited festival-goers to fill in a brief questionnaire about the street and the festival and/or to answer a few questions in a recorded interview (Appendix J). This method was extremely fruitful, thanks in large part to the collaboration of my colleagues Nathalie Boucher and Marilena Liguori, who were able to approach potential questionnaire respondents while I was interviewing. Nathalie also recorded observations and took photographs of the festival, as did I for brief periods (see Appendix V). We received 101 questionnaires and I conducted over a dozen interviews with 20 people on the day. This material was equivalent to that obtained by the brief interviews in the other streets.

A table at Appendix K sums up some of the relevant characteristics of interviewees (including gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status and whether or not they live locally).

3.3.3 Complementary sources

This thesis also draws on complementary sources of data, including documents from the City and its boroughs (zoning regulations, planning advice and the official urban plan), websites of

⁷ The financial support I received for this project allowed me to pay research assistants to transcribe the interviews; each of the four assistants received training on transcription conventions and software and signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix I). I checked all transcripts against recordings. Thanks again to Julia Male, Jessica Moore, Julie Paradis and Alexandre Pirsch for their careful work.

individual businesses, newspaper articles⁸ and documentary films (Beitel, 1991; Soiferman, 2000). These are cited as appropriate throughout the text. More systematically, I have used data from the Statistics Canada censuses of 1996, 2001 and 2006 to paint a portrait of the residential population local to the streets (see in particular Chapter 5) and from Lovell's street-address directory 1996-1997 (Lovell Litho & Publications, 1996) to examine the changing commercial composition of the streets. Street directories can provide useful information to track sociospatial change and contextualize ethnographic research (Schlichtman and Patch, 2008). Lovell's directory lists residents' and businesses' names and telephone numbers for every civic address in the city, sometimes with information about the type of business; it thus provides a partial picture of the streets' activities which can be compared to my inventories for 2006-2007. Although my main aim is not to trace the streets' histories but to understand their current social dynamics, in the period that I can know them first-hand (2005-2008), it is useful to have a point of comparison in order to be able to investigate changes relating to ethnic composition and gentrification; this can be inferred to some degree from business names and types, respectively, where relevant information is listed.

My choice of census tracts to use for statistical data merits explanation (see maps in Appendix L). As described above, St-Viateur Ouest and de Liège are both situated in the heart of their neighbourhoods, which are very well-defined not only in morphological but also in statistical terms. Thus, Mile End is made up of census tracts 161-165 and 167-171 inclusive, and Parc-Extension of census tracts 220, 221, 222, 223.01, 223.02, 224. The clear delineation of neighbourhood boundaries makes it logical to draw on all the census tracts that make up Parc-Extension, even though rue de Liège is situated at the northern extremity of the neighbourhood. Besides, a quick test excluding tracts 221 and 220 at the southern extremity made little difference to figures on ethnic composition of the population or income.

⁸ My sources for newspaper articles were the Biblio Branchée/eureka.cc and ProQuest electronic newspaper databases, for the francophone and anglophone print media respectively (limited to Quebec). Archive coverage varies by title but the most important newspapers for this research (*La Presse* and *The Gazette*) date back to 1985. I conducted searches using keywords referring to specific businesses, places (e.g. parks, churches), policies (e.g. zoning), associations and the streets themselves. I conducted extensive general searches for articles on de Liège and St-Viateur streets, since their short length and uncommon names made it relatively easy to isolate articles referring to the sections I was studying. Material on Sherbrooke Ouest and Jean-Talon Est had to be extracted more selectively, as the long length of the streets and existence of homonyms (Jean-Talon market, the city of Sherbrooke) would have made extensive searches too time-consuming, given that print media was a complementary rather than principal source of data. Other relevant newspaper articles came to my attention thanks to colleagues and two blogs on local urban issues, Spacing Montréal and the Montréal City Weblog (<http://spacingmontreal.ca/> and <http://w5.montreal.com/mtlweblog/> respectively).

In contrast, since the section of Jean-Talon Est I study does not bring to mind a particular neighbourhood, it was harder to delineate the relevant census tracts. Interviews and observations gave me reason to believe that the market area of this section of Jean-Talon is relatively local, because there are other significant shopping streets in the environs (e.g. Bélanger to the south). I therefore restricted the local area to include only census tracts 206, 207, 209, 240, 241, 242, 243, 249. None are to the east of d'Iberville or the west of de Lanaudière. Tract 209 is anomalous, as it extends far south to the railway track, but since the extent of statistical analysis in this thesis does not merit going down to dissemination-area scale, I included it as is.

It is equally tricky to define the relevant census tracts for Sherbrooke Ouest. A particular problem was whether to include tract 94.01 (known as Saint-Raymond), south of the railway tracks. Advice from two people who live there and participate in urban debates and issues suggests that, given the paucity of shops in Saint-Raymond, those who live there do use Sherbrooke Ouest. In contrast, it seemed unlikely that inhabitants of tracts 101.01, 101.2 and 98 would venture so far south and east. Overall, in light of the significance of Sherbrooke Ouest and its businesses, it makes sense to delimit an area with a larger market reach than for Jean-Talon Est.

Having justified the geographical basis for my statistical data, a word should be said about my historical reference points. 1996 is a useful year to look back to for both „quantitative“ and qualitative reasons. The decade 1996-2006 was, overall, characterized by economic upswing, so that the effects of business cycle variations on data observation points are minimized. Moreover, three of the four streets were featured in urban research projects during the 1990s, which allows for useful qualitative comparison. Rues St-Viateur and de Liège are included in the case study areas of a major research project on Montréal's multiethnic neighbourhoods conducted by a team from INRS Urbanisation (Germain et al., 1995). Sherbrooke Ouest, as the main thoroughfare of the traditionally anglophone west end of the city, was often discussed by participants in my master's fieldwork in 1998 (Radice, 2000); it was also around this time that the street's businesspeople began to organize their merchants' association, with support from the private urban consultants Convercité. The year 1996 therefore makes a sensible reference point for my study.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The ethical conduct of research involving human beings is currently conceived of as depending on two main principles: 1) a just balance of harms and benefits to participants, and 2) the free and informed consent of participants.⁹ I shall deal with each in turn.

This research involved minimal risk to participants, in that, in the words of the Tri-Council Policy Statement, “potential subjects can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research” (1998-2005: 1.5). Put simply, the people whom I observed on the four streets and who talked with me about them would see my research as no more „dangerous“ than their ordinary activities and conversations. In my view, the only real „possible harm“ to research participants would be damage to their reputation, if my analysis were to attribute words or actions to them that would likely be condemned (for instance, racist views or unhygienic food storage).¹⁰ The way to minimize this risk is to protect research participants’ identity by anonymizing the data. Since this research has a tight geographical focus, this is harder to achieve than in other studies (e.g. those that focus on a social group spread over a larger area). I have used the streets’ real names because it makes little scientific or practical sense to try to disguise them. Other researchers should be able to verify my analysis, and besides, any researcher who knows Montréal would soon be able to identify them; this practice follows numerous scholarly precedents (e.g. Bridge and Dowling, 2001; Charmes, 2006; Clerval, 2004; Duruz, 2005; Fleury, 2004; Foret and Bavoux, 1990; Lehman-Frisch, 2002; Simon, 1997b; Zukin and Kosta, 2004). However, I have tried to remove details that might permit identification of individual research participants. This means not only avoiding the use of personal and business names, but also, in some cases, not specifying other characteristics such as participants’ gender, ethnic origins or type of business. Since I name the four streets, it is at times possible to identify some of the research participants; moreover, I draw on newspaper articles that name business owners,

⁹ Two other important principles are the avoidance of conflict of interest and the fair distribution of participation in research (i.e. no group should be unjustifiably excluded from or burdened with research). These are less relevant to my research: there is no conflict of interest and I aimed to include as wide a variety as possible of users of the streets. For details see Institut national de la recherche scientifique (2006) and Tri-Council Policy Statement (1998-2005).

¹⁰ The potential benefits of this research were only of abstract interest to most participants. They thought it was an interesting subject and were generally happy to help, but knew it would be of no direct benefit to them. (I was also quick to clear up the occasional misconception that I was an urban planner who could have a direct impact on their environment.) The exceptions to this were some municipal civil servants, who anticipated that my work would be of some professional use.

particularly those who have become „local characters“ (e.g. the owners of St-Viateur Bagels or D.A.D.S. Bagels on Sherbrooke Ouest). I therefore distinguish between information that is public, because anyone can observe it on the streets or read it in newspaper archives, and information that is private, in that it relates to participants“ personal views or actions to which only I had access (e.g. through interviews). I make every effort to protect the source of the latter.

Ensuring that people know what their participation in research entails, and that they freely consent to it, is a second principle of ethical research (closely related to the first, in that free and informed consent is only possible if one knows what the potential harms and benefits are). While the Tri-Council Policy Statement prefers evidence of consent to be in written form (article 2.1(b)), it also acknowledges that written consent is not always appropriate and may indeed create distance and imply distrust between a researcher and research participants. I was well aware that some participants in my research might prefer oral rather than written consent; the difficulty I had was in predicting *which ones*. I expected some immigrants, especially, to view „official papers“ with suspicion, since in many cultures greater faith is placed in oral testimony than in the written word (which can always be falsified...). In actual fact, some of the kinds of people whom I thought would be wary of written consent forms – e.g. recent immigrants from North Africa – took them in their stride, because they were used to filling in paperwork from Canadian institutions, which they generally trusted. Others – including Québécois born-and-bred – rejected consent forms out of hand, because they felt them to be disproportionately serious given the banality of the subject, or because they trusted themselves to say only what they meant to say and trusted me to use their words wisely.

I created three tools to use in obtaining consent: a letter of information about the research, a consent form, and a leaflet giving a brief explanation of the research and my contact details (Appendices M, N and O); and I used them in various combinations. I did not obtain consent for passive observation, since I did not want to intervene unduly in the setting (see page 2.5 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement). However, when observation became more „participant“ I explained my research, often using the leaflet. For in-depth interviews, I gave the interviewee a leaflet in advance when arranging the appointment, and then presented the information letter and consent form at the interview. In the case of interviewees who preferred not to sign the form, I recorded consent in my notes immediately afterwards or on tape if possible. On some occasions, an informal conversation developed spontaneously into a longer interview, in which case I gave information about the research orally and then presented the letter or the leaflet afterwards. For short interviews, on the street or at festivals, I explained the research and

obtained consent orally, and gave participants a leaflet afterwards. The leaflet was also handed out for information at my stand at the „St-Viateur festival de rue“; filling in the questionnaire obviously constituted consent in itself. The leaflet was a great success, since people seemed to appreciate receiving something in return for their time (as well as my contact details). Its user-friendly style and clear language seemed to hit the right tone, light enough for the subject matter yet serious enough to show that I valued their contribution.

In my view, the unpredictability of participants' reactions to consent forms helps to demonstrate that the ethical conduct of research must not be reduced to obtaining a signed piece of paper. Instead, it is a flexible and ongoing process that begins when the researcher first starts to explain her project and continues throughout its life, including during dissemination. My responsibility was not only to make sure that people knew what the research involved and were freely consenting to participate in it, but also, and I believe more importantly, to put their contributions to use in a careful and respectful manner.

3.5 Analysis

I take a „bottom-up“ approach to data analysis, inspired by, although not entirely conforming to, the precepts of grounded theory (Paillé, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).¹¹ I see it as a process of „asking questions“ of the data in front of me, whether they consist of fieldnotes, interview transcripts, newspaper articles or census statistics (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995). The units of analysis vary: sometimes I am comparing particular actions, interactions, events or micro-places that come from any of the streets; at other times, I am comparing the streets themselves. What is going on here? Why is it interesting? Why is it interesting to me? What are people trying to accomplish? How do they characterize and categorize the people, activities and objects around them? When analyzing people's discourse, as well as looking at *what* was said, I paid attention to *how* it was said. Were there recurrent phrases, or contradictions, or (best of all) recurrent contradictions (Kaufmann, 1996)? Trying to answer such questions is like testing a series of micro-hypotheses about the data, and it involves constantly going back and forth between the data and the questions, themes and concepts that drive the research.

In order to do this, the data need to be sufficiently well-organized that the trips back and forth between data and concepts do not take forever or lose the researcher in the morass of her own material. For this project, I used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo7 to store and

¹¹ Grounded theory requires a much closer and more systematic relationship between data collection and data analysis than I achieved here.

organize my data.¹² I imported into NVivo7 all the documents generated by my research (fieldnotes, transcripts, some rich secondary source material such as newspaper articles or website text). I then coded sections of text that spoke to a particular theme and assigned them to a code (or category, or „node“ in the NVivo jargon). Since even small segments of qualitative data can have multiple meanings, one section of text can „belong“ to many codes. NVivo also allows whole documents to be categorized according to other factors (e.g. which street it comes from, whether it is an interview or a fieldnote, what kind of interviewee it is).

Of course, the real question is, which codes to create and how (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995: Chapter 6; Jackson, 2001; Kaufmann, 1996: Chapter 4; Miles and Huberman, 1994). In the early stages of analysis, I took a bottom-up approach known as open coding, creating numerous codes for a very broad range of potentially relevant themes, large and small, descriptive and analytical (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995: 150-155). As time went on, some codes fell by the wayside while others became more important; some were grouped together into higher-level categories, others were sub-divided (ibid.: 161, Bazely, 2007). I created several broad-brush, overarching categories that organized themes relating to ethnicity, sociability, specific businesses, the street as a whole, spatiality, temporality, festivals, business strategies, the research process, and so on. These categories are not all equivalent instances of the same kind of thing (and nor are their sub-categories), but they do not need to be: the aim is to make data accessible in a useful way.¹³ I was then able to search for all the data relating to a given theme, sometimes in combination with other themes or factors, for instance, „everything that people on St-Viateur said, or that I noticed, about the ethnicity of specific businesses“. Rereading and asking new questions of the results of such searches allowed me to identify common themes and exceptions, and the parameters and dimensions that shape people’s discourses and practices in the four streets I studied.

3.6 Limits

There are several limits to the methodology that I have outlined here. Some relate to the methods themselves, while others relate to the overall research design.

¹² Bazely’s manual (2007) and several accounts of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis helped me work out how exactly to use NVivo7 (Bourdon, 2000; Savoie-Zajc, 2000; Schiellerup, 2008; Van Hoven and Poelman, 2003).

¹³ See Alexander (1996 [1965]) on the epistemological dangers of adhering to a rigid tree structure when dealing with qualitative material, in urban planning as in data analysis.

The quality of material gathered through both participant observation and interviews depends largely on the rapport that the researcher manages to establish with research participants. During fieldwork, I met or interviewed people with a huge range of different social positions, occupations, cultural backgrounds, ethnic origins, class positions, age groups, family circumstances and general life experiences. The sheer variety of people meant that I could not rely on accumulating knowledge about a single group's culture or set of experiences in order to build rapport. However, there was at least a common context to most of the in-depth interviews and much of the participant observation, which took place in stores and businesses. I interviewed many people while they were working and/or „hung out“ in places of business. As I noted above, this meant that they were often busy and perhaps had more pressing concerns on their mind than the interview. Building rapport in this context often depended on my sensitivity to their preoccupations and capacity to be patient and unobtrusive. In addition, one of my own characteristics seemed to facilitate social connections: like many people I met on the streets, I am an immigrant. Although my trajectory was very different from most of theirs,¹⁴ I think our shared status could be somewhat reassuring, in that it implied I had a degree of knowledge of as well as empathy for their experience. Conversely, with interviewees who were not immigrants, the status of „outsider“ could be useful in that it put me implicitly in the position of someone learning about their society. Building rapport during fieldwork was therefore shaped and limited by the commercial context in which it often took place, as well as my position as an immigrant to the city I was studying.

Another limit related to methods is that only people who are happy and willing to talk with a researcher will grant interviews. I think this leads to two biases in my material. Firstly, it means I have more interviews with (co-)owners of businesses than with employees, because the latter were less likely to feel they had the right to give interviews than the former. Business owners are likely to have different interests and higher or at least longer-term stakes in the commercial streets than employees. For instance, they will be more involved in merchants' associations, and they have more to lose if the street goes into a phase of decline. However, they will perhaps be less conscious of relations with customers. Secondly, it seems likely that those people who have a particularly negative perspective on the streets, or indeed the world at large, who feel

¹⁴ Mine was a „pull“ immigration, triggered by my positive experience of studying in Quebec. I first arrived in Quebec in 1997, as an MA student, and immigrated as a skilled worker from the UK in 2004, the year I began doctoral studies. Although all skilled workers formally go through the same selection process, it is much easier to obtain the bureaucratic and material necessities for immigration (judicial record, minimum bank balance, medical exam, etc.) if one comes from the UK than if one comes from a poorer or less well-organized country.

alienated from them, would not have talked with me (which is not to say that I did not gather any „grim“ material, as we shall see). The question of who responds to our questions is, of course, a constant problem in empirical social science research. In ethnographic fieldwork, it seems likely that those who are most at ease with their social world will be the ones who share it with the ethnographer, who may in turn be more attracted to those who are happiest in it (Ah-Nième, 1996). However, both these biases are compensated to a reasonable extent by the material gathered through observation, in which the participants are not self-selecting.

On the level of overall research design, another limit relates to the extent to which the research results of this research can be generalized. As a qualitative, exploratory research study, it has no pretensions to representativity. The streets selected are not a representative sample of all multiethnic streets in all cities, although I think that most multiethnic commercial streets in central neighbourhoods and inner city suburbs of Montréal would fit into one of the four squares on the grid generated by my selection criteria (see Table 3.1 above). However, the aim of this kind of research is not to generalize through the use of representative samples, but to explore relevant themes that aid our understanding of the phenomenon under study. My research is a case study design, in that the situations studied are interesting both in their own right and as a source of rich data that has the potential to illuminate similar cases (Stake, 1994). The insights it generates should help shed light on social and spatial relations in urban commercial and/or multiethnic streets, and even other public spaces elsewhere in the „developed“ world. It helps build theory by elucidating certain dimensions of the key concepts, such as public sociability, and by relating them to particular people, places and circumstances. For example, it aims to identify how different kinds of places can foster different types of cosmopolitanism. My research constitutes a useful theoretical contribution to urban studies not because it is representative nor replicable, but because it is a credible and dependable account that enriches the conceptual tools available to researchers studying cases that are in some respects similar to mine (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Even taking into account the appropriate criteria of validity for this research, though, its design generates a significant limit. The physical length of each section of street, the multiple conceptual focus (sociability, ethnicity, spatiality), plus the comparison of four separate sites led to a constant tension between breadth and depth. While doing fieldwork, I felt that if I engaged too deeply with one social setting in one street – a café, say, or an ethnic social network – I would fail to capture other settings in the same street, not to mention the other three. On the one hand, this tension makes it hard to characterize my fieldwork as thoroughly ethnographic, in the

anthropological tradition of acquiring an in-depth knowledge of a given social setting. On the other, it echoes the pull I sometimes felt towards a more exhaustive, „objective“ approach that came from studying in an interdisciplinary programme (particularly from some of the geographical literature (e.g. Lehman-Frisch, 2002)). However, I persisted with my anthropological approach within the context of an urban studies doctoral programme, seeking to understand subjective experiences and accounts of the streets.

The resulting construction of my research object is inevitably, like all such projects, partial. But in a sense, my fieldwork was conducted at precisely the level of social space it aimed to investigate, and as such it was eminently urban. As Pétonnet explains, the traditional anthropological techniques of participant observation are easily and usefully adapted to the study of professional, religious or ethnic milieus, but not necessarily to urban public space. When research is restricted to specialized milieus:

the urban is just an interference, taking the form of preferred journeys, of territories: this neighbourhood, that church, this market or club represents an aspect of the city. These are studies in the city in which the city can only appear in counterpoint or anecdotally. [...] But even supposing that every single milieu in a given city could be studied, the sieve would still let slip through any number of urban objects, from street furniture to public transport and public places, or in other words, sites frequented by individuals who are typically unknown to each other. [...] Still, places of transit with no particular destination, public spaces with no obligations are without doubt urban phenomena. (Pétonnet, 1982: 38, my translation)

In order to capture the urban proper, Pétonnet proposes the technique of “floating observation” (*observation flottante*), in which the observer makes herself open and available to events and interactions in the field without pursuing a particular object, or objective, with too much determination. She follows the pathways or people that present themselves to her in the public place, on that day. This technique is diametrically opposed to the systematically-sampled environment-behaviour observation that I mentioned above, and can doubtless be criticized as „unscientific“. However, it reaches parts of urban society that more structured observation techniques cannot reach, such as the broad and partial knowledge and anonymous or semi-anonymous social ties that are in fact intrinsic to the social experience of public space. In this sense, my fieldwork strategies were well-suited to the research object in spite of their limits.

3.7 Fleeting and flowing: the street as research object

I close this methodological chapter with some thoughts on the construction of my object of research. As several urban scholars have pointed out (Charmes, 2006; Gourdon, 2002; Jacobs, 1961), the city street is marvellously flexible, allowing endless incremental change thanks to its

form as a patchwork of separate lots (elegantly called *la forme parcellaire* in French). However, this practical strength also makes it rather difficult to approach as a research object as a whole. When one starts to ask the people present to talk about their immediate environment, the street often seems to fragment into the smaller building blocks of its individual stores and other micro-places, or else to melt into the larger scale of the neighbourhood. In other words, it is hard to see the street as a whole on account of people's tendency to focus on the stores and/or the neighbourhood instead. Streets can be fleeting.

On occasion, I thus came up against a similar sort of problem as Martin did in his research into gentrification in Notting Hill, London:

there was something of a „phenomenological gap“ between my own „authorial intentions“ as interviewer and those of the working-class respondents in particular. Their concerns and mine did not entirely correspond. General questions about place identities most frequently elicited specific answers about the functional utility of places; inquiries about how the neighbourhood had changed, which I expected respondents to relate to gentrification and associated processes, were just as likely to be met with references to improvements or deterioration in the estate. (Martin, 2005: 81)

In my case, the „phenomenological gap“ was not class-based, but related to scale, as the following quotes illustrate. The first person, a worker on St-Viateur, answers in terms of the neighbourhood when I ask him, “What changes in the street have you seen since then?” “Well the neighbourhood has changed very much, I think, since uh... 1999” (StVw4). The second does the opposite, and answers in terms of his own business:

And how do you explain, like, ah, St-Viateur becoming, so popular over the years, like it seems to be a real –? I kinda like it. It ah, it makes for ah, a new breed of people coming in and I'm always happy to see more and more new faces. And more and more people have, seen this place and they tell people about it, „I heard your place is great, I heard your ambiance is nice, you have internet,“ you know, you have people playing cards, you have three generations in here, so that's great. (StVw1)

In the above quote, it seems that the interviewee is deliberately drawing me back to what he knows best: his business. Store workers spend so much time dealing with business inside their stores that they sometimes can say very little about the street itself – whether they live nearby or not. This is especially so for those owners or managers who mainly work „backstage“, making products or getting supplies in. In the quote below, the store owner is so focused on his business that he answers a very different question than the one I ask:

Do you use the other businesses on the street, the cafés, go have a coffee, or the butcher's or...? No, not, not really because... Before I had customers like cafés, pastry-shops, like one man in Côte-Vertu used to buy pastries each week, he sold them with his French pastries, like that, that worked very well. (deLw2, T)

I asked whether he went to the cafés on the street (one was next door to his shop); he heard a question about whether he had cafés as clients.

Although the language barrier may have been a factor in our misunderstanding (French is not this man's first language), the fact that he seemed to be expecting a different question shows that my construction of the street as an object did not match his own construction of the place in which he works. In contrast, one of his employees who worked at the counter understood my questions, recognizing the kinds of things I wanted to know. Cashiers, who deal more with the public and have greater opportunity to observe what happens beyond their storefront than their bosses, could often tell me more about what happened on the street. Conversely, residents, visitors and other users of the streets were often more used to thinking and talking about their environment at the neighbourhood level and were sometimes unable to recall which of the local businesses they use are located on which streets. We therefore have a paradox. The street constitutes an immediate environment – if one stands outdoors in a city, the chances are strong that one is in a street – and it is typically much easier to define and circumscribe than the scale of the neighbourhood. However, it is this latter, looser notion that often seems to make more sense to people as the appropriate scale and scope of their daily activities.

This brings me to a last limit of using the scale of the street, one that was emphasized by a few surprises of fieldwork. In spite of treating each street as a separate research object, a separate site, I realized before long that there were connections between them: streets flow easily into each other. The husband of a shopkeeper that I interviewed on rue de Liège had worked for St-Viateur Bagels for many years (and incidentally had nothing but good things to say about the business). Another of my de Liège interviewees had a brother-in-law (her husband's sister's husband) who owned a restaurant in the section of Sherbrooke Ouest that I studied, and for a brief time, a nephew on her husband's side also ran a business there. These observations go to show that dividing the multiethnic city into discrete units, be they neighbourhoods or streets, will only ever give a partial view of the urban experience. It fails to capture the many systems of relationships, the networks of kinship, ethnicity or activism, the trajectories of housing, employment or education that traverse the city. Such relationships, to rework an old urban trope, mean that "[t]he mosaic turns into a kaleidoscope, where the multitude of parts again and again take on new configurations" (Hannerz, 1980: 15). And of course, they reach way beyond the city boundaries, connecting people living in different localities and vastly different circumstances in many other places in the world (Amin, 2007; Massey, 1993). This

thesis does not make any claim to account for those transnational or translocal (Appadurai, 1996b) connections, even those stemming from the tiny stretches of space I studied; that was a road that I chose not to travel in constructing my object of study. Rather, I focus on the local, circumscribed space of four city streets, and on the meanings of the interactions and social relations that cohere in them.

*

This chapter has presented the methodology I adopted to explore the research problem that I presented in Chapters 1 and 2. I explained how I chose the four streets studied, justifying the criteria of multiethnicity, urban form and socioeconomic circumstances, and we took an initial whirlwind tour of each street. I described the methods I used to collect my research material: mobile, static and participant observation; a range of interview types, varying in depth and length; and complementary sources. I also discussed the measures I took to try and ensure that my research was conducted ethically, and described how I analyzed my research material. Lastly, I raised some of the limits of the research, concerning rapport, representativity and depth versus breadth, plus the problems of scale and connection in constructing the „fleeting“ and „flowing“ street as a research object. The next chapter begins to present the empirical findings of my research by taking us into the social world of the streets.

CHAPTER 4 PLACES AND PRACTICES OF PUBLIC SOCIABILITY

A walk along the section of Sherbrooke Ouest that I studied would take you past 21 restaurants or cafés, four depanneurs, ten food stores like bakers, butchers, and grocery stores, 28 other retailers, ranging from dollar stores to a furrier's, six hairstyling salons, 31 other services like banks, dry cleaners, and copy shops, one advice centre for young people and a pub. These categories of businesses allow us to imagine the kinds of activities that people engage in on Sherbrooke Ouest – doing the daily or weekly shopping, dining out with family, grabbing a coffee or copying a paper on the way to college. However, they tell us little about how people interact with each other, inside the businesses or outside them, on the sidewalks, on public benches, at bus stops or in the small park at the end of Chemin de la Côte Saint-Antoine.

This chapter generates a more useful set of categories to account for the forms of public sociability found in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets. Drawing on the work of Simmel, Goffman, Pétonnet, de la Pradelle and Charmes, it constructs a series of oppositions or axes along which forms of sociability vary. It gives a partial response to the ever-intriguing question of how city-dwellers deal with being in close proximity with so many strangers – partial in that it concerns the specific context of the commercial street. It explores the types of practices of public sociability in which people engage, in close relation to the micro-places in which they engage in them. It forms the basis for the analysis presented in Chapters 5 and 6, since by first understanding how people interact in general in the streets, we can then better explore how ethnicity traverses those interactions, and how the streets are „produced“ as places as a whole by their users.

As explained in my research proposition, the empirical chapters of this thesis are oriented by Henri Lefebvre's triangular understanding of the social production of space. This chapter can be understood as an account of *spatial practice (perceived space)*, which focuses on everyday, routine activities: it “embodies a close association [...] between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, „private“ life and leisure)” (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 38). By “perceived”, Lefebvre is not referring to mental perception, mediated by the intellect, but rather to the tactile, immediate perception of the body.¹ Spatial practice thus consists of activities and products (such as a Roman road, *ibid.*:

¹ As anthropologists have shown, bodily perception is also mediated and culturally variable, so the immediacy of perceived space is clearly relative.

245) that are “empirically observable” (ibid.: 413). I draw heavily on material from direct and participant observation of each street, and to a lesser extent on users’ accounts of practices of sociability (which can sometimes be at odds with observation). While each example relates to specific people and places, many could be used to illustrate more than one of the themes. The unit of analysis and comparison is therefore not the street section as a whole, but rather the micro-events and micro-places that can be identified on any or all of the streets.

Three themes, stemming from close analysis of the fieldwork material, structure this chapter: spaces of sociability, forms of sociability and ends of sociability, or in other words, the where, the what and the why of public sociability. The first section, on spaces of sociability, looks at the ways in which the commercial street provides a material setting for sociability. The street is both a collection of micro-places and a route integrated into daily itineraries, and as such provides both destinations for social activities and occasions for chance social encounters. It also provides spaces for sociability that are relatively inaccessible and ones that seem more accessible. This raises the question of „(in)accessible to whom?“, and the second section, on forms of sociability, discusses the mix of familiars and strangers that make up the population of the streets, and the familiar or anonymous relations between them. It then describes the kinds of interactions, remarkable and unremarkable, that constitute public sociability. Some of the more remarkable forms of sociability are in fact part of the job for many of those who work on commercial streets, particularly in cafés and restaurants, and the third theme, on the ends of sociability, addresses the extent to which sociability is put to certain uses or remains, instead, „pure“. The fieldwork material thus helps to think through public sociability, from places, to practices, to purposes. Before tackling these three themes, however, I delve into urban social theory to explain in more detail what I mean by public sociability.

4.1 Conceptualizing public sociability

In everyday language, a person or group is said to be sociable when they easily maintain a wide range of friends and acquaintances; it is seen as a psychological or individual characteristic (Agulhon, 1990). But social scientists understand sociability in a more abstract sense, as the capacity and the skills required to live as a social being, with, for or against other people. Three different “orders” of sociability can be distinguished in the literature (Grafmeyer, 1995): 1) organized sociability in relatively formal groups such as voluntary associations; 2) social networks, i.e. informal social ties between relatives, friends and acquaintances that vary in intensity but are generally quite stable; and 3) “the order of interactions or „contacts” that can, on

the contrary, remain superficial or ephemeral” (ibid.: 190, my translation). This third order of sociability is the one with which we are the most concerned here.

Each of these orders is associated with a particular tradition of urban research. The study of organized sociability, if it extends beyond one particular institution, is often part and parcel of neighbourhood or community studies (Germain et al., 1995; Whyte, 1981). The intimate and family ties of social networks are typically studied in an urban context that includes domestic space (e.g. Fortin et al., 1987) but not necessarily public space (Charbonneau, 2004). The ephemeral, superficial contacts of the third order of sociability are closely associated with the study of interactions between strangers – people who are unknown or only known as members of „categories” to each other – in the public and semi-public spaces of the city (Foret and Bavoux, 1990; Joseph, 1998; Lofland, 1985, 1998; Whyte, 1988). This field is particularly associated with Erving Goffman’s work on social interactions (1959, 1963; 1971, see below). Its studies are largely observational, although there is also a recent trend towards studying users’ representations of public space (e.g. Shantz, Kearns and Collins, 2008).²

Public sociability, then, can be defined as the sphere of casual social interactions that take place in public between people who do not know each other, or know each other little. It is therefore the dominant mode of relations for the exchanges that circulate between different users in commercial streets, including those that are generated by commerce (consumption) and state intervention (urban planning, policing, etc.). It does not necessarily equate to conviviality (as in the vernacular sense of „being sociable”): as a principle of relations between people, it can take the form of minimal interaction, indifference, avoidance or conflict as well as solidarity or conviviality (Dansereau, Séguin and Gaudette, 1993; Tonkiss, 2003). In essence, studies of public sociability are an attempt to respond to one of the principal „problems” of urban life, as famously raised by Georg Simmel (1950 [1903], 1979 [1903]) and Louis Wirth (1979 [1938]): how do so many strangers, people who are socially distant from one another, cope with living in such physical proximity? Simmel’s answer was that when surrounded by the city’s excesses of stimulating input and potential for human contact, one must maintain an attitude of reserve. Crucially, this attitude does not stem from indifference or rudeness (although it may sometimes appear as such), but rather from politeness and a reciprocal regard for the other. It performs a kind of triage of contacts, protecting city-dwellers from each other and thus offering them a

² Closely related to this field is the study of city-dwellers’ interactions with their immediate physical environment, in which interactions with people are not ignored, but are studied in light of how they are affected by urban design (see Chapter 2).

measure of freedom denied those who live in smaller towns (where one knows more of the people one meets and where one is, or at least used to be, socially obliged to greet passers-by). "What appears, in the metropolitan style of life directly as dissociation is in reality only one of its elemental forms of socialization" (Simmel, 1950 [1903]: 416; see also Tonkiss, 2003).

For Simmel, the very project of sociology was to study forms of sociation, or "the processes by which we engage in and are members of society" (Frisby, 2002: xv; Simmel, 1950), while the content of these forms could be covered by the other sciences. He was as interested in the apparently trivial forms of sociation (coquetry, letter-writing) as in the supposedly serious ones (political institutions and religion). But he argued that all these forms, and indeed all kinds of social ties with others, are created and maintained by sociability, the "pure" form or "play" form of sociation. "[Sociability] is freed from all ties with contents. It exists for its own sake and for the sake of the fascination which, in its own liberation from these ties, it diffuses" (Simmel, 1950: 43). Indeed, once a participant in sociability acts to further his or her own objective interests, pure sociability is undermined; it then becomes a mere medium through which to achieve a goal.

Two observations emerge from this concept of sociability as „pure“ sociation. Firstly, since it has no content of importance, great value is placed on form in the sense of „good form“ (Simmel, 1950). In the absence of the objective interests (business negotiations, particular projects) that usually regulate exchanges, tact and politeness take on a primordial role. Secondly, sociability has a "democratic" dimension, in that the degree of satisfaction with the exchange felt by each participant depends on that felt by every other participant (ibid.). Note that this use of „democratic“ has nothing to do with government or politics, nor does it imply consensus, nor is it an example of the widespread confusion of concrete public space with the figurative public sphere (see Germain, Hoernig and Liegeois, 2008). Rather, it is „democratic“ in the sense that the greatest possible number should obtain the best possible satisfaction from the reciprocal action in which they engage. Simmel further supposes that this dimension leads each person to minimize his or her personal differences of status, class, ethnic origin and so on, which would otherwise damage this impression of equality. "Sociability is the game in which one „does as if“ all were equal, and at the same time, as if one honoured each of them in particular" (Simmel, 1950: 47-48). Moreover, although certain personal characteristics (good manners, amicability, an ear for an anecdote) oil the wheels of pure sociability, in general, other personal traits and identities are not highlighted. Good form and tact thus enable contact between temporary equals, in which the pleasure of exchange trumps the pursuit of personal interests.

As described so far, this model of sociability seems more suited to a dinner party than a street, but it can be applied to urban public space if we think of it not as a mode of conversational turn-taking over dinner, but as the mode of verbal and non-verbal contact between users of public space. As with sociability in general, public sociability is affected by “objective interests” which, in the street, would include the imperatives of commerce or the state. For example, one does not stay a long time in a café without buying a drink, or a long time in a street under heavy police surveillance. Public sociability is also „democratic“, in that everyone gains if no one loses (possible losses might be one’s personal space on the sidewalk or sense of security). Participants disclose little of their personalities, since in order for public sociability to run smoothly, no one should stand out too much. And when they engage in verbal interaction, “they do not tell their own stories, they perform; they put on the mask of one of the eternal figures of the human comedy that is immediately comprehensible to all and that belongs to no single social milieu” (de La Pradelle, 2001: 185, my translation; Goffman, 1959; Levasseur, 1990).

One of the great scholars of public sociability was Erving Goffman, whose major contribution was to make explicit the sheer amount of work that goes into maintaining normal social relations between people (1959, 1963, 1971). Even if they are not talking, people who are in the same space together cannot help but communicate with each other by nonverbal means. This communication produces very subtle social interactions, and it is so well learnt and interiorized that we do not even notice them. Such interactions facilitate relations between those who are using public space at the same time. In particular, Goffman identified the typical urban attitude of civil inattention (1963: 184), which leads us to pay enough attention to another nearby or passing person to show that we realize that (s)he is there, but little enough to indicate that (s)he is no special target of curiosity. Civil inattention and urban reserve effectively allow social interactions in public to go unnoticed. However, as the following passage shows, these social interactions are actually complex enough that they always carry the potential to come to notice and to require greater attention:

[W]hen an individual is in a public place, he [sic] is not merely moving from point to point silently and mechanically managing traffic problems; he is also involved in taking constant care to sustain a viable position relative to what has come to happen around him, and he will initiate gestural interchanges with acquainted and unacquainted others in order to establish what this position is. In a public place, the individual appears to be indifferent to the strangers in his presence; but actually he is sufficiently oriented to them so that, among other things, should he feel the need to perform corrective rituals, he can transform the strangers around him into an audience to receive his show. (Goffman, 1971: 154)

The „publicness“ of public sociability is therefore about being in the public eye and behaving as such. “A place and a time are public to the extent that we behave in some way „publicly“ in them, treating each other reciprocally as co-participants in a public scene” (de La Pradelle, 2001: 181, my translation). As noted in Chapter 2, public space for our purposes should not be confused with juridical terms of property ownership. A café is, legally speaking, a private place, but relations within it are typically public:

Sitting in the cafe is a course of conduct that is concerned with others with whom you are together as customers. These others, even in a place so full of mutual inspection as the café, are nevertheless not „onlookers“ but rather people who may or may not „notice“ what is occurring; it is a reciprocal arrangement between everybody in the café because we allow ourselves to be exposed and vulnerable to others when in public and vice versa. (Laurier and Philo, 2006: 202)

It is often assumed that there is a kind of continuum between public and private space, with a corresponding and isomorphic continuum of relations from public (anonymous) to private (intimate). According to this logic, the kinds of interactions people have on the sidewalk, in a public square or at a festival will necessarily be different from those that occur in a home, in a shopping mall or in a bar. In fact, since people are mobile creatures, any given concrete space can be the setting for different orders of social relations, although one particular order may predominate. This argument is well put by Lofland (1998), who distinguishes between public, parochial (or communal) and private *space*, on the one hand, and public, parochial and private *realms* of social relations, on the other (these realms correspond respectively to the third, first and second orders of sociability identified by Grafmeyer, above). Different realms can penetrate different spaces: for instance, a recurring family argument (private realm) can take place on a sidewalk outside a grocery store (public space). Similarly, Charmes takes to task the traditional opposition in French sociology between the parochial sociability of the neighbourhood and the anonymous relations of more central public spaces. He argues that the familiar space of the neighbourhood street is also a place for encounters with strangers, with the unknown and the unpredictable (2006: 88), a point which my material will explore.

Public sociability, then, can be understood as the mode of social relations between people who, by and large, do not know each other, or know each other little. Although influenced by surrounding activities and interventions, in its pure form it has no purpose except to sustain those relations. It can be understood as „democratic“ in that, ideally, its participants treat each other as if they were equals, and conduct themselves in such a way that all benefit to an equal degree from the interaction. Its public character is due more to its visibility than to the status of its spatial setting. Indeed, in some places in the city, such as neighbourhood commercial streets,

it coexists and fluidly combines with more private orders of sociability (relations between people who are not such strangers to each other). As informal as it is, public sociability does have its own codes, “ways of seeing and being seen, ways of calling, speaking, presenting oneself, representing others” (Levasseur, 1990: 10, my translation). I now turn to the dimensions along which public sociability varies – and sometimes becomes less public – in the four commercial streets studied in multiethnic neighbourhoods of Montréal.

4.2 Spaces of sociability

[How would you describe Sherbrooke Street, in one word?] Sociable. [Why?] Well, you meet people that you know, or you get to know the people you see. (ShOb2)

This section discusses the ways in which the spaces and places of a street constitute physical resources for sociability, supporting (or limiting) the kinds of social activities that can take place there (Charmes, 2006). Commercial streets, as opposed to routes through shopping centres or housing developments, are characterized by their mix of functions and their organic, „patchwork” quality that allows for gradual evolution, building by building, lot by lot (Gourdon, 2002, and see Chapter 2). The overall space of a street is therefore composed of a variety of many smaller places and spaces. There are outdoor places (parks, public benches) and indoor places (the various kinds of shops and services) and spaces that are somewhere in between (café or restaurant terrasses and some apartment balconies). One might suppose that each of these kinds of places hosts a corresponding kind of sociability, but observation shows that there is no direct relationship between spatial form and forms of sociability.

Neither the basic spatial form, nor the general category (restaurant, *depanneur*, park bench), nor the public or private status of a given micro-place can determine the kinds of social relations that occur there. To illustrate this point, we can take the example of Jean-Talon Est and de Liège Ouest, which each have parks that give onto the street: Parc Gabriel-Sagard, between Louis-Hémon and Sagard, and Parc Sinclair-Laird, between Wiseman and Stuart, respectively (see maps in Appendices B). Although they are of comparable size and overall layout, each park has very different social activities. The former is used sparsely, by occasional dog-walkers, child-carers and, apparently, drinkers; the latter is used regularly and heavily by groups of children playing and by adults on their own or in small groups, chatting or snacking at the picnic tables and on the benches near the street. The differing popularity of these green spaces can be explained by a combination of social and spatial factors. First, the residential area surrounding de Liège is very densely populated and offers only small back yards, if any, so even though there are two other parks abutting rue de Liège, there is probably a much greater demand for

parks than around Jean-Talon where yards are larger and dwellings less dense. Second, on Jean-Talon Est the benches face inwards towards the generally empty park, whereas on de Liège they offer a more interesting view of a lively street (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). And third, the park on de Liège is attached to a school so it seems likely that many local children are already used to playing there. Thus, two apparently similar kinds of spaces are socially and spatially structured so as to support very different activities.

Similarly, although both Cosmo's and, say, Étoile des Indes/Star of India on Sherbrooke Ouest fall into the „restaurant“ category and each has a sidewalk café-terrace, tiny Cosmo's has an intimate atmosphere special enough to have inspired a documentary film (Soiferman, 2000), while Étoile des Indes offers an atmosphere that, although convivial too, is less unusual and rather more distant. As another example, two benches installed by the borough on Sherbrooke Street for summer 2006 were used for very different kinds of socializing.³ One, located in front of a supermarket and at a bus stop, had a high turnover of occupants who occasionally struck up conversation with each other about the time of the next bus, the weather and so on. The other, installed in front of a barbershop, was very often occupied by the barbers or their customers and friends. Although officially public in status, it was hardly public in actual access. In summer 2008, this bench was installed right next to the barbershop instead of further out, perhaps in recognition of this *de facto* appropriation (see Figure 4.3). Likewise, on rue Jean-Talon, a public bench appeared in summer 2008 at right angles to the façade of one of the „Italian“ cafés, apparently legitimating the café's informal terrasse of a few plastic chairs brought onto the pavement. Again, similar urban forms can have very different uses; moreover, formal installation of urban forms, e.g. street furniture, can follow informal uses.

The particular places mentioned above – parks, café-terrasses and public benches – therefore foster different forms of sociability. Since neither their general category nor their status as public or private property reliably determine the varieties of sociable activity that they host, what other spatial dimensions might affect public sociability? I will now explain two further dimensions that affect the ways in which the street generates the conditions for sociability. The first of these is to do with how the street is used: is it a destination or a pathway? The second relates to the kinds of spaces that the street offers: are they accessible or inaccessible?

³ In Montréal, street furniture is usually installed at the beginning of summer and removed in the fall to facilitate winter snow-clearing operations.



Figure 4.1 Parc Sinclair-Laird, rue de Liège

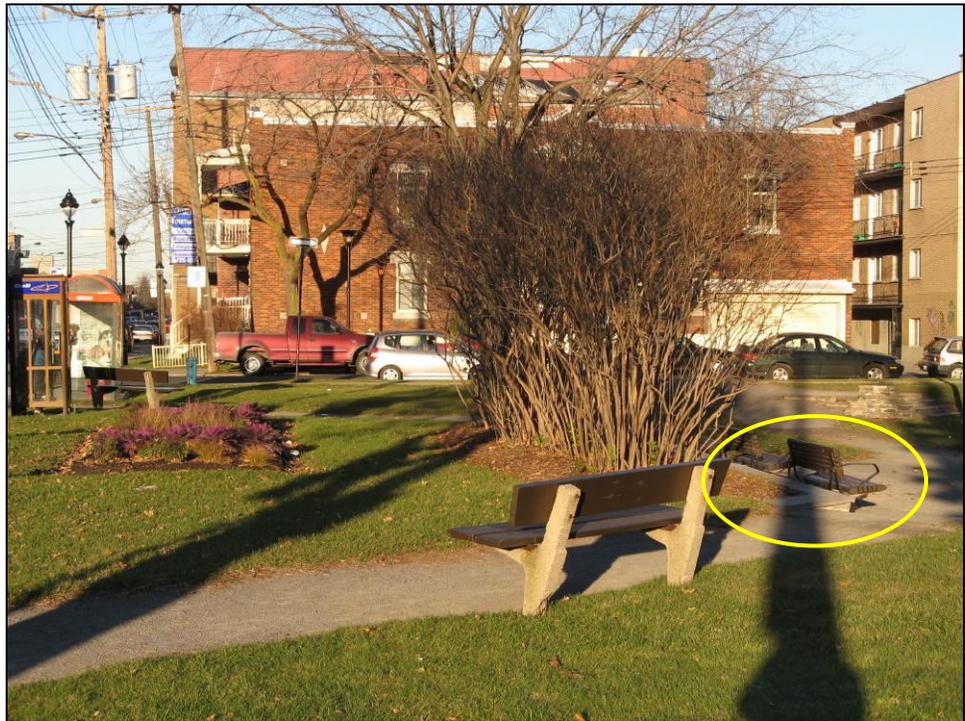


Figure 4.2 Parc Gabriel-Sagard, rue Jean-Talon Est



Figure 4.3 Sherbrooke Ouest: café-terrasses and the barbershop bench (right)

4.2.1 Destinations and pathways

Neighbourhood commercial streets typically function as both destinations and pathways. Social interactions take place in them both because users meet at given destinations, and because they pass each other in the course of completely different activities, en route to other places. Everyday intra-urban mobility thus generates the conditions for public sociability. As pioneering urban planner Hildefonse Cerda (1992 [1867]) astutely grasped, the road network of the city determines not only its architectural but also its social forms. Let's take the example of Sherbrooke Street. On the one hand it is a major artery, channelling traffic through the west end of the city (see map, Appendix B); it is an obvious route to take to go downtown. Students travel along the street, going to and from the Loyola campus of Concordia University. There are many shops and services used by people during their everyday itineraries, such as two relatively large on-street supermarkets, well-stocked smaller grocery stores, depanneurs, a pharmacy, banks and a post office, an SAQ, video clubs and dollar stores. On the other hand, it also has businesses that are „destinations“, places to which people go with the express purpose of spending time there, to meet friends or take pleasure in being surrounded by other people. One

example is what one interviewee called “the food court of Sherbrooke Street” (ShOw2). This consists of a few blocks with a high concentration of restaurants (Jamaican, Trinidadian, Korean, vegetarian-Mexican, Italian, Indian...): “the shops, the bars, the restaurants, it’s ah, it sounds corny but a fun, fun place to hang out” (ShOu2). Of course, the micro-places (stores, bus stops, green spaces...) of a street do not divide exclusively into destinations and passing-places; one person’s destination is another’s quick stop en route to somewhere else.

Use of the street in passing, on a „pathway“, affords many opportunities for ephemeral contact between people who are unknown or only „categorically“ known to each other. Although by and large this contact consists of the barely-there, side-by-side relation of civil inattention, there are also particular zones that seem propitious for spontaneous conversation between strangers. On Sherbrooke, this might occur among people waiting for a bus, exercising their dogs in Place Guy-Viau, or even shopping in the aisles of Akhavan, where cooking advice is occasionally freely offered by one customer who has spotted a particular food in another’s shopping trolley. The use of the streets as pathways generates two further conditions for sociability. The first is that since many people who live in a neighbourhood are regularly using the same street in their everyday routines, those who know each other already are likely to bump into each other:

Two young white/Latino men (20s) speaking Spanish come north up Stuart, cross over and go towards the Armenian pizza place. One goes in, but the other pauses to greet an older woman (50s), walking east, wearing a colourful jacket. They talk for a few minutes before he enters the pizzeria too. Another greeting I see is between two black women: an older one (60s) walking west, a younger one (30s) walking east. The exchange is brief but it puts a strong smile on the older woman’s face. (deL fieldnotes 2006-06)

Even on Sherbrooke, where road traffic is heavy, friends or acquaintances call out to each other across the broad and noisy street:

[A man I had been talking with at a bus stop] sees someone he knows on the other side of the street. “Hey Lisa! Did you went to the reggae fest?” She makes a questioning face. “The reggae festival, did you go? I was there all weekend!” Then the bus draws up. “Nice talking with you, see you again,” he says to me as he gets on. (ShO fieldnotes, 2006-07)

Secondly, and conversely, the routines in themselves produce familiarity and change the nature of sociable contact. Since the streets are a necessary route to other places, they become familiar, and their regular inhabitants become familiar faces (Charmes, 2006: Chapter 3), also known as „familiar strangers“ (see 4.3.1 below). For instance, a man who runs a sandwich shop

on St-Viateur waves to the people he sees regularly passing in front of his window, even if they never come in to buy from him (StV fieldnotes, StVw2). A bakery worker on Jean-Talon Est, who doesn't live in the neighbourhood, said:

When I go to the *depanneur* I often bump into the same people who know each other and who talk with people. I have the impression that there are a lot of people who often cross each other's paths and who maybe developed relationships like that, by always being in the same stores, because it doesn't seem like it but you can pretty much do all your shopping in a pretty small area. The same people must bump into each other a lot. (JTEw3, T)

This kind of sociability can even evolve into quite a different sort of sociability, as I found when interviewing a couple who both work on Sherbrooke Ouest:

Have you got any memorable stories about the street, or things that happened to you specially on the street?

w2: Well I met her.

Oh, well there you go!

w1: We met each other, yeah.

How did you meet?

w1: Well, I was friends with the previous owners of the restaurant and when they hired him, I got to meet him through them. We became friends. I'd take the bus off, I'd get off the bus every day, I lived upstairs, I'd get off the bus every day, pass by the restaurant and go home. We became friends that way. And then a romance blossomed and now we're a family. (ShOw1 & w2, who now have a daughter)

The street is thus a resource for public sociability because it serves as a path for everyday activities.

Streets also provide key destinations for sociability, that is, places where people – who may be local residents, or may come from elsewhere across the city – „hang out“, with friends or solo. On Sherbrooke Street, such places include the food court mentioned above, and also the terrace of Dunkin' Donuts, which tends to be occupied fairly constantly in good weather by groups of adults, mostly white and in their 30s or older, who appear to be on low incomes (judging by their clothes and minimal consumption of food and drink). The Jamaican barbershop is certainly a sociable destination, and the importance of barbershops to male Caribbean sociability is confirmed by the regular opinion column that is set in a barbershop in *Community Contact*, a newspaper “for Quebec's Black and Caribbean community” (as its tagline reads). Sherbrooke also has, in greater proportion than the other streets, several for-profit and not-for-profit services that function to some extent as community centres, thereby generating what Lofland terms „parochial“ relations. Head and Hands/À Deux Mains has been providing medical,

legal, street-outreach, and counselling services to young people since 1970.⁴ Until 2007, there was an access centre for the Côte-des-Neiges – Notre-Dame-de-Grâce City borough. A café then opened up in its place that functions as a gathering-place and resource centre for parents and their infant or toddler children. Likewise, the Cooperative Maison Verte sells ecologically friendly household products and clothing, but is also a café, a pick-up point for vegetable baskets from „community-supported agriculture“ organic farms, and a venue for talks on environmental issues and even party political meetings of the Green Party and a left-wing sovereigntist party, Québec Solidaire. It is also, as the name suggests, a retail cooperative, which means that members can become involved to varying degrees; the role distinction between employees and customers is blurred. People who don't necessarily do paid work in the shop know *how* it works, and move around it with a certain air of authority (ShO fieldnotes). Each of these micro-places, and others beside, function as destinations where people spend time, which generates the conditions for certain forms of sociability to develop.

In order to develop an appropriately detailed picture, I have referred often to Sherbrooke Ouest, but the other three streets equally provide the destinations and pathways that support public, private and parochial sociability. Jean-Talon Est is also a major east-west artery; key to its integration in everyday pathways are its large pharmacy, various small grocery stores and bakers and the two metro stations. As for destinations, there are several cafés and restaurants, and also two churches, one of which, Notre-Dame de la Consolata, at the corner of Papineau, is a large and well-attended Italian-language Catholic church. St-Viateur and de Liège, narrow streets in the heart of their neighbourhoods, each have a considerable number of small and specialty grocery stores and *depanneurs* as well as frequently-used services like laundromats and hairdressers that mean they are well-integrated into daily routines. Their destinations for sociability differ markedly, however: while both have a number of small independent cafés, those on St-Viateur have a reputation that attracts people from far beyond the boundaries of Mile End, as do some of the restaurants (see Chapter 6). St-Viateur also has a large Catholic church, now serving a Polish congregation who do not necessarily live locally. De Liège's destinations for sociability – several cafés and two restaurants – are also lively, but serve a much more local population, and as noted above, its parks are well-used. There is a small mosque above one of the shops, but it does not appear to have a particular impact on the rhythms or population of the street. Thus, the four streets I studied serve both as pathways that are part of people's daily

⁴ See www.headandhands.ca, accessed 30 July 2008.

rounds, providing chances for casual social contact, and as a destination for more regular and involved forms of sociability.

4.2.2 (In)accessibility

This brings us to another axis that regulates the interplay between the spatial and the social: that of accessibility. Are the spaces of sociability in a street inclusive or exclusive? From an objective point of view, all parts of legally public space in a street are equally accessible to all people, and all shops or services are open to all customers (within certain bounds set by the owners or managers). But from a subjective, experience-based point of view, it is clear that some places, at some times, are more accessible to more kinds of people than others. Also, accessibility is not the same as visibility: a place that is quite visible and out in the open may nevertheless be inaccessible to people who are not members of the group that has appropriated it, as is shown by the example of the barbershop's „public“ bench. An accessible space allows the free circulation between „inside“ and „outside“ of both people and communications (Joseph, 1992).

The rules that determine the accessibility of micro-places are typically unspoken, but at times are more explicit than others. So a women's hairdressing salon with a Korean sign and apparently no non-Korean customers is unlikely to attract customers from other backgrounds, or men, but the appropriation of the Dunkin' Donuts café-terrace, mentioned above, is more subtle. There is nothing to stop a well-heeled stranger from sitting down there for a coffee aside from a vague sense of social discomfort, or feeling out of place. The inaccessibility of this café-terrace is extremely context-specific, and is emphasized all the more by the relative accessibility of, say, the café-terraces in Sherbrooke Street's „food court“, where non-verbal and verbal interactions flow freely over the terrace perimeters:

What do you think about the atmosphere of this street? It's always busy, it's a good atmosphere. Here [at a Jamaican restaurant] usually there is a terrace, and when we are sitting there, people come up and talk with my boyfriend [a black man of Caribbean origin]. It's inviting. I like it. (ShOb3, white French-Canadian woman)

On rue de Liège, too, looks, nods, greetings or small talk can be exchanged across the boundaries of café-terraces or chairs set outside businesses, and even between the sidewalk and apartment balconies that overlook the street. However, at times one of the restaurant terraces – in fact, the only terrace that is a permanent structure – appears to „close“ as it is taken over by a group of white men in their thirties and forties who seem to know each other well (de Liège fieldnotes). Its accessibility therefore varies with time of day or day of the week.

The subtlety of such rules, the temporal and contextual specificity of appropriation of micro-places in commercial streets, perhaps helps to explain why people are hard put to describe how different groups of people use the streets in different ways. For example, observations of St-Viateur make it clear that there are differences in the way men and women use the streets, yet people typically say that men and women use the street in the same ways. On the sidewalks, men do more „hanging out“, while women tend to be on the move; the cafés Olimpico and Club social, as open as they are (nowadays) to women, are still predominantly frequented by men. That said, in all four streets, relatively few public, outside places seem to be consistently appropriated by particular groups, in particular compared to studies in France such as Simon’s (1997b). He describes heavy use of outdoor micro-spaces such as benches, squares and segments of sidewalk in Belleville, Paris; this use is often exclusive to a particular ethnic group (or ethnic and age group), for a certain time-slot if not all the time. Indeed, he argues that the very visible ways in which different social and ethnic groups use space mean that newcomers can better decode and integrate into the neighbourhood. In the four streets I studied, it would be impossible to argue that overall neighbourhood intra- and inter-group relations are as transparently reproduced in groups’ appropriation of space. A plausible, if partial explanation for this is that the long Quebec winter annually breaks people’s habits of going outdoors. Moreover, the dominant North American culture and design of urban space is generally less conducive towards living out of doors. Montréalers are perhaps more likely to firmly appropriate indoor semi-public places.

Some indoor spaces of sociability on the streets are surprising, and not obvious from the outside or the function advertised on the façade. For instance, one independent, downmarket ladies’ and children’s clothing boutique provides a small haven where women drop by to see what’s new, perhaps treat themselves to something, and to confide in the shopkeeper. Her store has been there for 25 years, and she remembers the histories of many customers’ families, jobs, health and migration. This kind of sociability is not entirely public, since it is rather intimate and belongs more to the order of social networks. But it is still on the street, and it is accessible (if not immediately „readable“) in that it only takes a couple of casual visits to be invited into a personal conversation by the shopkeeper. Moreover, every customer is welcomed with the same warmth, so it is hard to tell which ones are regular clients and which are entirely new faces. In this space, there is little distinction in words or gestures between the sociability of the social network and the sociability that is part of the transaction between seller and buyer (see also 4.4 below).

In contrast, an independent sports shop on Sherbrooke Ouest (now closed) used to become a similarly intimate, but in this case inaccessible, space of sociability when the storeowner hosted a get-together every Friday after closing time:

Ah, bring your own beer, and if you don't have any, just go next door to *[a bar]* and buy your beer, bring it over to the shop. We just hang around and talk talk talk talk, I don't remember, [but] *[the owner]*'s got one of these memories, [...] he's got all these brilliant – he's a typical salesman, he just, he's a talker. (ShO u2)

I've had as many as 18 or 20 people here on Friday night having a beer. And uh... we did build up that rapport with the, with a lot of people. You know like I've got people who don't COME on a Friday night, but they'll say, „how was Friday night?“ (ShO w12)

I went to the last of these gatherings before the shop closed down, and saw how the host introduced each person who came by name to all the others, like at a small private party. A potential customer peered in the doorway at one point, but although the owner offered to help him, he walked away. „Looks like we intimidated him!“ said one of the participants. All of the people present were athletes except the man quoted above (u2), who in fact uses a wheelchair because he has multiple sclerosis. He told me that when he was first diagnosed, he felt quite depressed, but the gatherings helped boost his morale:

I was down and feeling down and my buddy had taken me there and at first I felt pretty awkward – I'm not a marathon runner, I'm not, it made me feel weird. But, slowly, I started hanging around more often, and now I take part, in all the marathons that he organizes. [...] He goes, „We run marathons when we feel like it.“ And they've done a lot, you'll hear the stories, you know, in Chicago, New York, dada-dada-da. „But your marathon, is 24/7. And it's a lot harder than the marathon that we run whenever we feel like it,“ you know... So he says, „you're one of us.“ And it just, you know it makes you feel, good. (ShOu2)

Thus, whereas all customers are engaged in the public sociability of amicable sales service during usual business hours, on Friday evenings a gathering of marathon-running friends transforms the shop into a more private place, closing the space off to casual passers-by or shoppers and rendering it accessible by personal invitation and social tie only.

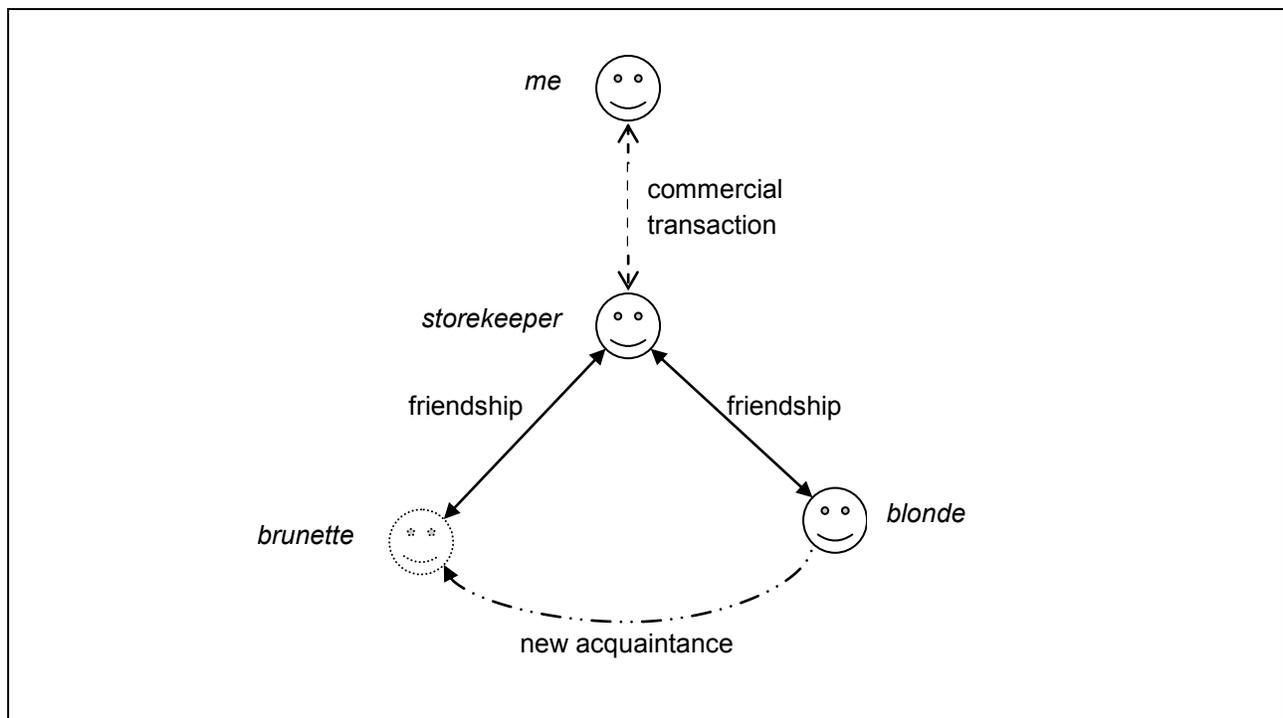
The interaction between space and sociability is therefore subtle rather than categorical and varies over time. Neighbourhood commercial streets provide both the destinations for socializing and the routes of everyday routines that enable occasions for sociability. They also offer different kinds of spaces of sociability, some that are accessible to all, others that are less accessible and sometimes quite hidden. But to whom are these spaces (in)accessible? To discuss this question, I shift the focus from places to people, and more specifically, to their *practices* of sociability – the ways in which their interactions vary in form and content.

4.3 Practices of sociability

A given place on a street can support different registers of sociability, public and private or parochial, as shown by the example of the sports shop above. Different registers of sociability can also play out concurrently, as in this case when a pet-shop owner was simultaneously dealing with a customer (me) and gossiping with two female friends:

Just before I paid, the brunette woman with the baby left, saying something like, “Well, I’m not buying anything, I just came here to see you and hang out, sorry!” The other, blonde friend said, “That’s okay, that’s why I’m here too!” Then as I paid, the shopkeeper was telling her blonde friend enthusiastically about the brunette. “Do you know her? No? It’s funny because she’s Greek and her husband isn’t at all. It’s like [the film] *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, he’s big, blond hair, blue eyes, and he loves it, he’s like „I’m hanging out with the Greeks“. He was even watching the world soccer with the Greeks, he’s like, „that’s something else.“ (fieldnotes, 09/2006)

Figure 4.4 Friends and strangers in the pet-shop



The storekeeper thus acquainted one friend with an absent other friend while dealing with a stranger (and incidentally, telling us something about ethnicity and sociability) (see figure 4.4). This fieldnote leads us to another axis along which sociability varies: that of familiarity.

4.3.1 Circles and contacts; familiarity and anonymity

Just as streets offer both destinations for sociability and passing chance encounters, they also offer opportunities for sociability among both known friends and unknown strangers. Each street

is host to a range of groups – “pockets” (ShOw8) or “circles” (ShOw2) – formed of friends and acquaintances. The circles may or may not intersect, but members of different circles do have ephemeral contact with each other. The streets thus allow for combination of different orders of sociability: they are not sites for public sociability exclusively. Indeed, the fact that they also include private and communal realms of sociability (to use Lofland’s terms), or organized and networked orders of sociability (to use Grafmeyer’s) seems to amplify their potential for public sociability, because various different circles or pockets rub shoulders with each other:

w2: There’s definitely circles, right? Different circles of people...

w1: yeah I think our circle is definitely one, you know, because the Co-op, the organic, the environmental aspect and then the restaurant, the organic foods.

W2: there’s definite cultural circles too

w1: [...]

w2: I mean strictly by where you were born, the Jamaicans all –

w1: – hang out together

w2: – seem to go hang out at the barbershop...

So it’s kind of like one community but with different circles in it, would you say?

w2: Oh yeah, I would think so. But at the same time, we’ll know the Jamaicans but we won’t sit in the barber’s shop with them. (ShOw1,w2)

These circles can be defined by age, gender, lifestyle, ethnicity or by interest and activity. On Jean-Talon Est, the terrasse of a café with an Italian name is mainly occupied by North African men, who linger in groups over coffee, cigarettes, newspapers and the odd beer. In Parc Howard on rue de Liège, a group of middle-aged and elderly South Asian men, several of whom sport Sikh turbans, play cards together in summer afternoons under the shade of a tree. An artist I interviewed on St-Viateur characterized the street as populated by groups defined more by shared interests, age and activity than origin:

*Would you say that there are one or several communities around St-Viateur? Ah, there are several communities, yeah. ... That’s pretty obvious, I think. ... yes. There are lots of communities... It always depends how you define them, but there are a lot of groups of people. I get the impression that it depends more on their age... And on how long they’ve been here, too, if it’s people who’ve grown up in the neighbourhood or if it’s people who came here by choice or... Hmm. Or students, or families, or... artists. I think it’s divided more along those lines than by... cultural communities.⁵ *The connections people make... through their activities?* Yes, exactly. [...] There are all kinds of people so yeah, it’s special. It’s so varied that you can always find someone, or some people who do the same thing as you, if that’s what you’re looking for. (StVu3, T)*

As this interviewee points out, circles form also just by having lived for a while in the neighbourhood. A woman of Italian origin in her sixties, interviewed on de Liège, had lived a

⁵ *Communautés culturelles* is a Québécois term for minority ethnic groups (see Chapter 1).

block south of the street for 20 years, told me: “Even in the evening, *I feel safe, you know?* Because I know everyone. We get on” (deLb5, T, exceptionally, the italics here denote English in the original). Likewise, a woman and a man, both in their thirties and of mixed French-Canadian and Anglo-Canadian backgrounds, interviewed on Sherbrooke Street (on separate occasions) said:

How would you describe Sherbrooke Ouest in just one word? Endearing! (Attachant!) [laughs] Endearing! Oh yes, why? Why? I don't know. I grew up in NDG, so I don't know, it's my neighbourhood, I feel good, I feel comfortable here. It's a street... I don't know, I always meet someone I know, so I don't know what I can say. I feel good here. (ShOb12, T)

I haven't had any troubles living here [*at an address on Sherbrooke Street*] in over ten years. People here are very nice. [...] I have a group of friends in the building, there's a number of us that have been there for a certain amount of years, and yeah, they're good people. (ShOb11)

What is interesting here is that the reassurance provided by a circle of familiar friends, with whom there is probably a deeper exchange of recognition and resources, is *generalized* to the atmosphere of the whole street, in which exchanges are less tangible – i.e. from one order or realm of sociability to another: “People here are very nice [...] I have a group of friends”.

Thus, in the population of each street, there are both groups of people familiar to each other, and others who are strangers: people who are unknown or only categorically known to each other („students“, „North Africans“, „X Company employees“, etc.). This coexistence, and the use of the streets as both pathways and destinations, also produces the figure of the “familiar stranger” (Milgram, 1992), who can also be an intermediary in the process of getting to know the social world of a street (Charmes, 2006). The familiar stranger is a person who “(1) has to be observed, (2) repeatedly for a certain time period, and (3) without any interaction” (Milgram, 1992: 68). Milgram's collaborative experiments, in which his students took photographs at a suburban train station and then asked commuters about the people in the photos they recognized, show that the familiar stranger relationship is no less a real relationship for all its supposed lack of interaction.⁶ During the course of fieldwork, I noticed familiar strangers and became one myself; however, my research goals led me to cut the „stranger“ side of the relationship short, since I wanted to become acquainted with people. The figure of the familiar stranger as defined here was not specifically mentioned by interviewees, but many spoke of recognizing shopkeepers and of saying hello to people: “I always know people on the street, like

⁶ It seems likely that Milgram defines „interaction“ as conversation or explicit non-verbal recognition, as opposed to the civil inattention that I would still count as an interaction.

it's wherever I go I know people, I know the people who own the shops. It's cool," said a man in his 30s whom I interviewed on St-Viateur (StVf15). And of course, this relationship of recognition is reciprocated by shopkeepers: "If you're a long time in a place, doing a business, everybody knows you... everybody acquainted with you, and they're nice to you, and thing like that, yeah... Without any problem, yes" (deLw6).

As well as the familiar stranger, there is the figure of the „regular“. In theory, the two figures differ in that conversation or explicit non-verbal recognition is more likely among the latter, but the line can be fine between the two:

Customers, according to the timings of their dwelling in the café, have differential access to the characters of other customers. Regulars who come at the quiet times can build up a certain kind of awareness of the lives of other regulars. This awareness, while not friendship nor loving intimacy, is more than a tolerance of others. It is an enjoyment of being among strangers familiar and unfamiliar that is part of the value of urban community. (Laurier, 2008: 125-6)

The familiar shopkeeper, the familiar customer and indeed the familiar stranger are relationships between individuals, but since each individual may also be a member of a different group (or circle), they also help mediate relationships between groups. As Charmes writes:

Streets operate differently depending on how close to the city-centre they are, how many businesses they have and how intensely their various kinds of exchanges circulate. However, we can pose the hypothesis that they all have the same mechanism that generates familiarity tempered by distance, as well as the same reciprocal performances of group belonging. (2006: 112, my translation)

In a sense, then, streets are spaces that facilitate the move back and forth from “first person singular” to “third person plural” (ibid.).

In the spaces of these streets, and in public space in general, it is important to distinguish between familiarity of *people* – the degree to which individuals or groups are recognizable or known to each other – and familiarity of *behaviour*, or the social relationship versus the mode of interaction. Part of the charm of public sociability, and part of the „publicness“ of it, is that strangers can be treated in a familiar manner, as if they were friends or acquaintances. But just as much a part of public sociability is behaviour that comes at the opposite end of the scale: relations of indifference (Tonkiss, 2003) and anonymity (Pétonnet, 1987). According to Pétonnet, the conditions of anonymity that prevail in cities do not dissolve the links between people: quite the opposite is true. Anonymity coats interaction between strangers in a kind of “protective film”, such that two strangers meeting in a cemetery (in her study) or on a street (in mine) are likely to reveal much more about themselves to each other than they would to people whom they know

or recognize.⁷ This is because regular social contact actually limits exchanges between people – a person would not wish a neighbour who she sees every few days to know everything about her – whereas total anonymity allows them the freedom to say more (see also Chapter 2). Of course, not all anonymous encounters result in revelations; anonymity without any exchange, or indifference, is the normal mode of urban social interaction and more involved modes should not necessarily be expected (or engineered). As Jane Jacobs put it, “[c]ities are full of people with whom [...] a certain degree of contact is useful or enjoyable; but you do not want them in your hair. And they do not want you in their hair” (1961: 56). But that does not mean city-dwellers do not occasionally seek some kind of involvement with anonymous others... whom they may treat, momentarily, as intimate friends.

The potential of anonymity to generate social relations is perhaps counter-intuitive to the dominant Anglo-American understanding of the relationship between public space and the private sphere (Remy, 2001; Sennett, 1974), as shown by recent social policies that coagulate around the buzzwords of „community“ and „cohesion“. This perspective takes the sphere of community, where some kind of values or background or projects are shared, to be the „natural“ site for engagement with fellow city-dwellers, not the anonymous urban public sphere (cf. Fortier, 2008). Hence the production of moralistic accounts of the communal sphere such as *The Great Good Place* (Oldenburg, 1997). This book celebrates the apparently inconsequential places of city life such as cafés, bookstores, bowling alleys and barbershops. However, it fails to capture their public character, with all the potential for anonymous relations that that implies. A café, for instance, can host a range of relations: truly intimate conversations belonging to the private realm can take place between friends, while a perfectly courteous but distant sociability can be maintained among customers or between customers and workers (whether they are strangers or familiar strangers). The public mode thus makes a crucial contribution to the café’s conviviality.

Thus, in many micro-settings on the streets I studied, there was not just a mix of people – strangers, familiars, familiar strangers and regulars – there was also a mix of modes of sociability, including one particular kind that I call „inconsequential intimacy“. According to de La Pradelle (2006), this is the dominant mode in the market at Carpentras; in my fieldwork, it was particularly apparent in certain restaurants and cafés (and perhaps at festivals). De La Pradelle found that although people gave „meeting friends“ as a reason for going to market, once there,

⁷ Urban anthropologists, being „outsiders“, can take advantage of these one-off revelations – with caution, since if one is spending a long time in a given field site, any anonymous encounter has the potential to develop into a more sustained relationship.

“one treats an old childhood friend and the anonymous person buying leeks ahead of one in line pretty much the same way: in a tone of overt, superficial conviviality” (2006: 202). The exchange doesn’t follow the rules of privately held conversations: it allows interruptions, it can jump suddenly from one subject to another, and it may well cover apparently troubling subjects such as ill health or family catastrophe. But above all:

[p]eople speak of themselves so readily because nothing important is being revealed. The tragic becomes trivial if mentioned while you are trying to decide between the hake and the coalfish or between two different pairs of shoes at Perdiguier’s. The daughter’s divorce and the brother-in-law’s bankruptcy [...] momentarily lose their status of private disasters and join the common lot of earthly misfortunes and local human-interest stories. The regime of pseudoconfidences is such that none of the partners expects the other to be really interested. (de La Pradelle, 2006: 208)

Whatever is said, tragic or jolly, helps instate a kind of familiarity that means nothing and implies no commitment beyond this distinct social time and place (de La Pradelle, 2001, see also Jacobs, 1961). Inconsequential intimacy well describes some of the exchanges in which I semi-participated, usually with men in or outside cafés. On de Liège, older men of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern origins chatted in this way about family, people they saw pass in the street, and their ailments and prescriptions (deL fieldnotes, 2007-07). On one occasion, I sat with one of the owners of a St-Viateur Street café (A), his friend who used to live in the neighbourhood (B) and his cousin (C), all men of Italian origin aged somewhere between 30 and 50. The conversation skipped from family to death to solitude to work to beaches:

B: What are you doing tonight, A?

A: Going to spend time with my dad, he doesn’t like to eat alone since my mom died...

M: I’m not surprised, big family like yours... When did your mum die?

A: Last November, then just a few months later C’s mom died. My mother died in my dad’s arms, my brother was there too but by the time I got there she was gone.

C: My mom doesn’t like to be alone either.

B: Who likes to be alone? Everyone likes company, right?

A: That’s where I’m different – I like to be alone, I want peace and quiet, you lose yourself in here. [*i.e. in the café*]

[A wanders off briefly and B tells us he is going to the beach tomorrow] (StV fieldnotes, 07/2007)

In this kind of sociability, you can talk about serious things, like grief and death and solitude, but never for very long. The conversation is not necessarily banal, it is abbreviated, aphoristic, more anecdotal than analytical. Rather than chewing on a single topic of conversation until, to coin a metaphor, all the flavour is gone, this is conversational *tapas*. Each topic is short but potentially intense, a little burst of life, a highlight. And it requires that you join in: if you just listen passively, you arouse suspicion, or at least bore people. It is conducted in a familiar tone, but doesn’t

necessarily require familiar ties, so a stranger can participate, although there may well be a core of regulars.

Certain aspects of physical space can encourage such inconsequential intimacy, as one of the regulars of the aforementioned café, a French Canadian in her 30s, noted:

Well there are people here that I've never really talked to, but we always say hello because just through seeing each other, we always say hello. And then one day probably we'll find ourselves sitting at the same table. I also really like the fact that there are big tables. You sit down with people you don't know, once or twice, and after that you know them, you say hello. (St-V u3, T)

Likewise, the 11-stool L-shaped counter at tiny Cosmo's on Sherbrooke Street necessarily puts people into contact, as does the use of litre cartons of milk and bottles of ketchup rather than individual packages. At one point or another, customers are bound to have to ask each other to pass down whatever it is they need for their breakfast. Moreover, strangers and regulars alike are treated with the same familiarity by whoever is behind the counter: whether they are known or not, they are treated as *if* they are known, like at the Carpentras market. "The stallholder's ostentatious familiarity means not that he knows the customer, but rather that he attributes to him, accurately or not, the quality of market habitué" (de La Pradelle, 2006: 195).

Not all places of business on the four streets generate such remarkable sociability. I observed that contact between workers and customers and among customers in many cafés, restaurants, stores and other services is often courteous but minimal (even in the „friendliest“ places, some people will prefer to engage in merely functional exchanges). Such contact corresponds to the model of anonymous relations that Colette Pétonnet describes here:

I know of no stopping place, no haven more pleasant than a *brasserie* that one enters by accident, in an unfamiliar neighbourhood, to dine alone in between two appointments. I like that the waiter brings me a small brown pitcher and a dish of the day, and that he and I follow the rules of the game – banter, smiles, connivance, busy-ness – and that he recommends the house dessert, and that when I have chosen it, he will ask me afterwards if I found it to my taste. Such professional contact has, in my view, appeasing virtues. Neither artificial nor servile but reserved for customers, it respects anonymity. Nevertheless it disturbs it, like a pebble skips across water, and I only need say the word and it will be broken completely. (Pétonnet, 1987: 251, my translation)

However, while some of the street users I spoke with may value this type of anonymous service as much as Pétonnet, none said so. Rather, they appreciated being known and liked to claim familiar social ties to a place. For instance, one man explained to me that besides the good cheap breakfasts, the reason he liked Cosmo's was that "when I came in they called me by name" (ShO fieldnotes, 2006-06).

Being a regular is highly valued, even coveted, and conflict over who has the right to claim the status of „regular“ is not unheard of, as the following story about the cafés on St-Viateur Street demonstrates. In November 1997, Stéphane Gélinas,⁸ a resident of Mile End, was at the Café Olimpico with his three-year old son and four or five friends. The waiter warned them that the boy would have twenty minutes to drink his hot chocolate and would then have to leave, because those were the boss’s rules. Outraged, and aware that by law children cannot be barred from places that do not serve alcohol, Gélinas filed a complaint with the Quebec *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* and the story was featured on the front page of *La Presse*. Gélinas argued that since the café is a „neighbourhood“ café, it should be open to children:

“It is unacceptable and arbitrary,” continued Mr Gélinas. “You cannot have segregation like that. Especially since you hear so often in the media about this trendy café, where you find a certain class of intellectuals who extol neighbourhood life.” (Desjardins, 1997, my translation)

But the café’s owner (who has since passed away) defended his policy by saying that some people bring their children and stay for hours, letting them cry and run all over the place, which disturbs the other customers:

M. Furfaro added that the restrictions he imposes are accepted by the majority of his clientele. “It’s only a few that object. They think that just because they come and spend a bit of money here, they can do what they want.” (ibid.)

The following day, well known *La Presse* columnist Nathalie Petrowski raced to the defence of one of her favourite haunts, metaphorically tearing Gélinas to shreds in an article headlined „*Le café des habitués*“ (Petrowski, 1997). She agreed with Furfaro that children tend to run amok in the café, but her main argument was that the Café Olimpico “is above all a café for regulars. They have their habits, their rituals, their privileges, and, yes, even a few rights” (ibid., my translation). In other words, the customer is not always right, and some customers are more equal than others. Indeed, the café’s regulars have the right to bring their children (whose photo might even grace the walls) because they, unlike the “failed Jean-Paul Sartres” (ibid.), keep a proper eye on their offspring and know when they are breaking the café’s unwritten codes of behaviour. Petrowski said that she had heard that Gélinas came to the café only once a month, if that. What’s more:

From what I’ve heard, Gélinas is one of these new tourists who have invaded the place in the last few months. They read in the paper that the place was „in“, that

⁸ Since I refer to newspaper articles here, I use Stéphane Gélinas’s real name.

artists, lefties and future stars hang out there. They came in with their great clodhopping feet to the despair of the regulars who, as trendy as they may be, were there first. (Petrowski, 1997, my translation)

She concludes her article, “If Stéphane Gélinas had taken the time to properly get to know the place instead of getting on his high horse about his precious rights, he would have understood in the end” (ibid.).

Ten years later, this incident still rankled. At the St-Viateur festival de rue, I invited a man who was by then a familiar stranger to me on the street to „tell me about his St-Viateur“, and discovered he was none other than Stéphane Gélinas himself. (I already knew about the articles, having done a press review of the street.) He and his friend, whom I will call Eva, told me:

S: So the column said that the reason that I should have accepted being kicked out is that I wasn’t a regular. I should have understood that it was perfectly normal to be kicked out, since I wasn’t a regular.

E: Though we used to go there about twice a week, but to go to the Olimpico you really have to go three times a day.

S: And I only live a hundred metres away, if that.

E: Whereas she [*Petrowski*] lived in Outremont. (StVf14, T)

Since the Olimpico had become “the Mecca of snobbery” as Eva put it, they now preferred the Club social italien, which as the name suggests was originally a private social club:

S: So I went to what is in fact a real club, and there, nobody kicked me out. Not bad, eh. There you had a café that wasn’t a club, but behaved like a club, and here you had a club that behaved as if it wasn’t a club. (StVf14, T)

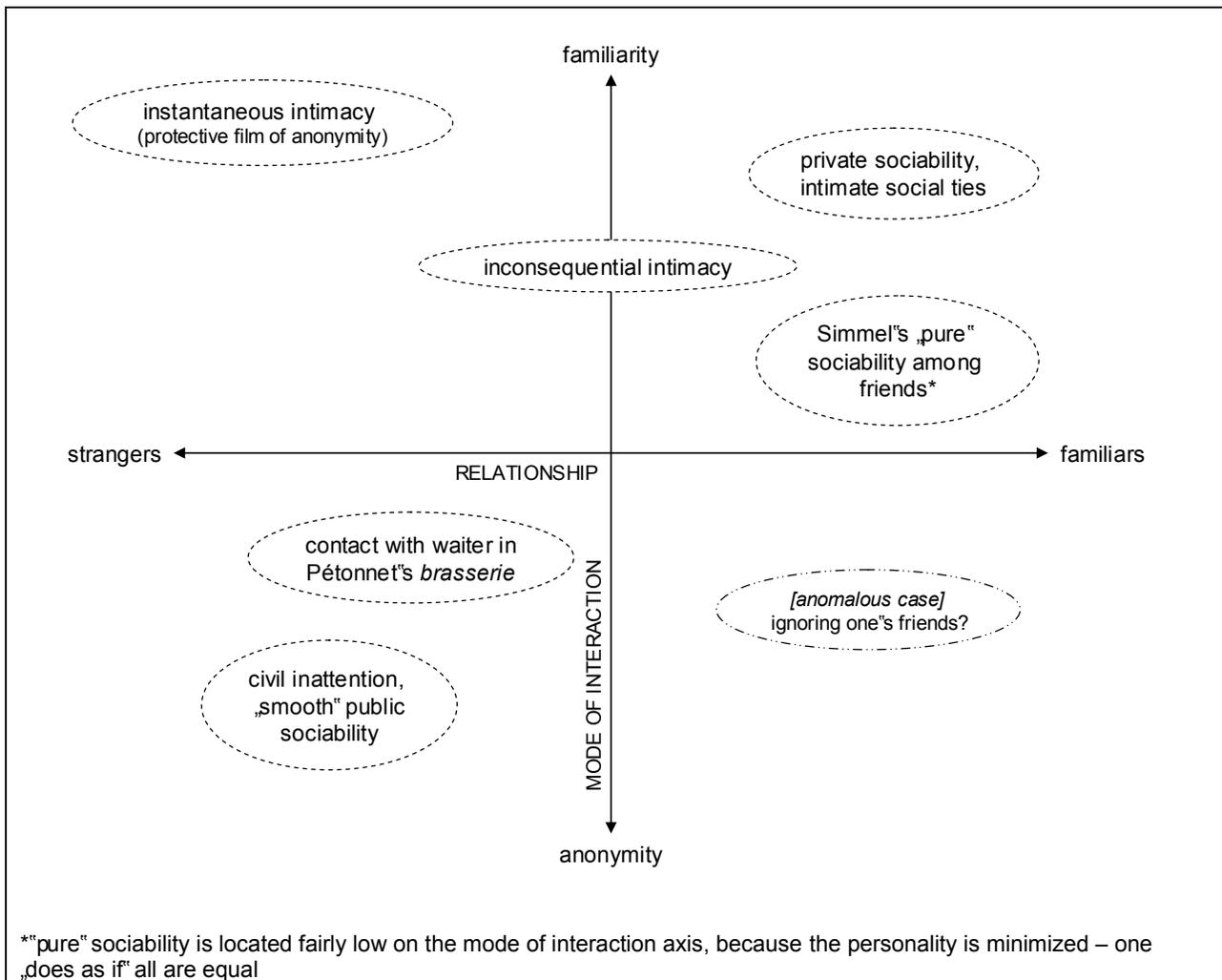
What is most interesting about this exchange is that even though Stéphane invokes universal access to public space in the newspaper article, it is still important for him and Eva to lay claim to being regulars.⁹

Before moving on, it seems wise to sum up this extended discussion of the axis of familiarity. All the streets play host to a mix of modes of sociability, because they feature both circles of people who are familiar to each other, and contacts between people who are not. Indeed, circles of private sociability can facilitate convivial public sociability, because a member might generalize positive feelings about the circle outwards to the street as a whole. Moreover, routine use of the street and the enduring presence of different circles generate the figure of the familiar stranger. A similar figure is that of the regular. Because they are recognizable and

⁹ Another interesting point is that Petrowski and Gélinas both refer to the café’s growing popularity, which is nourished by the media. This reveals the workings of the “critical infrastructure” (Zukin, 1991a) on St-Viateur, a concept to which I shall return in Chapter 6.

typically members of other circles, both the familiar stranger and the regular help the individual grasp the group identities performed on the street, mediating the first person singular and third person plural experiences of the street.

Figure 4.5 Forms of sociability: familiar/anonymous relationships and interactions



Familiarity pertains not only to relationships between people, but also to modes of interaction. Figure 4.5 represents this distinction, showing different forms of public and private sociability, among people in more or less familiar relationships interacting in more or less familiar modes. Thus, strangers can treat each other as if they know each other well; indeed, conditions of anonymity can even encourage instantaneous intimacy, just as they can foster courteous social distance. A common mode of sociability on the streets is inconsequential intimacy, a way of chatting (or a kind of conversational *tapas*) that can involve friends and/or strangers, treating each with the same degree of closeness. Although it is quite possible that users of the streets

value anonymity without saying so, I found that they explicitly appreciated familiarity. The status of „regular“ can be especially coveted, as the story about the St-Viateur cafés shows. An atmosphere of inconsequential intimacy brings people back to these cafés; it is the kind of atmosphere that makes people *feel* known, that people notice, remember and recount. This brings us to another axis along which forms of sociability vary.

4.3.2 (Un)remarkability: smooth, rolling and spiky sociability

Observation of public sociability in the four commercial streets I studied leads me to propose another axis along which its practices vary: that of remarkability. My analysis is inspired by Goffman’s work on social interaction in public space, especially the concept of civil inattention described at the beginning of the chapter.

At one end of the axis is unremarkable public sociability. This is the attitude of civil inattention, which I suggest calling „smooth“ sociability, since it smoothes contact in public space, keeping feather unruffled and tempers calm. Smooth sociability governs the vast majority of interactions on local commercial streets, but since it is unremarkable, it is also extremely hard to collect data on it (something at which Goffman excelled, albeit in his own unsystematic and eclectic manner). Indeed, later scholars of behaviour in public places have often found it more expedient to study norms of public social interaction by observing or even instigating breaches of those norms (Manzo, 2005; Milgram, 1992).

At the opposite end of the axis lies remarkable public sociability, of which my analysis of fieldwork material suggests there are two kinds. One sort is remarkable because it is composed of noticeably agreeable or convivial interactions; the other is remarkable because it is made up of misunderstandings, breaches of norms or outright conflict. Thus, in contrast to the unremarkable, „smooth“ or „flat“ interactions of most public sociability, remarkable sociability gives contours to urban interactions: „rolling“ contours when they are convivial, „spiky“ contours when they are conflictual.

„Rolling“ public sociability consists of spontaneous, apparently superfluous positive interactions between people who are unknown (or little known) to each other. They can be simply cordial or warmly convivial, straightforwardly polite or gently comic: a nod in greeting, an exchange of pleasantries, a shared smile in reaction to some droll incident or other. The way in which these interactions unfold depends on who is participating in them: generally, strangers will only pay more than civil inattention to certain kinds of other strangers. Greater involvement can depend on one or more of a stranger’s visible characteristics (gender, age, ethnic appearance),

but also on his or her attitude. Many of the instances of rolling sociability that I recorded were participant observations, in that they involved strangers talking to me. Sometimes, their choice was clearly gender-related, as on the several occasions when elderly men on Jean-Talon Est invited me to have coffee with them (more for the pleasure of the contact, it seemed, than from any real belief that I would accept). But at other times, rolling interaction probably occurred because, as someone who was being attentive to her environment, I looked like what Lofland (1998) calls an „open“ person, engaged in “situated activity” and therefore “available” (Joseph, 2007a). For instance, also on Jean-Talon Est, I had a couple of quite lengthy conversations with passers-by. One was with a sprightly elderly woman who initiated conversation by commenting on my shoes as I was doing up my laces; the other was with a man in his forties who sat down at the bus stop bench from which I was observing the street, and to whom I volunteered the information that the bus had just gone by. The woman talked of the weather and her love of keeping active; the man of the films he’d seen lately and new models of car. As other scholars have noted (Charmes, 2006; Demerath and Lvinger, 2003; Lofland, 1998; Whyte, 1996 [1988]), a conversation between strangers is often triggered by a third thing or event (which Whyte and Lofland call „triangulation“): the weather, the bus schedule, food, children, dogs, an overheard accent, the remarkable behaviour of a third party, and so on. Thus, a proud grandmother interacts with passersby on Jean-Talon Est who look at her grandson just learning to walk; a young man comments on a particularly beautiful bicycle left surprisingly unlocked on St-Viateur; elderly people wish me “bon appétit” or ask if what I am eating is good on Jean-Talon or de Liège. It seems at times as if some users of these streets are just waiting for a pretext to strike up a conversation, however fleeting, with a stranger, and to engage in rolling sociability.

What I call „spiky“ public sociability, in contrast, refers to the engaged interactions that are triggered by misunderstandings, breaches of norms or outright conflict. Social scientific literature would lead us to expect several different types of „spiky“ sociability in neighbourhood commercial streets. In Greenwich Village, Duneier observed and analyzed what amounted to sexual harassment, consisting of repeated infringements of conversational turn-taking and other rules (“interactional vandalism”) between a homeless black man, who helped out at second-hand book stalls and begged on the street, and women passersby who were usually white and middle-class (Duneier and Molotch, 1999). In Turin, Semi (2005) observed misunderstandings that arose between a Moroccan shopkeeper and the Italian customers; the latter sought to “buy culture” – whether in the form of spices or picture frames – from the former, who had not yet grasped how to make the most of his customers’ curious acquisitiveness. More subtly, de La Pradelle (2006: 196) noted how a tourist can misjudge his contribution to sociability at the

Carpentras market, lingering a little too long over his inconsequential flirt with a stallholder. „Spiky“ sociability can therefore range from slight discomfort, to embarrassment and non-sequiturs, to significant violations of what is held to be the norm, all of which constitute contours puncturing the habitual smoothness of public sociability. The important point about these “failed” interactions is that they can feed negative perceptions or representations of the broader social scene, nurturing beliefs that, say, tourists are invading our market, immigrant shopkeepers are rude, or city streets are full of racial tension (to use the examples above). Spiky sociability can thereby amplify people’s sense of insecurity, especially in urban and suburban public space (Bourdieu, 2004b).

Spiky sociability intersects to a certain degree with the concept of „incivility“, around which a field of social scientific study and social policy has burgeoned since the 1980s. This field investigates the low-level violations of dominant social norms and signs of disorder (e.g. graffiti, vandalism, garbage, rowdiness and rudeness) that are typically not recorded by the police. The reason that these „incivilities“ arouse so much interest is that they are thought not only to indicate but to encourage the escalation of serious crime (according to the famous „broken windows hypothesis“ of Wilson and Kelling (1982)), as well as to amplify fear of crime. The idea is that signs of „incivilities“ indicates that a place is ill looked-after, which puts people off going there, and if fewer people go there, then illicit uses of the place will proliferate. There is a strong link here between public concern with incivilities and (in)security and the new valorization of convivial public spaces as a vital part of the urban symbolic economy, as city authorities have attempted to „clean up“ public spaces of (signs of) incivilities, by both „hard“ strategies of zero-tolerance policing and „soft“ strategies of promoting certain activities, especially consumption-oriented ones (dubbed „domestication by cappuccino“ by Zukin, 1995, and Atkinson, 2003). However, critical urban scholars have pointed out that this effort to make public spaces safer for „respectable“ citizens often has the effect of excluding other groups of people from them (Atkinson, 2003; Mitchell, 1995; Shantz, Kearns and Collins, 2008; Zukin, 1995).

Criminological research often uncritically puts quite different kinds of incivilities on the same plane (drug-dealing, garbage, street sleepers, noisy neighbours) (e.g. Keown, 2008), quantifying them without distinguishing respondents’ reactions to each. This sheds little light on “the direct encounters with the rude Other that we all probably wish to avoid more than a wall of graffiti” (Phillips and Smith, 2006: 884). Moreover, because it is so much harder to measure interactional incivilities than environmental signs of incivilities, researchers have concentrated on the latter, correlating them with crime and census data in a way that tends to exacerbate the

stigmatization of particular neighbourhoods and the marginalization of social groups (e.g. young people, homeless people, sex workers) (Phillips and Smith, 2006). Even qualitative research into incivility is often limited to „problem“ residential areas (e.g. Borzeix et al., 2005) and marginalized groups, whereas the routines of urban life clearly provide many chances for uncivil encounters far from the place where one sleeps, instigated by quite „proper“-looking, mainstream types of people (Phillips and Smith, 2004). The current research agenda is thus rather narrowly policy-oriented and somewhat environmentally deterministic, and focuses on ridding particular urban places of signs of disorder such as panhandling and graffiti rather than investigating how city-dwellers actually experience incivility. In reaction to this, some sociologists are trying to place incivility back into an interactionist perspective involving a fuller range of urban social relations that can be enacted all over the city (Fyfe, Bannister and Kearns, 2006; Phillips and Smith, 2006; Roché, 1994). There lies the intersection between incivility and spiky sociability, since it is seen as part of a continuum that also moves through smooth and rolling sociability.

I rarely observed, or heard reports of, any „spiky“ sociability in the streets (although as we shall see in Chapters 5 and 6, concern with trash and traffic problems did crop up); the vast majority of interactions can be characterized as „smooth“ or „rolling“. I did however witness a few altercations, including a couple of arguments in a Jean-Talon café during the World Cup 2006, and another outside the same café between two people who had been involved in a car accident. On de Liège one day, three teenage white boys had rolled and were smoking a joint on a park bench. A South Asian man in his 40s sat down on another bench, and after a while pointedly asked “Something wrong with your hand?”, a question apparently directed at the boy who had his hand cupped round the joint. One of the other boys responded pushily, “You need something? You need something?” The man did not pursue his enquiries. The boys soon sloped off to the other side of the park (deL fieldnotes, 2006-07). Drug-dealing was indeed perceived as a problem on de Liège, according to three Bangladeshi men whom I interviewed together in Parc Howard and a white Franco-Québécoise woman who works in a neighbourhood public security programme. It seemed that the South Asian man’s comment was an attempt to intervene by showing disapproval of the behaviour. The lack of seriously „spiky“ interactions could be explained in part by the streets’ locations in the city: Phillips and Smith’s (2006) innovative work on incivilities suggests that they occur above all in “transport nodes and vectors”, places with a quick, dense flow of people trying to get somewhere else. With the possible exception of their buses and metro stations, and their traffic snarl-ups as experienced from inside a car, this does not well describe any of the environments on our four streets.

The degree of „spikiness“ of spiky sociability is of course a subjective matter. Although I did not much mind elderly Italians asking me out for coffee, other women might consider it intrusive. Likewise, while some people like to see other people „hanging out“ in the street, since it made the street more lively, others did not feel comfortable with it. For instance, a recent immigrant from Bucharest, Romania, thought that Sherbrooke Ouest could be “more civilized in people, if it’s possible”. In her view:

there are many people which aren’t used to live in a big town, to walk in a street, you know. They stay in the middle of the street and speak at the phone and you have no place in right and left to pass away. And they are a little... not civilized, many, in this area. It’s the impression, but I... I um... I see that each day. That is a fact. (ShOb13)

A grocery shop worker originally from Iran had a similar opinion about Jean-Talon Est. If he could change something about the street, he would ask people not to “stay on the street”:

It is not like Canadian lifestyle. They stay on the street like they do back home. You know what I mean? Here like, if you go to TMR,¹⁰ you go to where people are more from Canada, they don’t go on the street and talk. You know, like staying where people pass by. I don’t like it personally. It’s like *[in]* my country, people stay on the street, like, when they have nothing to do, they stay outside. For me it is interruption for other people. I don’t know, if you go out, you will see. They are staying on the corner of the street and talking. That I don’t like.

– *Or like in the café, on the terrasse?*

– Café is okay, like they go to... spend money, to have something to drink, that’s different. But staying on the sidewalk, that I don’t like.

Sort of hanging out?

– Yah, that, yeah. It’s like back home. Where we come from it’s like that. When you finish work, you go in the neighbourhood, you come out with the neighbours, it’s like that. That I don’t like here.

– *Why not?*

– It’s not good, I think they are interrupt other people.

– *It’s sort of, you mean they get in the way, physically?*

– Yeah, no, in the way, so, some, you know, like... looking at others.

– *You think it makes other people feel uncomfortable?*

– Yah. I personally don’t like. That’s my idea, that’s the way I see it, but. Like I’m not comfortable when I pass by a bunch of people looking at me. I like more quiet place. I never live here, I don’t like, I don’t think I [could] ever live here. (JTEw7c)

This view was not confined to immigrants who disapproved of people who were not used to “Canadian lifestyle” or a “big town”. A woman in her 20s, born in Quebec, held the same opinion of the people who hung out in a small green space on St-Viateur:

It has kind of attracted the... I don’t like using the word, but kind of the riff-raff *[racaille]*. Not real riff-raff, but you know, it’s a bit, kind of, slackers who do f***-all,

¹⁰ TMR is Town of Mount Royal (Ville de Mont-Royal), the affluent suburb in the style of a garden city that borders Parc-Extension (see map in Appendix B).

and they just watch you going past with their great big eyes. It makes me just want to say, “come on, get up, do something, get to work!” (StVu1, T)

In all three extracts, the interviewees dislike the fact that people hang out in the street: not only do the people get in the way, they also watch you, which can make you feel uncomfortable or even, as the young Québécoise implies, frustrated.

Another example of discomfort occurred one sunny July afternoon on a café-terrace on Jean-Talon, where I had taken a female friend and another friend’s toddler. The other occupants of the terrace were men of varying ages, all apparently of Maghrebi origin.

While we are finishing our coffee, a tall transvestite walks up the steps onto the terrace and towards the back. She has long brown hair, greying at the temples[...]. She is wearing make-up and must be in her 40s. Total silence falls on the terrace among the men. [My friend] and I look at each other, mutually noting the silence, but continue our conversation. [...] [A couple of minutes later] The men’s conversation resumes, but no one interacts with her, as far as I can tell. (JTE fieldnotes, 2007-07)

The other customers had been chatting in small groups (mostly in Arabic), and when we (two women and a baby) had arrived, one had helped us with the baby’s pushchair and several had made faces at or commented on the baby. In striking contrast, when the transvestite arrived, silence fell for several minutes. The waitress, though, greeted her in a friendly way; she appeared to recognize the transvestite since she spoke to her in English (the habitual language of approach in this café was French). How should we interpret the men’s silence? Was it one of: a) surprise („who on earth is that?”); b) exclusion („her in our space, no way!”; or even, „not her again!”); or c) embarrassment („how should we react?”). Was it aggressive or defensive? Inhospitable or just an adjustment to the unexpected? Also striking was the way that my friend and I automatically connived to deliberately *continue* talking, thereby signalling that it was absolutely fine by us to share the terrace with a transvestite. I think it would take a more detailed and long-term observation of this one café (à la Laurier and Philo, 2006; or Semi, 2005) to understand what was really going on in the silence, let alone whether there was a story behind it. Based on the material I have, it seemed to represent a minor „culture shock” from which the normal café sociability quickly recovered.

In this case, it was the interactions between customers that were „spiky”, but other misunderstandings can arise between customers and workers. For instance, a takeaway food counter employee on de Liège rebuked a boy who would only point to what he wanted, an incident that made it clear that normal behaviour at this counter is to speak clearly. Commercial transactions could sometimes be temporarily derailed by language barriers, or by workers’ fatigue or impatience with hesitant or unknowledgeable customers. However, none of these

misunderstandings come close to those described by Lee (2002, 2006) in relations between Korean and Jewish merchants and black customers in black neighbourhoods in the USA. „Spiky“ interactions seem to be common there because:

although most merchants and customers may have positive relations at an individual level, racial and ethnic conflict persists at a collective level because groups jockey for position in America’s racially and ethnically stratified society. (Lee, 2006: 913).

The USA has a distinct history of social stratification in which race/ethnicity and social class often coincide. In contrast, in Montréal, spiky sociability between merchants and customers can be easily smoothed out because intergroup relations are the product of a different history of Canadian and Québécois (post-)colonial relations (see Chapter 1); they are therefore, by and large, not already tense.

Practices of public sociability on commercial neighbourhood streets can therefore be classed as unremarkable, when they are maintained by civil inattention and therefore run smoothly, or remarkable, in which case they have certain contours. I call these contours of remarkable sociability „rolling“ if they are convivial, and „spiky“ when they approach what are often called „incivilities“. Both rolling and spiky public sociability can have a disproportionate effect on broader social representations of a street; precisely because they are remarkable, they make a lasting impression. The last examples of spiky sociability cited above highlight the contribution that merchants and workers make to the sociability of neighbourhood commercial streets. This brings us to the final axis along which practices of sociability vary.

4.4 Ends of sociability: pure or instrumental

Everybody that you meet, has got something really cool that they’ve seen or done in the last 24 hours, or the last 24 years. Or the last 24 minutes. You know? And uh, if you, if you can unlock that, in a nice little conversation, you can help yourself a lot. (StVw3)

As I explained in the first part of this chapter, Simmel suggests that the purest form of sociability is entirely disinterested, enjoyed for its own sake. However, this must be understood as an ideal-type, constructed in order to better understand the ins and outs, ups and downs of actual sociability. In real life, and in our streets, much public sociability is in fact put to a purpose. While the rolling sociability described above generally fits into the model of pure, disinterested sociability if it takes place on the street, if it takes place inside a shop, café or restaurant, the line between interest and disinterest becomes blurred. To put in the words of the merchant quoted above, “[with] a nice little conversation, you can help yourself a lot”. Are shop workers sociable in order to sell more of what they’re selling, or just because they like and choose to be so?

The answer, unsurprisingly, is that the sociability of merchants and employees is a mix of work and pleasure, as Grafmeyer writes:

In the main, the everyday world of sociable practices is in between the two. You see very varied combinations of activities with an end in sight and the search for a social bond, the relation of service and the pleasure of contact, exchange with a hidden interest and interest in exchange" (Grafmeyer, 1995: 198, my translation).

Some rolling sociability seems entirely superfluous. A barman in his 30s in a St-Viateur café livens up his latte sales with an apparently extraneous commentary on current events: "They say Pluto's not a planet any more. I don't buy it; I'd say if it's been a planet for this long now, you can't just change it like that." "I know, that was my reaction exactly!" replies his customer, a woman about his age who seems to be a regular (StV fieldnotes, 2006-09). But this sociability is also part of the job. The same barman told me how much he had learnt from his boss:

He knows what you drive, when you come in, whether you're there on the weekdays or the weekends, what kind of coffee you have, what you had last time, he knows that you have half hot milk half cold milk, it's all in his head. And so people really like that, „Hey, he remembers my name,“ it makes them feel special, they think it's really cool. And I learnt a lot from him too, that that's what it's about. (StV fieldnotes 2007-06)

The same mix of work and pleasure is also presented in the documentary film about Cosmo's restaurant on Sherbrooke Ouest, *Man of Grease* (Soiferman, 2000). The film hinges in part on the owner's first ever visit back to Cyprus, where he grew up. While he is away, the restaurant at first stays closed, but his children soon open it up again. The daughter justifies this decision because "it's tradition," and then in the next shot, the son says it's because he's broke and needs the money. This amusing juxtaposition neatly sums up the tension between the workers' attachment to sociable work on the one hand, and their need to turn a profit on the other. Customers clearly appreciate the convivial atmosphere that Tony and his children create. One confirms: "I love it like a brandy. [...] It's a real treat for me". And another calls the tiny restaurant "cabaret", a "stage" where they're selling "attachment". "I freak out how much people love my dad," says one of the sons (all quotes from Soiferman, 2000). Clearly, customers fill up on more than just breakfast at Cosmo's.

Sociability at Cosmo's seems to have evolved fairly organically. As Tony puts it in the film, "I have a nice personality, my children have nice personalities, [that's] why [the customers] like the place" (ibid.). But many merchants are quite conscious of needing deliberately to engineer social relations in their store. One spoke of using techniques such as moving stock

from place to place and putting up interesting old photos in the store as a way to get customers talking.

That's what makes it different from big shopping centres, where people take a trolley and go off. In a small store you talk, and if you get people used to talking, then they'll come and ask you for what they need and you'll sell to the max. *So it's a way of getting people to talk, then?* Yes, it's a sales policy. Of course, yes. People like the small store when you talk – if you don't talk and don't smile, they won't bother. They can go and buy everything they need in the big stores. The difference is really that here, they talk, here it's like family, people really feel at home. (JTEw10, T)

Another merchant had just moved from Boulevard St-Laurent, Montréal's „Main“, to St-Viateur, and he realized that it would take some effort to adapt to the local mode of sociability:

I'm not an unfriendly guy, but I have to be more neighbourly. [...] What we've decided is to position ourselves as, I mean, everyone's delighted we're here, „oh, it's an asset to the neighbourhood,“ and it is, but uh, it's taken some time I think to fit in, they they, you know, it's, they're used to certain ways of, of doing things, like going and sitting and supping around coffee for endless hours, which is not my thing, I don't like that... [...] So, I'm trying to be a neighbour, [...] and this is going to be a neighbourhood store, and, and, I'm trying to be a little less, uh... crusty... than I can, possibly, be. (StVw8)

This meant that he let a customer who had sold him some goods buy others at a discount, something that he normally wouldn't do. “In the back of my mind it's going „neighbourhood neighbourhood neighbourhood,“ and you know, she's gonna talk, so I said oh, okay.” So sociability requires effort that sometimes gets in the way of business. At a café on Sherbrooke Ouest, one worker said:

There are those who need a lot of attention, I mean, customer service, working at a bar, even if you're selling coffee not liquor, you still get those people who have nobody to talk to and they come and they want to chat with you. So there's a lot of that too. But you learn to manage and make it a healthy relationship, you know. Where you learn to cut it off or to say “I'm busy” or “Don't worry, tomorrow will be better,” or pass it on to someone who has more understanding. (ShOw1)

And dealing with the public can be tiring, as a shopkeeper in her sixties told me:

You know, Martha, sometimes I'm tired of being with the public. There are days when I see so many people that when I go home, I don't feel like doing anything, just resting, drawing the curtains, I don't even watch television, I just want to be quiet, I'm fed up. (de Liège fieldnotes, 2007-06)

That said, however instrumentalized it is and however much effort it can be, many merchants also genuinely enjoy the work of sociability they undertake. An Iranian immigrant told me that working part-time at his brother-in-law's meat and fish counter – even though he no longer needs to, financially – helped him keep in touch with people. “If one day I don't come

here, I feel I lost something, that's it!" (ShOw5). Another man felt that his store had put him more in touch with his neighbourhood:

Since I've had my store, I've met lots of, uh, older ladies that come in, and you know right away you get the feeling like, „ah, they're looking for something for like a quarter." And then, you realize after you get to know them a little bit, or talk a little bit, there's one or two things they really love and they don't mind spending 20 dollars on that beautiful, silver tray. And nobody else wanted that silver tray. And you thought it was beautiful. You and that little old lady thought it was beautiful. And that's cool. That's, that's really neat. That made me feel like, okay, I'm living in my community. I'm really here. (StV w3)

Shop worker sociability on these streets can thus be similar to that of the stallholders observed by de La Pradelle at the Carpentras market. Their banter with customers, often jocularly disrespectful, provides entertainment – not only for the people waiting in the long queue behind, but also as “a way of indicating that one is not really a merchant, of ensuring that nothing in market exchange evokes the *de rigueur* conventional courtesy practiced in shops” (de La Pradelle, 2006: 184). And if the salient contrast in Carpentras is between shops and market stalls, in neighbourhood commercial streets it seems instead to be between large stores and chain stores and small businesses (see also Chapter 4).

I mean let's be honest, you could walk into Walmart, and you could buy EVERYTHING that's being sold, on Sherbrooke Street, from Grey avenue to Cavendish, in air-conditioned comfort, one-time parking, no meters. Why in heaven's name would you want to come to Sherbrooke under the conditions that exist, except for, you like to deal with that person, you know you're going to get treated well, you know that the person you're talking to will serve you well, will give you what you need, not what you want – there is a difference. (ShOw12)

Public sociability thus helps merchants and workers construct their places of business as unique.

Ostentatious sociability in small businesses thus becomes a spectacle, enacted by those behind the counter for the benefit of customers who want to watch or join in to play roles of varying importance (Bauman, 1972; Bozon, 1982). The St-Viateur barman quoted above had been working in the café for a decade:

It's like my favourite soap opera, I love it. And now I have a hand in writing the script, in directing it, I can't move away! I can't get enough of it. Plus I haven't had to pay for a coffee in ten years so I've saved a lot of money. (StV fieldnotes 2007-06)

Of course, as with any show, the script may target a particular audience, and may not always be benign. Wells and Watson found that shopkeepers in a multiethnic London neighbourhood use their shops as stage on which they “literally provide a place for the production and circulation of racialized notions of who does and who does not belong in the locale” (2005: 264). I did not

observe any overtly exclusionary public performances in the little „theatres“ of the stores in the four streets I studied, although the stars of the show behind the counters could certainly give off cues as to who belonged and who did not in some places.¹¹ That said, it is likely that exclusive scripts were enacted in the least accessible, most tightly-knit stores on the streets: those that were set apart by gender and/or age and/or ethnic origin, such as the cafés on de Liège that were reportedly devoted to gambling, or the hairstylists“ salons everywhere.

If from one point of view, stores, workers in cafés and stores can stage a show, from another, the shop window looks out onto another spectacle, that of the street, observed by the merchant. One grocer on Sherbrooke Street had long worked in an office before going into business with her husband:

So it was a BIG step for me, really a big step. And I didn't think I could do it when I started because I was always going home and saying „Oh, the things I see on the street,“ cause I'm not accustomed to seeing it. You know? I, I – when I was working for the corporation, I leave my home, I get in the office, I stay there, I go for lunch, I go back in the office, and finish I go home. So, you're not out in the open to see what really transpires, so that was a big learning. *[laughs]* *What kind of things did you see that surprised you?* Everything, everything! The way people, the way people interact, the, the things, silly things that people DO, that, you just didn't pay attention to it! You know, because you're with your peer, you're with a group of people that you work with for years, and you know them, so you're not in the public eye. [...] So now I know what to see and, the way people act and you know, now, how you have to treat people as well, you know, you can't judge, that's a big thing, you can't judge people, you have to get to know them, because judging can lead you in the wrong direction. And, or make you feel sorry that you, that you think that way or whatever, so. So it's, it's... so, it's a challenge. *[laughs]* (ShO w6)

This quote shows that merchants and employees have to learn about social relations in their working environment, just as other users of the streets do. Over time, if they master them and if they stay in the same place long enough, they may well become the kind of “eyes on the street” that Jacobs wrote about, that is, figures who watch over the street and contribute to “an almost unconscious assumption of general street support” (1961: 56). To a great extent, then, the small businessperson's or employee's moneymaking commitment to customer service is intertwined with the varieties of public sociability that everybody on a neighbourhood commercial street helps to create.

¹¹ Some merchants did express ethnicized views of who belonged on the streets, as we shall see in Chapter 5, but only in the context of private interviews with me, not in front of other workers or clients.

4.5 Conclusion: the street as ecosystem of social relations

This chapter has identified several axes along which sociability varies in neighbourhood commercial streets. Firstly, these streets offer a variety of places for public sociability, since they are used as both destinations and pathways, and they provide both accessible and inaccessible micro-places in which people pass or meet. Secondly, sociability on the streets varies in its forms. It involves both familiar and unknown people, as well as familiar strangers and regulars, the latter being a particularly coveted status. It can operate on a mode of familiarity or anonymity, whether or not the people involved are known or strangers. It also generates unremarkable, smooth social interactions, as well as others remarkable for their conviviality (rolling sociability) or their tension or conflict (spiky sociability). Thirdly, sociability on commercial streets varies in its finality: it can be put to the service of commerce or remain „pure“, as Simmel would say.

What do we learn about multiethnic commercial neighbourhood streets from this analysis of their places and practices of public sociability? Above all, that they constitute a kind of richly diverse „ecosystem“ of social relations. The word „ecosystem“ is apt here because it evokes the interdependence of the various kinds of social relations. Although some kinds of relations may be overtly appreciated more than others (the status of being a regular, or the „conversational tapas“ of inconsequential intimacy), the unremarkable or anonymous relations play an equally important role in sustaining the ecosystem, and are crucial to preserving the „public“ character of public sociability. Just as no one would want to see a commercial neighbourhood street deserted, not everyone would want it to be full of friends „hanging out“ together either. This is perhaps particularly the case in multiethnic contexts, since certain forms of public sociability – such as people lingering on the sidewalk – can have quite distinct meanings for people from different backgrounds.

The practices of public sociability in which people engage helps generate the „sense of place“ of each street as a whole (see Chapter 6); the diversity of these practices on neighbourhood commercial streets certainly helps account for their attractiveness in light of the current trend of the „reenchantment“ of public space (J-P Garnier, 2008). Public sociability is also related to cosmopolitanism, in that it constitutes forms of social exchange that are, in a sense, the „building blocks“ of openness to the Other – or indeed closed-ness, in the case of spiky sociability. Indeed, public sociability brings into contact people from different social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As Simmel often argued (e.g. 1997a, c), sociation always involves both integration and differentiation. Individuals connect with each other both by being like everyone

else and by distinguishing themselves; so sometimes they minimize the distinctive features of their identities, and at other times they accentuate them. One of these axes of differentiation is ethnicity, and the following chapter explores how ethnicity is mobilized in commercial streets in multiethnic neighbourhoods.

CHAPTER 5 STREET SIGNS: THE MOBILIZATION OF ETHNICITY

If the overall aim of this thesis is to investigate urban cosmopolitanism, then it is important to explore how people construct their „Others“ in the city, and what kind of interaction they engage in across these lines of „otherness“. Ethnicity, as I explained in Chapter 1, is one of the main axes along which individuals and groups construct each other's „otherness“. This chapter therefore explores the mobilization of ethnicity in our four multiethnic commercial streets. I use the term „mobilization“ to cover three interlinked and crosscutting themes, namely, the construction, the significance and the place of ethnicity.

By „construction“, I refer to the ways in which people construct (perceive, imagine, classify) themselves and each other as belonging to particular ethnic groups. In other words, it refers to the drawing of ethnic boundaries, both by directly assigning membership (“I am Italian”, “you see a lot Arabs round here”), and indirectly, through symbols or practices that are associated with one group or another. These boundaries are perceived differently from the inside (endogenous or achieved ethnicity) than from the outside (exogenous or ascribed identity), yet they are also a product of the dialectic between the two.

By „significance“, I refer to what ethnicity means and what it „does“. In Chapter 1, I noted that groups and individuals draw on ethnicity for both instrumental and symbolic purposes, that is, to perpetuate the group and gain access to resources, and to find a sense of belonging and organize meaning. While the two are closely intertwined, this chapter is primarily concerned with the symbolic dimension of ethnicity rather than the instrumental. Symbols of ethnicity can be classed as part of the evolving repertoire of shared cultural heritage, including cuisine, language and décor, with which groups establish their ethnic identity. I am interested in how such symbols are displayed and deployed, both in the physical streetscape itself and in interactions between people (e.g. merchants and customers) in the multiethnic streets. What is going on – what „work“ is ethnicity doing – when a restaurateur presents his menu as Mexican, when a cashier of Greek origin asserts that in her culture, shop windows have to be clean and clear, or indeed when a Franco-Québécois resident lists the presence of different ethnic groups as evidence for a street's conviviality? In the context of the multiethnic commercial street, one of the key issues relating to the meaning of ethnicity is that of authenticity. Do people seek to establish which symbols „genuinely“ belong to which ethnic group? If so, how? Does the circulation of ethnic symbols in commercial streets represent „authentic“ interethnic exchange?

By reflecting on the „place“ of ethnicity, I want to capture how it is affected by different physical (geographical) and social contexts. At the social level, ethnicity is just one of a range of characteristics that situate us in society (gender, age, class, family situation, physical ability, etc.), which are variably “stressed or muted” (West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 30) depending on the context. The „place“ of ethnicity in the multiethnic commercial street will therefore vary considerably in different situations, as encapsulated by the concept of salience (see Chapter 1). At the geographical level, matters of place and space are bound up in the construction and significance of ethnicity. This recalls my discussion of the spatialization of urban multiethnicity in Chapter 1. For example, „being Greek“ does not have the same impact in Athens as it does in Cyprus or Parc-Extension (a neighbourhood strongly associated with Greek immigrants in Montréal). And someone who is not Greek may feel that a meal in a Greek restaurant is not the same in Parc-Extension as in NDG, or round the corner from home as in a street across town. In a sense, this concern for the place of ethnicity puts the „mobile“ back into the idea of „mobilization“.

In terms of Lefebvre’s triangular understanding of the social production of space, this chapter’s subject matter corresponds to *representational space*, also called *lived space*. In contrast to spatial practice, which is space as perceived through routine use, representational space is:

space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of „inhabitants“ and „users“ [...] which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 39)

The symbols that Lefebvre discusses are mostly psychoanalytical and archetypal ones (e.g. circles, lines, the masculine versus the feminine principle), “linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art” (ibid: 33). I did not delve quite so deeply into the cultures and psyches of the people I talked with! Instead, the symbols I explore are typically less abstract, closer to the surface of things: they are the symbols of ethnicity that mark the four streets, either physically (for instance on storefront façades) or in people’s discourse (ibid: 141).

This chapter therefore addresses the following kinds of questions. How are the four commercial streets marked and recognized as multiethnic? What kinds of references to ethnic origin, affiliation or affinity are in circulation? In what ways does ethnicity intervene in social interactions? How does ethnicity colour the recent historical and socioeconomic circumstances that shape each street as a setting for social interactions? It is important to note that my approach is centred on *individuals*’ representations of ethnicity and interethnic relations. I did not

investigate relations between ethnic groups as such, at the levels at which they occur. That would require research into the collective institutions of civil society, like community associations and facilities, places of worship and other such arenas, of the kind that was undertaken for one prong of the project *Cohabitation interethnique et vie de quartier* (Germain et al., 1995). My research instead follows on from that project's other prong, namely, the use and representation of public spaces in multiethnic contexts, focusing on individuals' experience of them.

Given that emphasis, it should also be clear that my research is not a contribution to the socioeconomic study of „ethnic economies“ as such (Light and Gold, 2000, see Chapter 1), although this chapter does touch on the phenomenon. These studies tend to focus on the „supply side“ of business, but I am interested in „ethnic“ businesses as they are presented and perceived on the „demand side“, in the everyday spaces of our cities. My interest is not so much consumption practices *per se* as the sociosymbolic impact of these businesses on the city and its inhabitants. A number of anthropologists and sociologists take a similar approach: Raulin (1986, 1987, 1988, 2000) explored the full social context of ethnic businesses in Paris; Lee (2002, 2006) and Semi (2005) investigated interracial/interethnic merchant-customer interactions in cities in the US and Italy, respectively; and Pécoud studied the business strategies of German Turkish entrepreneurs in Berlin (2002, 2004a, b); while Stoller (1996, 2002a, b) and J Garnier (2008) examined those of West African vendors in markets in New York and Poitou-Charentes, respectively. All these examples take account of the relations between merchants, customers and spatial context (although they still tend to centre on merchants rather than clients or place). They problematize the „ethnic“ in „ethnic business“ and recognize that folk concepts and scientific concepts of ethnicity rarely correspond (Banks, 1996; Banton, 2000). Inspired by this approach, I adopt the premise that running, seeing and using shops and services that are marked as „ethnic“ affects how city-dwellers perceive and, ultimately, interact with both the members of the many ethnic groups that make up the city, and the multiethnic city as a whole. In other words, it is relevant to examine the social and symbolic impact of businesses that are marked as ethnic, because this has an effect on how we live together and recognize each other in a multiethnic city.

The chapter is divided into four parts. I begin with a discussion of representations of the ethnic composition of the population of each street, comparing users' perceptions with census statistics. This analysis shows which groups are most visible and which seem to be invisible on each street, indicating the range of „Others“ that are recognized in social interactions. In terms of the chapter's overall themes, it deals with the construction of ethnicity and the place (in the

sense of salience) of ethnicity. Secondly, I discuss how the streets are marked as multiethnic, by examining the signs of ethnicity in the urban streetscape, and by again comparing the apparent ethnic affiliation of shops and businesses with census statistics on ethnic origin. This section therefore considers the construction of ethnicity in conjunction with its symbolic significance. Thirdly, I explore the mobilization of ethnicity in the consumption side of „ethnic business“. What is really ethnic about ethnic businesses? My answers to this question deal mostly with the significance and the (geographical) place of ethnicity, and will include further development of the debate on authenticity. Lastly, drawing on all three themes of the mobilization of ethnicity, I come full circle to discuss what individuals „do“ with ethnicity in their discourses about interethnic relations in these streets. I trace some of the historical patterns of settlement and socioeconomic trends that have shaped how people think about and treat each other as members of ethnic groups on each street. The structure of the chapter therefore moves from the level of the street in general (section 5.1), to that of its particular micro-places (sections 5.2 and 5.3) and then back to street level (section 5.4).

5.1 Places and their people: ethnic (in)visibility

It is hard to imagine anyone but the most devoted demographer picturing the multiethnic city in terms of the precise portions of the population of each ethnic group in each neighbourhood. More commonly, city-dwellers build up a heuristic picture of who lives where in the city based on a mix of first-hand observation and second-hand reports, as they see or hear about people associated with particular ethnic groups in specific parts of the city. Some ethnic groups are more visible in certain places than others, and this visibility is often disproportionate to their actual quantifiable presence in the population. In this section, I investigate the relationship between „reality“ and „representations“ of the composition of the population in the area surrounding each street, in order to find out which ethnic and other social groups are most visible, and which are invisible. This inquiry is interesting because it illustrates two important theoretical points about ethnicity. It shows how variably the boundaries of ethnicity can be drawn: from insiders“ or outsiders“ points of view (achieved or ascribed ethnicity) and at different scales of ethnicized belonging (nested identity). And it shows that ethnicity is not always salient to the way in which users categorize the local population of each street. Overall, I argue that each group“s level of (in)visibility is likely to affect the recognition that its members are accorded in the streets.

I analyzed (in)visibility by comparing what interviewees told me about the ethnic composition of the population of each street“s local area with available census data on this

theme (in a similar way to Leloup, 2002; Simon, 1994).¹ I used census data on immigration (place of birth, period of immigration and generation status) and ethnic origins as the basis for my analysis, and to compile the tables and figures presented in Appendices P (immigration data) and Q (ethnic origin data). Census data, however, is far from unproblematic, as Hamel, Mongeau and Vachon (2007) point out. Firstly, the census is based on the nocturnal resident population, and tells us nothing about the crowds of people who might conceivably flock to our streets during the day (ibid.: 65-66). Secondly, immigrants' place of birth is only a rough indicator of ethnic identity, since the latter is not always ever isomorphic with a nation-state (see Chapter 1). As an example, an immigrant to Montréal might have been born in France to immigrants from Algeria and identify ethnically as Berber, but she would be recorded by Canada as a French immigrant. Thirdly, while the variable of ethnic origin has the potential to capture ethnic identities regardless of place of birth, it is rife with complications (see section 5.2). The current wording of the census question encourages both use of „Canadian“ as an ethnic origin and reference to all ancestors more distant than a grandparent, apparently giving equal weight to both a newly-hatched „ethnicity“ and myriad ancient ones (Hamel, Mongeau and Vachon, 2007: 69ff.). Moreover, data tables published from the 2006 census aggregate both single and multiple responses (see 5.2 below). These developments seem to acknowledge the social-scientific consensus that many people do claim and live by multiple ethnic identities (see Statistics Canada, 2008b), but they generate an unusually complex set of data – which is nonetheless helpful in assessing the ethnic makeup of the population.

I contrasted these census statistics with material from interviews, namely, the groups that people most often mentioned when they talked about the composition of the neighbourhood. Of course, people do not only categorize each other in terms of ethnic origin, but also in terms of age, gender, social class and what could be called lifestyle (as students, families, etc.). My questioning technique was to first ask what kinds of groups of people the interviewee saw on the street, without mentioning ethnicity. If ethnic groups did not immediately feature in the response, I would probe further. The commonsense categories with which people answered are not always the same kinds of affiliations: ethnic origin, country of origin, region of origin, religion and colour of skin were often listed together. So someone might mention Africans, Vietnamese and Arabs in the same sentence, putting a continent, a country and a cultural category on the same level. This is only to be expected; what is interesting is that it tells us something about which kinds of difference make a difference in people's representations, or which kinds of difference are salient.

¹ See Chapter 3 for details of my choice of census tracts.

It thereby sets the scene for my later discussions of the mobilization of ethnicity that focus on the landscape of the streets and the interactions they host. Since each area has its distinct demographics, a street-by-street approach is appropriate here.

5.1.1 Rue de Liège: “It used to be... and now...”

When asked about the kinds of people they saw on rue de Liège, many interviewees made a clear distinction between the area’s earlier demographics and its current population. For instance, these men, whose parents had immigrated from Greece, said of the neighbourhood:

– It’s changed a lot. – *What changes?* – Well [*he waves his hand towards a man passing by who looks South Asian*], when I was growing up it used to be all Greek, English, some French, maybe like six black families. Now it’s more Indians and Pakistanis. But they don’t bother me, I don’t mind anyone. (deL fieldnotes, 2006-07)

The ethnic background used to be mostly Greek, at one point it used to be something like 80%, or 85% Greek. And now it’s Indian, Pakistani I’d say are pretty much dominating the area, and I’m pretty sure they’re close to about over 50% of the mark, maybe could be hitting 60%, I’m not sure. So basically things have changed a lot around here. (deLb10)

Although the second interviewee’s figures are much exaggerated, the overall picture of change is clear and relatively accurate, opposing groups that “used to be” there to those who are there “now”. The former were classed by interviewees as “Europeans”, mainly “Greeks”, sometimes “Italians”, “English” and “French”. “Armenians”, although non-European, occasionally featured among the long-established, as did “Arabs” a couple of times. Only the oldest interviewees mentioned groups from Eastern Europe. The recent arrivals were variously listed as “Asians”, “Africans”, “Indians”, “Pakistanis”, “Bangladeshis”, “Sri Lankans”, and, less frequently, “Ghanaians”, “Haitians” and “Latinos” or “Hispanics”. Unlike the long-established groups, recent arrivals were sometimes labelled by religion (“Hindus” or “Muslims”). The list of groups varied from person to person; for instance, people of South Asian origin gave a more nuanced portrait of South Asian groups (“Punjabi”, “Gujarati”) than those who were not, who tended to refer only to “Indians” and “Pakistanis”. This clearly illustrates the asymmetry of „external“ and „internal“ definitions of ethnic boundaries: finer distinctions of nested identity are made by insiders, while outsiders generalize and do not remark some groups at all. Not surprisingly, some of those who were recent arrivals themselves did not present a strong picture of change, but emphasized instead the area’s diversity, e.g. saying there are “all kinds of people” (DeLb4, an Indian immigrant, and DeLb9, Bangladeshi immigrants). This picture of a neighbourhood that used to be mainly Greek but is becoming more South Asian does indeed reflect census counts (Poirier, 2006). The table for de Liège in Appendix P shows the progressive decline of the proportion of

immigrants born in Greece and the rise in the combined share of those from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. A quarter of the neighbourhood's immigrants now come from Southern Europe, as against 40% from Southern Asia (2006 census figures).

People on de Liège associate this change with the upward social mobility of older waves of immigrants or their children, who have moved out to suburbs that are seen as „nicer“ areas. Indeed, the other characteristic that was salient to some interviewees was social class: the kinds of people they saw were mainly poor people. One shopkeeper noted how women customers counted out their pennies, and had little disposable income left after feeding their children: “It's the poorest neighbourhood here. The rich people have all left, they all left to buy places,” she said (deLw1, T). A bakery cashier noted that the proximity of the affluent Town of Mount-Royal highlighted the difference between rich and poor:

There are lots of... Indians, Pakistanis that I see, Greeks as well a little bit, not many Arabs, a few, but in general it's people who aren't very rich, who aren't very poor, but in the middle class and then perhaps closer to the breadline, too. For instance there's a difference between the people who – the fact that the Town of Mount-Royal is just next to us, and people go to the Rockland shopping centre, it's a boundary all the same, so we do see rich people who pass by here too! *[laughs]* (deLw3, Syrian origin, T)

This perception of income levels does reflect the reality of Parc-Extension, where men earned only half, and women two-thirds, of average full-time full-year employment incomes for 2005 in the Montréal CMA (see Table 3.4).

However, while de Liège interviewees' picture of the local population is roughly representative, a few immigrant groups and ethnic origins are quite invisible in it. For example, Haitians do not feature as strongly in the *image* of local demographics as their actual share in the population would suggest (6.0% of immigrants, 5.0% of ethnic origins, 2006 census). My observations showed that Haitians are certainly visible, or rather, as Creole-speakers, audible in significant numbers on de Liège. But perhaps their „low profile“ in other people's representations can be explained by the lack of shops marked as Haitian on de Liège (though there are a few on other east-west commercial streets in Parc-Extension).

For once, the relative invisibility of white “English” and “French” groups is quite appropriate. Even though the 2006 census reports that a third of the population are not immigrants, only 3.5% of the total population cited British, 3.4% cited French and 5.2% cited Canadian in their ethnic origins (compared to 11.0%, 26.4% and 46.6% for the Montréal CMA respectively). Moreover, only 6.8% of the population aged 15 and over are of third or more generation status in Canada (i.e. both their parents were born inside Canada). Thus, the groups

that are usually “invisible” because they are part of the dominant but unmarked white majority in Canada (Mackey, 2002) go unremarked, for once, for good reason: they are indeed in the minority.

5.1.2 Rue Jean-Talon Est: “A certain cohabitation between communities”

Users of Jean-Talon Est also think of the street in terms of the changing ethnic composition of the population, but the split between old and new populations is not represented as starkly as on rue de Liège. In this area, the old-time population is said to be Italian, and the most recent arrivals are typically labelled as “Arabs”. The latter are sometimes called “North Africans” in interviews in English, and are sometimes distinguished more finely as people from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia – again, usually by people from the region, showing the asymmetry of ethnic boundaries. Other groups that interviewees frequently mentioned are “Latinos” / “Hispanics” / “South Americans”, “Haitians”, “Chinese”, “Vietnamese” and “Africans”, along with “Français”, “Québécois” or “French Canadians”.

It’s very very multiethnic, but I see lots of groups of Italians, Africans, Asians. (JTEw3, Franco-Québécois, 20s, T)

There’s a certain cohabitation between the communities, [...], there are Latinos, there are Arabs, there are Haitians, there are Africans, there are Italians, there’s everything, everything. (JTEb1, Moroccan immigrant, 30s, T)

I would say the older generation Italians... the South Americans... North African... French Canadians, cause there’s still a lot of French Canadians in the area... ... I would say that would be, uh... those four. (JTEw5, Canadian of Italian origin, 40s)

There are the Chinese, there are the Italians, there are the Latinos, there are the blacks, the Haitians, there are the Arabs, that means there’s everything. Oh yes, there’s everything. There are definitely Québécois, too. (JTEw10, Tunisian immigrant, 40s, T)

Again, these pictures of the population do roughly reflect the major groups recorded by the census, but there are notable mismatches. The references in the first and second quotes to “Africans” are ambiguous: while the first might include North Africans, the second treats “Africans” as a group separate from Haitians and “Arabs”. Yet people from sub-Saharan Africa represent just 5% of all immigrants, and only 1.9% of the population cites African (as distinct from Arab or Maghrebi) origins (2006 census). “The Chinese” were mentioned more often than Vietnamese as a group, even though people from China and Hong Kong together only make up less than 3% of the local immigrant population, whereas 9% of the local immigrant population is from Vietnam (2006 census); that said, many Vietnamese immigrants declare their ethnic origin to be Chinese. Curiously, only one interviewee mentioned the Portuguese as a group, although they made up 5.7% of immigrants in the area in 2006.

“French Canadians” or “Québécois” featured as a group in many interviews and indeed, insofar as they can be identified in the 2006 census statistics, they are a significant group in the local population. Half the population aged 15 and over is of third or more generation status (which is where old stock Québécois would fit in). Among the total population, 22.5% list French, 35.1% list Canadian and 2.6% list Québécois among their ethnic origins.

A number of interviewees mention the presence of older people as a distinctly visible group in the street. This may relate less to their actual numbers than to their particular use of space: as some shopkeepers pointed out, they are likely to buy small quantities on a frequent basis. Last but not least, several interviewees seemed to feel it was important to emphasize how hard-working and “ordinary” the local population was:

It’s ordinary people, not like on avenue Mont-Royal, for example, where it can be a bit bourgeois. Here it’s a modest milieu, with simple people who help each other out. (JTEb4, from notes, francophone Québécois, 40s, T)

What kind of people use this street, do you think? I don’t look too closely, but... kind of more adults, senior citizens. Yeah. Not many young people, so far. But that’s what I like, too. It’s people who have their own lives, and they’re walking down the street, that’s it. (JTEb3, Canadian of Haitian origin, 20s, T)

On the one hand, these comments show that ethnicity is not the only salient form of difference: people categorize each other in terms of a combination of social class and lifestyle, too. On the other hand, they perhaps also demonstrate a desire to emphasize a certain commonality across ethnic difference: there may be many ethnic groups, but they are all ordinary hard-working people. I will return to this image of Jean-Talon Est as an „ordinary” street in Chapter 6.

5.1.3 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest: “All different types of people from all walks of life”

When asked which groups they saw on Sherbrooke Street, interviewees often responded initially in a general way such as “Oh, every nationality going!” (ShOb5), rather than naming specific groups. Moreover, they also mentioned diversity of social class or lifestyle:

Well, on Sherbrooke you see a lot of different people. All different type of people. From all walk of life. [...] I’m from LaSalle [*a more suburban borough, further west than NDG*]. And, in LaSalle it’s a bit different. You know? Now it’s getting to see more different faces in LaSalle, a different mixture of people in LaSalle. But [...] NDG it’s way different. NDG it’s like really you could see Montréal in NDG. Like, when you talk about multicultural society you see it, right here on Sherbrooke. No doubt. No doubt. Whatever kind of people you see, even if they’re weird, if they’re nuts in their head, if they’re like, best guy, biggest politician, lawyer, whatever, you see them here on Sherbrooke, you know? (ShOw11, Jamaican immigrant, 30s)

All styles! All classes, everything, I don’t know, like I say it’s very multicultural, anglophone, francophone, much more so now, it used to be much more anglophone

before, now it's becoming... half and half francophone, but you find everything. It's super fun. (ShOb12, Irish-Québécois, 30s, T)

As the quote above indicates, the main change that people reported was in the proportion of anglophones to francophones:

And like I say, it used to be... a predominantly Italian / Anglo community, almost... maybe 48% Protestant, 48% Catholic and 4% whatever. Now I find that religiously, and uh, in colours, and in national origin, there's quite a mix now. (ShOw12, Anglo-Canadian, 60s)

This effect of this perceived change is to „mark“ with their language the white Anglo-Canadians and French Canadians, who would often in other contexts remain unmarked and unmentioned. Here, they are explicitly named. When interviewees named ethnic groups besides “francophones” and “anglophones”, the list often included “Koreans”, “Jamaicans”, “Russians”, “Iranians” and, occasionally “Italians” or “Africans”:

In my building, [...] there is seven apartments, one African, one [*inaudible*], one Russian, one Arab, Arabic people from Morocco, Canadian. [...] I think there is many communities. Iranian, Indian, Chinese, Italian, Greek, many many. African. (ShOw5, Iranian immigrant, 30s)

Some immigrant or ethnic groups are still relatively invisible. As on rue Jean-Talon, the labels “Middle Eastern”, “Lebanese”, “Arab” and “North African” were used somewhat interchangeably by people who were not members of those groups, and were probably also confused with the considerable Iranian population of the area. The striking growth in the proportion of Chinese immigrants, from 5.9% in 2001 to 13.1% in 2006, has clearly not yet percolated into interviewees' pictures of the population. Romanians were not mentioned once by anybody (even a Romanian interviewee), in spite of making up 6.1% of the immigrant population and being listed among the ethnic origins by 3.5% of the total population. That said, interviewees' impressions of the sheer *variety* of origins around Sherbrooke Ouest is accurate. As the table for Sherbrooke Ouest in Appendix P shows, the top ten countries of birth accounted for only half of all immigrants (a lesser proportion than in the other three streets), which points to a highly diversified immigrant population. The proportion of immigrants in the total population has also increased markedly, from 32% in 2001 to 37% in 2006.

As for other salient groups, while a few interviewees mentioned the elderly, many talked about students. Concordia University students shuttle between the downtown campus and the Loyola campus, situated further west along Sherbrooke, and the cheaper apartments in the neighbourhood are reportedly popular among student tenants.

In sum, the picture presented below is fairly typical of interviewee's representations of who uses Sherbrooke Ouest:

What kind of people use this street, in your view? It's very varied, depending what time of the day you're out. If you're out during the commuting time, it's all the people working downtown, or students, a lot of students in this area. The elderly, you see a lot of elderly people too, out and about here. And people like myself, in between. I would say, a variety of people, different ethnic groups. [A fine] representation of every possible ethnic group on this street, so I would say it was a pretty, um, a pretty good cross-section of the population. And a fair degree of francophones and anglophones. I would say most of them are residents. (ShOb7, Palestinian immigrant, 40s)

5.1.4 Rue St-Viateur: "The new immigration now? Is really not much immigration"

When asked which groups of people used St-Viateur Street, interviewees generally listed specific European groups, principally "Italians", "Portuguese", "Greeks", "French" and "Hasidic Jews". They often added "Latinos" or "Spanish", and some mentioned "Asians", as a group or in particular: "Chinese", "Vietnamese", "Koreans" (although the latter two each represent less than 1% of immigrants and well under 100 people). Some Eastern European groups were mentioned, such as the "Polish", usually in relation to St Michael's church and the delicatessen next door. Generic "anglophones" were often named as a group, typically in counterpoint to "francophones", but separately from the list of immigrant or ethnic groups. People sometimes mentioned "Québécois", seeming to imply French Canadians, but other interviewees may have been referring to French Canadians when they said "French" – or perhaps not, given that France is now the top country of origin of immigrants in the area surrounding St-Viateur (see Table P.4). There was also a strong sense that the visible groups of the neighbourhood had changed:

The European families have been replaced with the younger generation, with... can't call them hippies, because hippies [were there] when I was around. We were hippies then. But you know, a younger generation. (StVf10, child of Polish immigrants, 60s)

Um ... the new immigration now? Is really not much immigration. There's a lot of yuppies moved in, so they've made it trendy, the cafés, and all artists move in, ah, painters, because it's, they wanna live in the Plateau, and it drives the rents crazy, 'cause everybody wants to live here. (StVw7, Italian immigrant, 60s)

Indeed, while the areas surrounding Jean-Talon Est and Sherbrooke Ouest have seen an increase in the immigrant population as a proportion of the total (Tables P.2 and P.3), and the proportion of immigrants in the population around de Liège has stayed stable (Table 1), the area around St-Viateur has seen a decrease in the immigrant population, from 31.6% in 1996 to 27.4% in 2006 (Table P.4). This figure is now lower than the proportion of immigrants in the population for the island of Montréal (30.7%). Likewise, the proportion of recent immigrants in

Mile End is markedly lower than in the other streets” surrounding areas, whereas it has the highest proportion of immigrants who arrived in the 1970s (Figure P.1). These figures confirm the impression quoted above that “the new immigration now? Is really not much immigration” (StVw7), of which other users are aware too. When one resident asked which other streets I was studying, and heard that one of them was de Liège, he said:

– Ah, Parc-Extension, I suppose that the multiethnic situation is stronger over there. Here there’s practically nothing left. Well, we know it’s an Italian café here, but it’s Italian symbols more than anything else. (StV fieldnotes 2007-06, T)

The social group that seems to make the greatest impression these days is “above all, trendy young people, whatever their ethnic origin” (StVu1, Anglo-French-Canadian, 20s). When I asked people which groups of people they saw using the street, variants of “trendy young people” were often the first distinctive group listed, before people mentioned any ethnic, immigrant or linguistic groups:

I think it’s a neighbourhood where there are a lot of artists, musicians, artists in visual arts or cinema... I think there’s a lot of them... And of course there are lot of Portuguese people here, there are lots of Greeks, uh... Jewish people. Well, you can spot the Hasidic Jews pretty quickly. (StVu3, Franco-Québécois, 30s, T)

A lot of artists, politically active people, um... a lot of creative people... um, predominantly. Then there’s a great deal of students... ... I don’t know, you get a little bit of everybody here. But I mean, this neighbourhood has been famous for a long time, for a lot of uh... Montreal artists, you may have seen their shows, you may have heard about them and now you’ll see them just sitting at the café, cause this is their home, too. ... You do get a lot of local ethnic groups, whether it’s Italian, um, uh, Greek, uh, Ukrainian, [...] maybe at different times than say, the more Anglo crowd. You get the Anglo mixing with the French here. (StVw3, Anglo-Canadian, 30s)

Thus, “hipster musician types, creative people” (StVw5, Italian origin) thus seem now to be the most noticeable group on St-Viateur. Their predominance marks a change from the portrait painted 13 years ago in which “marginal professionals” and wealthier gentrifiers (Rose, 1995: 59) were more evenly mixed in with other social groups; it certainly changes the sense of place of Mile End (see Chapter 6). Finally, several interviewees commented on the large numbers of young families, or parents with young children that they noticed on the street.

*

What does this exercise of comparing representations of the local population to census figures tell us about the four streets? Firstly, it shows that users’ representations of the streets, although often relatively accurate, are always partial. We can note, for example: the absence in people’s discourses of Haitians on de Liège, Portuguese on Jean-Talon Est, and Chinese and

Romanians on Sherbrooke Ouest; the external „Jumping together“ of several internally distinct groups as “Indians” and “Pakistanis” on de Liège, “Arabs” on Jean-Talon Est, and “Arabs” or “Middle East people” on Sherbrooke Ouest; the possible confusion of French-from-France and French Canadians on St-Viateur. As Bordes-Benayoun writes:

The „ethnic character“ of a space never totally coincides with any tangible and quantifiable reality of its population. Instead, it is in large part the result of a representation of space that tends to amplify the presence of one particular group within it. (2005: 282, my translation)

The gap between representation and reality depends on the knowledge and position of the person interviewed: on St-Viateur, an interviewee who worked in an after-school care service had a more realistic idea of local ethnic groups than did the owner of a bric-a-brac store; on Jean-Talon East, an Algerian interviewee spoke in fine detail of distinct groups that an Italian interviewee saw indiscriminately as “Arab”. The construction of ethnic boundaries thus varies according to who is drawing them. Secondly, the groups that seem to stick in people’s minds are not always ethnic, to which attest the many references to ordinary, hard-working people on Jean-Talon, low-income people on de Liège, students on Sherbrooke and creative hipsters on St-Viateur. Social groups — and social changes — that are unrelated to ethnicity can therefore be highly significant to people’s experience of these multiethnic streets. Some ethnic, immigrant and other social groups are therefore less „visible“ in these streets than others, although this does not mean that they are not visible to their own members, nor that they necessarily want to be more visible.²

The variable visibility of groups is interesting because it indicates that the range of Others to whom city-dwellers can be open is limited. Although in principle personal cosmopolitanism entails openness to all „Others“, in practice it is hard to engage with Others of whose existence one is not aware. Thus, the ways in which people categorize each other indicate how their experience of the street is structured by the groups they see (and, potentially, how it could be extended). I think the following quote illustrates this very well, in spite of its brevity:

What kind of different people do you see in the street here? Chinese, Italians, Algerians. With the headscarf, without the headscarf. All sorts of people. Black people. (JTEb2, Italian immigrant, 60s, T)

² Podmore (2001) argues this point with respect to lesbians who frequent part of the Plateau Mont-Royal around Boulevard St-Laurent. Without inscribing this area with visible signs of territorial occupation (bars, shops, etc.), they nevertheless feel comfortable and are visible to each other in this space.

Although this man's list mixes very different „variables“ together (country of origin, religious conviction, skin colour), it actually conveys his main point, that there are “all sorts of people”, much better than any list of census figures ever could. In a sense, it is marking out the salient axes of difference in the street. Thus, it shows the salience, to at least some people in some contexts, of: national origin, which is not surprising on a street where there is also an Italian pension office and a bakery plastered with political posters at Algerian election time; religious practices, as he refers to one that is debated both among Muslims and in society at large; and skin colour, a factor that still structures our experience of many domains of life (West and Fenstermaker, 1995). In effect, members of groups that are seen and named – however inaccurately – are *recognized*, and this affects their status and legitimacy as actors in the locality:

expressive gestures of recognition clearly demonstrate the fact that a subject has already put a limit on his or her own egocentric perspective, such that he or she does justice to the value of the other person as an intelligible being. (Honneth, 2004: 148, my translation)

(In)visibility arguably affects the recognition that individuals accord to the social and ethnic groups of the streets, and establishes the bases for subsequent interaction. I shall return to this theme in the last section of this chapter (5.4).

5.2 Ethnic signs in the streetscape

The visibility of ethnic and social groups in users' images of each street is also influenced by shops and businesses. As I suggested above, for example, Haitians are probably less present in the discourses of users of rue de Liège because there are no recognizably „Haitian“ stores on the street. This leads me to a second exercise involving ethnic classifications. Figures R.1-R.4 in Appendix R are an attempt to represent, street by street, the relative proportions of different „ethnicities“ among i) the local population, ii) all businesses and iii) food-related businesses (cafés, restaurants and grocery stores). The key word here is „attempt“: rather than presenting a definitive guide to the ethnic composition of these streets, these figures serve as a springboard for two more interesting discussions. The first concerns the process of categorizing people and businesses as „ethnic“. The second concerns the relationship of the multiethnic street as a whole to its surrounding area and ultimately to the multiethnic city.

The information used in Figures R.1-R.4 comes from two sources, neither of which are unproblematic. The data on individuals comes from the 2006 census, and the data on stores from fieldwork observations. I outlined some of the problems with ethnic origin statistics in

section 5.1. As the Statistics Canada (2008b: unpaginated)³ reference material for ethnic origin concurs, “Ethnicity is a difficult concept to measure and there is no internationally recognized classification for this concept”. However, it is also an important concept to measure, since ethnicity data are used by many institutions “to assess how people of differing backgrounds have integrated into life in Canada [...] [and] to administer programs under the *Multiculturalism Act*” (ibid.). The 2006 census collected data on the “ethnic or cultural origins of the respondent’s ancestors”, specifying that an ancestor is “usually [sic] more distant than a grandparent” (ibid.). Up to six ethnic origins were retained for each person, and in contrast to previous censuses, the data published so far aggregates single and multiple responses, which means that “the sum of specific groups is not equal to total population” (ibid.). Statistics Canada has sorted this dataset into „nested” categories of broad and specific origins (see Appendix Q). Thus, for example, the total responses given for the broad category of “Caribbean origins” include responses for the sub-category “Haitian”, for which a separate figure is also given. This inclusive presentation of data – combining single and multiple responses, and classing all responses under regional categories – recognizes the subjective nature of ethnic origin. Since the census tries to measure how people see themselves, it makes sense to include as many ways of seeing as possible, rather than „cleaning” the data up into more manageable categories. However, it does make the data rather complicated to use (see notes for Figures R.1-4).

The data on ethnic affiliations of stores in Figures R.1-4 come from my fieldwork, but these are perhaps even harder to identify than those of people. Most social science literature on ethnic businesses treats their ethnic character as unproblematic, locating it in the ethnic (usually national) origin of the business owner and his or her employees and backers, who are assumed to be of the same background.⁴ Ethnicity is defined from behind the shop counter, as it were. This is understandable given the aims of this kind of socioeconomic research: to understand why, how and to what extent members of ethnic minorities create and sustain their own businesses (which may or may not specialize in ethnically marked goods). However, for my purposes, it is reasonable to question this simplistic approach, since the ethnicity of „ethnic” businesses when approached from the other side of the counter is less obvious. What makes a

³ www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/reportsandguides/ethnic-origin.cfm, accessed on-line, August 22, 2008.

⁴ For instance, Aldrich and Waldinger “assume that what is “ethnic” about ethnic enterprise may be no more than a set of connections and regular patterns of interaction among people *sharing common national background* or migratory experiences” (1990: 112, my emphasis). The possibility of *interethnic* employment, e.g. minority ethnic businesses employing staff from other backgrounds, is rarely considered in ethnic economy literature (but see Kim, 1999 for an exception).

business „ethnic“? As Raulin (1987: 109) asks, is it the origin of the owner and employees or the origins of the clientele? Is it indicated by the name, the façade, the décor of the store? Is it associated with the products, or with the circuits of capital and distribution that put the products on the shelves?

In spite of this complexity, I assigned a single ethnic affiliation to each store in order to produce the charts in Figures R.1-R.4. My decisions were well-informed, but sometimes inevitably arbitrary. D.A.D.S. Bagels on Sherbrooke Ouest is a case in point. The Sikh owner is originally from India, and sells onion *bhajis* and curry as well as the bagels. He is quoted in a newspaper article as saying: “You don’t need to be Jewish to eat bagels. You don’t need to be Jewish to make bagels!” (Laurence, 2006, my translation, see Appendix U). However, it still seems somewhat arbitrary to class his business as „East Indian“ (as I have done for the purposes of Figure R.2) rather than, perhaps, Jewish. One way of resolving such dilemmas would be to retain up to six for stores’ ethnic origins, as the census does for people – say, one for the owners, one for the employees, one for the name, one for the décor, one for the products, one for the customers... But the problem would still arise in that each of these in turn can be multiple.

In everyday as opposed to statistical life, human beings are able to learn and retain complex stories of identity and belonging relating to the places and people they encounter. Any attempt to reduce this information to a single ethnic label is patently inadequate.⁵ My learning about the ethnicity of stores during fieldwork was an ongoing process, since each site visit or interview could shed new light on each place. Indeed, it resembled (with perhaps more attention to detail) what a regular user of a commercial street might achieve over the course of her day-to-day activities, getting to know different stores, their products, their workers and other customers a little better each time. Ethnic affiliation might at first be guessed at from visible markings of the store’s façade, then revised according to signs in the store’s interior, and then stabilized after talking with the shopkeeper – to be possibly changed again after seeing who else uses the store and what products are on sale there. The following paragraphs give some specific examples of how in practice one might „read“ the ethnic symbols of a business.

First, a store’s ethnic affiliation is sometimes clearly visible from its façade. Its name might feature a country, region or city (Bonne Bouffe jamaïcaine, le Coin du Mexique, Marché

⁵ One should also ask what purpose ethnic labelling serves: while the census data is collected to help administer public policy, collecting data on businesses is harder to justify (besides satisfying scholarly curiosity...), although it could be used to support neighbourhood branding or ethnic place marketing.

Green Punjab), or perhaps two distinct but „close“ origins (Épicerie coréenne et japonaise). Some names indicate an affiliation at a higher level in the series of „nested identities“ – e.g. Keur Fatou le bistro africain, Restaurant Zone d’Asie, Marché Reynald Produits antillais – but in the latter two cases, smaller signs make them more specific – “cuisine vietnamienne authentique” and a Haitian flag, respectively. Some rely not on direct geographical references, but on other associations: many Italian businesses have names that echo the sonorities of the language (San Marco Pasticceria, Boucherie Motta, Pasta Casareccia, Ristorante di Lusso, Salon de coiffure Moda Donna) or are decked out in the Italian flag’s colours of red, white and green. Some such signs are only displayed temporarily; for instance, a dry cleaner’s on Jean-Talon Est put up an Italian flag during the soccer World Cup 2006, but usually there is nothing visibly „ethnic“ about it. Likewise, an ordinary-looking basement depanneur on de Liège occasionally displays posters announcing funerals in Ghana; this participation in informal social networks is the only external clue to the community to which the shopkeeper belongs. Of course, one can only grasp the meaning of some of these signs if one has a little geographical or linguistic knowledge.

In other cases, ethnic affiliation is not obvious from outside the store. Some ethnic references are simply multiple: D.A.D.S Bagels also advertizes “Home-made Indian cuisine” (T); while the Centre visuel d’Iberville’s name is repeated in several Asian languages, and it is hard to tell whether one trumps the others to reflect the owners’ origins or target clientele. In such cases, it is more appropriate to think in terms of markers of *multiethnicity* rather than ethnicity. Indeed, businesspeople may want to deliberately advertize their multiethnicity, as is the case when they put up signs in multiple languages, like at the optician’s mentioned above or the florists on St-Viateur (see photos U.2 and U.3). Other ethnic references are just oblique. „Akhavan“ means „brother“ in Farsi (Persian), but unless you knew that, you might not know from the outside that the supermarket of this name is owned by Iranian brothers (indeed, interviewees often called the store “Middle Eastern”). The name of the bakery La Belle Bleue refers to the Mediterranean, which gives only a tiny clue to the baker’s Algerian origins. The curly alphabet on the sign of Marché Murugan is Tamil, spoken in Sri Lanka, and Honey Martin only looks like an Irish pub if you recognize the faux-Gaelic font. And there are Arabic letters on the sign of the Marché de Poisson et de Viande St-Laurent (a name inherited from the last owner), but they spell Farsi words, not Arabic ones (the two languages use the same alphabet). Often, one needs „insider“ knowledge to recognize a store’s ethnicity.

More often still, one needs to actually go inside, where the décor and origins of products can provide more clues. If you have time to read the framed newspaper article on the wall, you’ll

find out that the bakers at Banette actually immigrated from France to bring proper baguettes to Sherbrooke Ouest (Semenak, 2001). However, even inside a shop, recognizing ethnicity can depend on „insider“ knowledge: that produce labels are written in Tamil as well as French; that saffron and pistachio nuts are particularly Iranian; that the flags on the wall are of Greek regions and sports teams. One can also look at or listen to other customers to try to pick up on the ethnic affiliation of the store, but as ethnic studies scholars know, gauging ethnic origin from appearance is notoriously imprecise, and locating it from language or music requires considerable prior knowledge.

Inside or out, then, a single store can convey multiple ethnic symbols that do not point to a single affiliation. *Depanneurs* are usually a case in point. On the one hand they offer a fairly standardized range of goods and serve a very general everyday purpose as „convenience“ stores; they could be classed as „mainstream“ (or „Other North American“ to use the Statistics Canada label. On the other hand, many are run by immigrants and stock a few lines of ethnically specialized goods that reflect the owners“ origins, so could be slotted in a particular ethnic category. Thus, the only obviously Portuguese things about the „Portuguese“ *depanneur* on St-Viateur seem to be the rather taciturn owner“s origin, the stack by the door of the community newspaper *Voz do Portugal* and the odd tin of sardines. In contrast, Arawak, on Sherbrooke Ouest, looks like just another *depanneur* from the outside, but inside the Jamaican specialties such as oxtail, malt drinks and hot sauces take up considerable shelf space. The name provides a less transparent clue, since the Arawak were an aboriginal people of Jamaica. Ultimately, the owners“ origins often outweigh any other ethnic symbols. On de Liège, *depanneurs* are often known by the nationality of their owners, not their goods, and play a certain role in intra-ethnic sociability. For instance, the Greek *depanneurs* double as cafés and, to some extent, hangouts for older Greek men. The owner of D.A.D.S Bagels is also a well-known neighbourhood character, active in local politics (Laurence, 2006), so it is not unreasonable to suppose that his own origin (Indian and Sikh) is as significant to customers as that of the bagels, or even more so. Storekeepers are often taken to be a representative of a given culture, whatever they sell. The key point here is that even if the goods exchanged are a case of beer and a bag of potato chips, interactions in the store may then be experienced as interethnic interactions.

Stores are not only inscribed with markers of (multi)ethnicity, but also with markers of social class and „lifestyle“. Ethnically unmarked, „mainstream“ businesses therefore also pose problems of categorization, since they too vary in terms of customers, goods, circuits of capital and commodities, and the types of interactions they host. A *depanneur* is used very differently

than Magie Spectram, a magic trick store on Jean-Talon, or General 54, a St-Viateur boutique specializing in fashion by young and especially Québécois designers. A post office serves a very different purpose from Maman Bébé Café, a café for parents and children on Sherbrooke Ouest that also sells cloth diapers and holds classes such as dad-and-baby drumming sessions. Each of these businesses conveys particular signs of class or lifestyle: from the typically down-market „emergency“ goods of the *depanneur*, to the exclusive, hip locality of General 54, to the insider knowledge, jokes and secrets of Magie Spectram, to the ecological correctness of Maman Bébé Café, to the clean Canadian universality of the post office branch. Although researchers have developed fairly stable categories of businesses relating to frequency and type of purchase,⁶ typologies along axes of social class or „lifestyle“ are rarely attempted. One exception is Donald and Blay-Palmer (2006), who group together “specialty, ethnic, and organic SMEs [small and medium enterprises]” into what they call the “„creative-food“ industry”. But while this approach may work for their supply-side research, it seems to conflate incomparable kinds of businesses in terms of their symbolic value to actual city-dwellers in the urban landscape. In contrast, by focusing tightly on commercial streets in four Sydney neighbourhoods, Bridge and Dowling (2001) link certain types of shops with neighbourhood gentrification, such as businesses that serve to manage body and self (gyms, alternative therapy centres, etc.) as well as the restaurants and caterers that soak up rising disposable incomes (see also Zukin et al., 2009). Categorizing businesses exclusively by ethnic origin, as I have done in Appendix R, masks this class-based variation.

The link between shops and gentrification brings us to the second set of points I want to make in this section. What do Figures R.1-4 tell us about the multiethnic street as a whole, and its relation to its immediate and wider environment? Firstly, food shops are more markedly ethnic than businesses in general: a smaller fraction of food shops than all shops fall under the „Other North American“ or „Uncertain“ categories. Food is still a stronger vehicle of „ethnicity“ or „culture“ than other commodities and services (van den Berghe, 1984). Secondly, the ethnicity of businesses on the streets is not in direct proportion to the local resident population, which is always more diverse than the stores. Thus, there is an „overrepresentation“ of Italian stores on all streets except Sherbrooke Ouest where they are in closer proportion to the population. On de

⁶ For instance, the *Dictionnaire de l'urbanisme et de l'aménagement* (1996) proposes a typology of everyday, occasional and „anomalous“ (i.e. requiring a period of reflection before purchase) goods and services; the *Fondation Rues principales* (n.d.) proposes a fourfold typology of everyday, semi-everyday and considered (*courant*, *semi-courant*, *réfléchi*) plus restaurants and entertainment. In English, the terms high-order and low-order goods are used in academic and technical literature.

Liège, there is a greater proportion of Greek stores on the street than Greek-origin people in the population, while Sherbrooke Ouest's proportion of Korean stores is far greater than the proportion of Korean local residents. In this vein, the following view of Sherbrooke Ouest is not as authoritative as it sounds:

[This area is] changing, quite rapidly. I would say maybe 30, 35 percent are francophone now. And the other ethnic backgrounds you have, particularly a strong Iranian community here. Russians, they came to the neighbourhood, quite a few. Of course there's the Caribbean community. It's really mixed, I mean there are Italians of course. And if you look at the businesses, they do reflect different backgrounds. We have a Vietnamese restaurant, we have a Chinese restaurant, we have three Indian restaurants, within my close circle, there is a Cajun restaurant, an Italian restaurant. So, it really reflects, I think, people's backgrounds. (ShOw3)

Both the businesses and the local population of Sherbrooke Ouest are very ethnoculturally diverse, but the former do not really reflect the latter. (It is hard to imagine that the Cajun restaurant reflects a local contingent of NDG Cajuns...!) So although it may be an appealing idea, one cannot „read off“ the local population from the apparent ethnicity of stores.

There are several possible explanations for such „mismatches“. Firstly, ethnic businesses are often „left behind“ when the groups that created them move out in greater numbers to the suburbs. Not just mere relics of a neighbourhood's ethnic past, they continue to provide services to a given ethnic group as part of its original founding neighbourhood (Remy, 1998 [1990], see Chapter 1). This explains the preponderance of Greek stores on de Liège, or Italian stores on Jean-Talon Est. Secondly, some ethnic groups have businesses in areas in which they are not particularly residentially concentrated, just because they are so large and well-established: they are present practically everywhere. This helps account for the presence of Italian businesses on de Liège and St-Viateur.⁷ Thirdly, some ethnically marked businesses exist to serve co-ethnic clientele in areas where the latter is not residentially concentrated at all. This relates to “heterolocalism” (Zelinsky, 2001, see Chapter 1). Members of one ethnic group may live and work in different places, coming together to socialize, shop or pray in other places, and also maintaining ties by non-territorial, sometimes transnational means (e.g. radio and internet). For example, Mexicans come from all over Montréal to go the Mexican restaurant on Jean-Talon Est, where less than 1% of the population claims Mexican origins. However, this restaurant also

⁷ Neither Mile End nor Parc-Extension are known as especially Italian today (the northern section of the former was settled by Italians in the early twentieth century). However, Italian immigrants make up such a large group, and have been in Montréal for so long, that they are present in most zones of the CMA. The 2006 census shows that Italy is still the number one single country of origin of immigrants in both the CMA and the island of Montréal.

serves a non-Mexican clientele, which brings us to a fourth explanation: many ethnically-marked businesses, restaurants in particular, do not only serve their own ethnic market but also target a mainstream or non-co-ethnic and often non-local clientele. This seems obvious, but in light of the traditional approach to ethnic economies, it bears repeating. Thus, the Senegalese restaurant on St-Viateur attracts a young, „alternative“, mostly white if well-travelled crowd (as I observed when dining there). So a commercial street’s ethnic businesses do not reflect its local ethnic population because (a) people are more mobile than stores, and (b) almost all city-dwellers engage in some kind of „intercultural“ shopping and eating out.⁸

Constructing and recognizing ethnic identity is as complex a process in relation to places as it is in relation to people. It is difficult, not to say reductionist, to slot businesses (or people) into particular ethnic categories, since any label will mask a much richer combination of signs and symbols of (multi)ethnic and other affiliations. Nevertheless, comparing ethnic affiliations of people and stores and businesses helps to show that streets are not like tiles in a city-wide mosaic of discrete neighbourhoods organized by ethnicity or class. Rather, (multi)ethnic markers in the urban landscape form one salient part of city-dwellers’ lived experience of place (whichever ethnic group they belong to). They are, in a sense, signs leading to stories. This brings us to the significance of ethnicity as presented in interactions within and discourses about the streets’ businesses. My focus therefore shifts from visible markers of businesses to the exchanges that take place within them.

5.3 Doing „ethnic“ business

They went into Waldman’s, to the pastry-shop Lozu, to Old Vienna and, finally, Miguel and MLF dealt with Warshaw’s while Maryse went alone to the fruiterer’s where, in her childhood, the three Jews used to put on their daily show. [...] Maryse chose a bunch of green grapes and raspberries, she took blueberries, gooseberries, a basket of peaches, plums, lemons, a huge head of lettuce and a strangely-shaped pink fruit that she had never tasted. It was too much, but why resist? When she was little, pulling along her donkey-father or being pulled along at Irene’s heels, she wasn’t allowed to touch the fruit and they only ever bought apples-bananas-and-oranges, oranges-apples-and-bananas, and even then, not every time! The other fruits, so appealing to Mary, were not for them: they belonged to the class of things with no name, not Catholic, too expensive, foreign and certainly inedible that only the stomachs of immigrants could tolerate. The O’Sullivans may have been poor, but at

⁸ Standard „supply-side“ research on ethnic economies might explain the over- or under- representation of a given ethnic group in businesses on a commercial streets by its supposed „cultural“ aptitude for, or aversion to, enterprise (see overview earlier in the chapter). This hypothesis has been strongly criticized by academics (e.g. Nederveen Pieterse, 2007), although merchants themselves are still quite likely to expound it (David, 2000; Pécoud, 2004b).

least they weren't immigrants! Now Maryse had the right to try all these formerly forbidden fruits. (Noël, 1987 [1983]: 424, my translation)

This extract from a well-known Montréal novel, *Maryse*, beautifully introduces the themes of the present section. Shopping with her friends on boulevard St-Laurent, Maryse, a francophone Québécoise of the baby-boom generation, takes sensuous pleasure in buying fruit that she hadn't been allowed to touch as a child – fruit sold by Jews, which belonged to the class of food that was not good to think with (as Lévi-Strauss would say), and was too expensive besides. Now adult, she can make her own sense of this „other“ food staged by „other“ people. How do the users of our four streets, like Maryse, perceive and perform the „ethnicity“ of the businesses they own or shop or work in? How do shop workers present the products they sell, in relation to their own origins, the nature of the product itself or the needs of their clientele? What ethnic elements do customers appreciate about the things they buy or the places they buy them?

These questions are particularly inspired by the work of geographers, anthropologists and sociologists on the circulation of meanings attached to particular products, especially food, and especially in „ethnic“ businesses. In contrast to the socioeconomic literature discussed in Chapter 2, sociocultural research on ethnic businesses has typically explored the meanings associated with the consumption of ethnically marked products. These meanings vary, of course, according to who is doing the consuming: people from the same ethnic background as the products, or people from a different one. Research on the former (intra-ethnic or co-ethnic consumption) finds that specialized ethnic businesses offer a kind of cultural haven to minority ethnic communities. They provide them with the goods and tastes of home or tradition that are unavailable elsewhere, and perhaps a place to talk in a familiar tongue or socialize in familiar, if not unequivocally positive ways (Chacko, 2003; Collins, 2008; Garcia Lopez, 2003; Hage, 1997; Law, 2001; Mankekar, 2002).⁹ But when research focuses on consumption *across* ethnic boundaries – which we might term interethnic or exotic consumption – it has often raised the problem of (in)authenticity.

The debate about authenticity began with simplistic critiques of exotic consumption, but more nuanced analyses have led to a growing body of „deconstructive“ literature. The critique, generally traced back to hooks (1992), goes as follows: although consumption of other ethnic groups' food, in particular, and sometimes their fashion, music and festivals, has been celebrated as one of the easiest ways to experience elements of another culture (van den

⁹ For instance, Mankekar (2002) finds that Indian businesses in California can reproduce tight community surveillance of divorced women.

Berghe, 1984), it is also the least authentic. This is because, firstly, minority ethnic producers typically adapt their products to local tastes, such that they no longer have much to do with the culture of origin (noted by Warde, 2000, among others). Secondly, contacts between producers and consumers are superficial, unequal and ultimately exploitative, such that they hardly represent positive intercultural exchange (Barbas, 2003; Parker, 2000). And thirdly, consumers – at least, white mainstream majority consumers – of minority ethnic products, especially culinary ones, are accused of “eating the Other” (hooks, 1992) in order to spice up their own bland culture, committing “cultural food colonialism” (Heldke, 2001; Turgeon and Pastinelli, 2002) to gain prestige, or social distinction, or “culinary cultural capital” (Bell, 2002; Schnell, 2001) among their friends. As Hage puts it, “the various deployments of cosmo-multicultural tastes operate as indicators of class position, and especially as indicators of the degree of accumulation of economic and cosmopolitan capital” (1997: 126). For these three reasons, interethnic consumption is perceived to be thoroughly inauthentic; it constitutes, in effect, commodified cosmopolitanism.

But is consumption of exotic foods necessarily a one-way exchange analogous to the exploitation of ethnic minorities by dominant majorities? Some researchers doubt it, since “models of ethnic authenticity and essentialist constructions of identity are no longer tenable as guides to the complexities of cultural borrowing” (Jackson, 2002: 14), and have begun to explore the nuances in relations of „interethnic“ eating“. Hage’s oft-quoted paper (1997), mentioned above, seems to have been erected as a straw man, unfairly knocked down (e.g. by Duruz 2005) as a simplistic argument in the same vein as hooks (1992) (see e.g. Cook and Harrison, 2003; Jackson, 1999, for the argument against hooks). In fact, it is a subtle analysis of the intersections of class, ethnic and gender relations that can be expressed in intercultural culinary experiences in the multiethnic city. Hage recognizes that food is one of the ways migrants build home and connect with their long-established neighbours, albeit in the context of unequal power relations. In Duruz’s (2005) own work on older white women’s culinary experience of multiethnic commercial streets in London and Sydney, and Jamal’s (1996) exploration of the meanings of Pakistani food for white British people, eating ethnic foods is not just about a chance to spice up bland white culture by „consuming the Other“, but can also redefine white cultural identity. Further studies of exotic consumption on the other side of the counter investigate the strategies merchants and producers use to stage a convincing performance of ethnic authenticity (de La Pradelle, 2006; J Garnier, 2008; Lu and Fine, 1995; Pécoud, 2002; Stoller, 2002b). If the ethnic identity of people is a socially-situated, continual accomplishment (see Chapter 1), then that of the goods which serve to establish their identity is just as socially constructed. Moreover, instead

of being a sign of exploitation of the Other, exotic consumption can also be understood, following sociologists of the late modern city (Bourdin, 2004a, 2005; Zukin, 1995), as just one of the myriad culinary choices that city-dwellers (of all origins) make as they compose the individually differentiated menus of their everyday lives:

As individualization progresses, contemporary urban eaters increasingly have the means to decide what, where, when and with whom they eat. From ever more diversified individual menus to multiple collective references, from *terroir* and regional certification labels (*AOC, appellation d'origine contrôlée*) to globalized and McDonaldized specialities, by way of ethnic and ethical cuisine, social differentiation is manifestly ever more complex and thoroughgoing. (Ascher, 2005: 243, my translation)

A growing body of literature has thus started to deconstruct (in)authenticity by highlighting the myriad routes that specialized ethnic products take as they move from farm or factory to cupboard or plate (Collingham, 2006; Cook and Crang, 1996; Cook, Crang and Thorpe, 1998, 2000; Cook and Harrison, 2003; Denker, 2003; Dwyer and Crang, 2002; Jackson, 1999, 2002; Pratt, 2007; Stoller, 2002b). Reacting against the trends of text-oriented „cultural studies“ scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s, these geographers, anthropologists and historians seek to „rematerialize“ studies of cultural goods:

[W]hat if we were to treat goods marketed as ethnic“ or „exotic“ [...] not only as textual and visual reservoirs of cultural codes, but as *things in the making and things in use*, materially and symbolically [...]? (Cook and Harrison, 2003: 299)

To sum up their work, they argue that given the complex material histories and trajectories of ethnically marked products („Jamaican“ hot sauces, „Indian“ curries, „Italian“ pasta sauces, „Ghanaian“ kente cloth), it is impossible to attribute unique, authentic origins to them. Both producers and consumers are often aware of this, and they do not necessarily seek to promote or enjoy a naïvely „authentic“ experience of these products. Rather, they weave more complex knowledge and narratives of origin or association into their relationships with ethnically marked products (and, by extension, places). Much more interesting to study than authenticity, therefore, are “strategies of authentication” (Cook, Crang and Thorpe, 2000), that is, the particular set of references and meanings that are configured to make a claim to authenticity.

Such are the themes that I explore in this section, which focuses particularly on food businesses (grocery stores and restaurants). I begin by looking at how store owners and employees present and justify the ethnicity of their stores and stock (i.e. their strategies of authentication), which means focusing on the objects of exchange, the things that are circulating, the „whats“. I then turn to the conditions of exchange, the „hows“, by investigating the relations generated by the purchase of these products, including some of their *spatial*

dimensions. I draw principally on material in which shopkeepers or workers and, to a lesser extent, customers and other interviewees talk about the ethnic or cultural characteristics of the products and services, customers, workers and décor of stores. These elements are all necessarily related to each other (customers buy products, workers create décor, etc.), and my analysis focuses more on patterns in these relationships than in the elements themselves. My overall argument is that the exchanges in which people engage in the „ethnic“ businesses of multiethnic shopping streets are not so much about ethnicity as about the interplay of otherness and similarity.

5.3.1 Strategies of authentication

Let's begin by looking at how store owners and employees present the ethnicity of their shops and stock. Some merchants do present their wares as being principally of one origin, reproducing a certain country's „authentic“ traditions:

Like my cousin the boss, he's doing what we usually do at home or in Jamaica, we try to stay traditional way. You know, like cook like from scratch and start everything the same day. (ShOw11, restaurant)

I try to keep it as Italian as possible. I buy Italian products, my desserts are Italian, it's uh.. yeah, it certainly, it is, it is. I mean, not from A to Z, let's say not 100% but I would say 75% of it is Italian. *[later in the same interview]* I like everything very very small, very... like you were in Italy? And I get many customers who come in here who are Italian and „oh my God, I feel like I'm in Italy“, you know, „oh, we had these in Italy, we had those in Italy.“ (JTEw5, baker's)

I head towards the cheese counter. “What can I do for you?” “I'd like some feta cheese, please.” “Greek or Canadian?” “I'll have Greek, please.” “You want the best, eh?” “Of course!” (deL fieldnotes, supermarket, 2007-06)

Others, however, present their products as a mix (perhaps more often in grocery stores than in restaurants):

[It's] mostly Italian, like we try to keep it Italian, but like I said, we mix, you know. We're a mix. Like we gotta make different cuts, because we got different clientele, you know. Like, Italian sausage, we only make one kind, we only make Italian sausage, we don't make Greek sausage, but everything else, we make for everyone, you know it's general. Canadian, more Canadian... „cause Canadian is basically a mix of cultures, so it's a Canadian shop, more or less. (deLw5, butcher's)

They are all kinds of products, we have Sri Lankan, we have Asian and we have Chinese. (ShOw10, grocery store)

This last store, run by a Sri Lankan, later expanded into the premises next door (which had been a bar), and now sells an even wider range of „ethnic“ products, including Eastern European and Latin American as well as Asian ones.

I found two kinds of strategies of authentication (Cook, Crang and Thorpe, 2000) among interviewees, which I call *specialization* and *diversification*. Merchants who espoused strategies of specialization typically emphasized traditional ethnocultural products (and sometimes atmospheres), while those who adopted strategies of diversification instead put the accent on adaptation to their diverse range of customers. Two shops on de Liège illustrate this difference. One is a pastry shop owned by a man from a long and distinguished line of pastry-chefs stretching back some 250 years (deLw2). He told me that the handsome wood-panelled décor was a replica of his father's shop in Alep, Syria; he insisted on the high quality of his ingredients (especially compared to French patisserie) and, indeed, his customers (said to include royalty and diplomats). His store is therefore presented as authentic because it proudly continues a venerable Middle Eastern tradition; it is specialized. Next door, however, is a small supermarket which exemplifies authentication by diversification. The current owners are a couple who immigrated from China, but they kept the original Italian name of the store (as had the Chinese woman who owned it for a few years before them), since it was already known by their suppliers. One of the co-owners told me:

On the tradition, this store is especially for the Greek and Italian. So we have a lot Greek and Italian stuff. But now we think we should keep the Greek and Italian stuff, but we should put more... multi-... national, stuff, because here we still have black people and the other kind of immigrants. Some they come from Polish, some from Turkish, and even India and Pakistani people. So now we change a lot... We keep the Greek and Italian stuff, and then we put the new stuff inside, that's what we are doing now. [...] Because I'm not Greek, I'm not Italian, I am Chinese, I open this kind of business, we have to put in more variety. If I am Greek, I can make this store especially for Greek people, but I am not Greek, I can't do like that. (deLw4)

The supermarket is thus also presented as authentic, but its terms of reference are different from those of the Syrian pastry shop. Its authenticity comes not from specializing, given that the owners lack the knowledge to do so, but because they are responding to the diverse needs of their customers.

Authentication by specialization can draw on traditions other than ethnicized or culinary ones (Pratt, 2007). One restaurant's authenticity is in the vegetarian and organic ingredients: "Well, it's kind of Mexican, but not really, I'm not Mexican... I never say it's Mexican first, I say it's vegetarian, Mexican-style" (ShOw1).¹⁰ A café-owner on St-Viateur authenticates his café less by reference to the coffee than to the atmosphere:

¹⁰ This quote raises the idea of „fusion“, which is certainly one possible strategy of authentication. Although we can assume that in restaurants at least, many flavours are adapted to local tastes, no interviewees

Yeah, the Italian roots, you can't take it away from here. It'll always be an Italian café, until, [...] if somebody else grabs it, and it's another nationality, it won't be an Italian café no more. But so long as we have it, it will continue to be an Italian café. Well, that's why a lot of people walk in here and – well we encourage like all kinds of ah, whatchacallit, races, to come in, enjoy a coffee, enjoy, spend the time that you need, but the Italian factor is, this is the core of the place, you know? Doesn't mean that we run it, in the sense like we want only Italians here, no. It's just that we found[ed] it, but we opened it up to the neighbourhood. [...] People say „what's your secret here to your coffee?“ The secret, here, is that we make our coffee with love. That's the secret. We want everybody – we take care of our customers, we talk with them. It's not like, „two dollars, two dollars. Gimme two – “ you know, money money money, it's not like that. We took good care, „how are you,“ like „Martha, how are you, good to see you,“ so on and so forth, but our secret is not the coffee, it's the way we make it, and it's the love we put into it. So, from Italy with love. (StVw1)

The ethnocultural specialization of this business rests on something intangible: the “love” in the coffee and, to a great extent, the work of sociability performed by the owners (see Chapter 4). Other stores may depend on décor to perform their specialization. One day on Jean-Talon Est, I found a TV crew filming inside an Italian grocery store for a cookery show. Although one of the crew members told me they had chosen the shop for the products, they also clearly found it photogenic:

They start before the star chef arrives, filming the shop, filming one of the workers slicing meat and grating parmesan. [...] They roll a camera on a trolley past all the jars full of savoury things. [...] Sometimes they film in the aisles, sometimes they film behind the counters, taking in the elaborate décor of the shop. It's very picturesque: great big cheeses hanging from the ceiling, lots of beautiful packaging, posters attesting to the authentic origins of the products, packaged bunches of herbs. It [...] has nothing of the bright bland supermarket about it, although it is a fairly large shop. I hear one of the crew say, “It's really beautiful” (T). (JTE fieldnotes 2007-06)

Just as the rustic décor of some stalls in the Carpentras market allows customers to believe that the products are truly Provençal (de La Pradelle, 2006), this store's décor and its re-presentation by the film crew authenticates the products as „genuinely” Italian.

5.3.2 Modes of consumption and spatialization

When I saw the TV crew, the few customers in the store generally seemed indifferent to the filming or avoided it, but two men who had apparently bumped into each other there by chance seemed to enjoy performing their Italian-ness for the camera, chatting in Italian with their arms

presented products as „fusion” as such; where multiple origins were cited it was in a context of diversification. This could be coincidental, but I suspect that fusion is a more sophisticated authentication strategy that would be articulated in higher-class businesses or commercial streets, and would therefore be associated with gentrification (cf. Bridge and Dowling's [2001: 101] discussion of „ModOz” or modern Australian hybrid cuisine).

fraternally resting on each other's backs. Thinking about this performance shifts our focus from interviewees' presentations of the *objects* of exchange, to their discourses about the *conditions* of exchange, and specifically, the relationship between stores and customers.

In contrast to discussions of the products, almost all merchants reported a mix of origins among their customers. This is not surprising, in that they are likely to highlight their broad appeal. However, the mix does not always include all groups. Several merchants just speak of two groups: „Canadian“ customers (also called „Québécois“, „English“, „French“ and tacitly understood as white „mainstream“), and customers of their own ethnicity. In other words, they seem to operate in terms of the majority and one minority (their own). It is not always clear why this is, although some say that their products do not appeal to everyone:

It's more Québécois, Québécois and Mexicans, yes, because in actual fact there are problems with other nationalities because of their religions, for example, the Muslims who don't eat pork. Us Mexicans, we're... how can I say it, pork-lovers. (JTEw6, restaurant, T)

This brings us to the relationship between customers and the ethnically marked goods or services they buy. Mirroring the merchants' authentication strategies (specialization or diversification), customers can be said to follow a pattern either of *tradition* or *exploration*, purchasing either „their own“ traditional ethnic food or other people's unfamiliar food. Thus, in the first quote above, the Mexicans would be following tradition while the Québécois would be taking an approach of exploration. Here are two further examples; the first exemplifies tradition, the second, exploration:

[The two interviewees] know and use the other Greek businesses. The woman says – We try to stick together, we go to our own nationality, partly because we don't know the products the others are selling, we don't know how to use it, and also because we're quite difficult about our food, we know what we like. (deLw9a, 9b)

My clientele is a mixture of clients, it's not just Italians. French Canadians, Italians, uh... South Americans, I have a mixture of everything. A lot of the neighbours, people who moved here, tend to... they come here, you know, they enjoy Italian sweets. (JTEw5, baker's)

The second quote above also mentions “neighbours”, which suggests that patterns of consumption also have distinct *spatial* variations. Indeed, customers come from nearby and far away, to buy things to which they feel culturally close (tradition) or distant (exploration). These patterns evoke the spatial models of the multiethnic city. Some businesses serve a local co-ethnic population in a current „ethnic neighbourhood“. Cases in point are the kosher butcher's and fishmonger's serving the Hasidic Jews living near St-Viateur, and the various South Asian shops on de Liège:

“We Indians like to use many different kinds of food and spices,” he says, adding that it’s easy to find all the things he needs for Indian food here. And there are a lot of people that speak his language, so it’s easy to talk to people. (DeLb4, from notes, resident of the street)

But other businesses serve ethnic communities that once were local but have since moved away as they gained social mobility. They are the original stores or services of an older founding neighbourhood (Remy, 1998 [1990]) that still attract co-ethnic customers consumers from further afield, as this story shows:

I chose this store here because at that time there were lots of Arabs, Egyptians, Lebanese, Armenians, from Syria and Lebanon and Egypt, lots of them. [...] They like this kind of pastry [as dessert]. I wouldn’t have gone in the east end, for instance, in the middle of where the others [*eux autres*] live, no. And now it’s been 29 years, more or less. *Are there still many people from the Middle East, from those kind of countries, in the neighbourhood?* No, there aren’t very many now because over time, in the last ten years, they’ve started to move to Cartierville or Laval [*suburbs*], but there are a few all the same. [...] And then, everyone everywhere has to come here because it was the first [*Middle Eastern*] pastry shop in Montréal, the first, in 1970. (deLw2, T)

So while shopkeepers liked to say that all their customers came from all over the city, drawing on my observations, it seems more likely that only part of their regular clientele – the „co-ethnic“ part – makes a point of travelling a long way to buy specialized products (although as several storekeepers reported, they will generally spend more money than local or non-co-ethnic customers in doing so).

Their grandkids, they come, because „Oh, nonna used to buy the bread here, let’s go buy the bread here, because we’re so used to it, because we grew up with that bread,” so, we see those ones once in awhile, because they’re all really from Brossard, and Longueuil, really out from the neighbourhood, you see them come up on the weekend: „I need to re-stock my bread for the week, because this is the bread that we’re used to because of my grandmother,” [...] so, we’re pretty lucky in that. (JTEw9)

Some customers come from even further away than Brossard. One day on rue de Liège, I kept crossing paths with the same man, and we finally got talking:

“Just doing my shopping!” he said to me.

“You’re going to the same places I’m going to!” I replied.

“Yeah, they’re great. This is the best Armenian pizza in Montréal. I moved to Calgary but when I’m back here I always stock up. I saw some in Calgary and tried it, but it wasn’t so good, I think it got messed up in the transportation.” [...]

“So you come back here when you’re in town,” I say. I see he has a bag from the pastry shop. “You go [*there*] too?”

“Yes, they have the best baklava in the city.”

“It’s funny, not many people know about them.”

“Yes, they’re hidden gems. Well, the ethnic community knows about them. I found this [*Armenian pizza*] place when I came to get my hair cut once, and then I told my

mom and dad, and they told their friends. They're doing pretty well now, they opened up in Laval too. Yeah, whenever I'm back here I get my hair cut, get some lahmajoune and go to *[the pastry shop]*."

"Which ethnic community are you from then?"

"I'm Armenian, so when I tell you this is the best Armenian pizza, you can trust me!"
(deL fieldnotes, 2007-05)

While customers who share a shop's ethnic affiliations may travel from far away, those who come from round the corner are likely to be of all origins. This chef explains that his own Jamaican community has spread out from the local neighbourhood, but others are coming in:

Our community, it's basically in this surroundings. You know when you talk about NDG most of the people's in this surrounding, in the beginning, and then some people they spread out [...] So you're gonna do your business in your community to try to get the support from them. But at the same time when you do it now, you don't know who's gonna come and support, you understand? Because then we find other people from other part of the world coming. And then we find we're getting a lot more support, from them, and so it's like a balance, half our community, half the other community. Then now you have other people come in, from different community coming in, and different people moving in in NDG [...], it's always a mixture, but you have more of other culture coming in, right. (ShOw11)

Eventually, a founding neighbourhood can become a "destination of consumption" (Zukin and Kosta, 2004) not only for the original ethnocultural community, but also "all city-dwellers, who use it as a symbolic landmark, visiting it as tourists or even in the mode of great familiarity" (Raulin, 2000: 10, my translation). Some might venture out to far-off streets because of press coverage (see also Chapter 6):

French[-Canadian] people go running *[she means „come running“]*, yeah, „cause they're picky about their food, you know? It's not that they're picky, they like good food, so I guess when La Presse says that this place is so wonderful and it was delicious, blah blah blah, they wanna go and they do wanna try it. (JTEw5, baker's)

Or else, the impetus might come from their social circle. A white French-Canadian woman on Sherbrooke Ouest told me:

I live in the Plateau so I don't come here often. The only place I come to is *[the Jamaican restaurant]*, here, for the food, and my boyfriend is black and they put a kind of grease in their hair, so he comes to get that here. [...] It's always the same spots, for the hair food and the food! (ShOb3)

Similarly, a white anglophone woman whom I interviewed on St-Viateur spoke of recently "discovering" rue de Liège:

not by walking into the place but by people, Armenians ordering these great little pizzas for a party at a friend's house, and bringing, you know, boxes and boxes. [...] And so then it was me then taking note of the address and wanting to get back there. (StVDeLb2)

So she had unearthed what the Armenian-origin man from Calgary had called the “hidden gems” of the street, thanks to her social network. Businesses therefore can benefit from both their place in an ethnic community and their place on the street as a whole.

The various patterns that I have discussed so far are summed up in Figure 5.1, along the axes of geographical proximity/distance (left to right) and ethnocultural proximity/distance (bottom to top). The ovals represent the types of relation of clienteles to stores, and the rectangles connecting them horizontally represent modes of consumption (tradition/ exploration). The shaded squares represent the spatialized relations of stores to their market of customers; the shaded rectangles connecting them horizontally represent strategies of authentication (specialization/ diversification). Lastly, the lozenges connecting them vertically represent different models of urban settlement: heterolocalism (or mobility) and its opposite, which we might term „localism“. Each of the relations generates different kinds of exchanges between shopkeepers or workers and customers, mediated by the products on offer.

Since the diagram represents types of relations rather than types of businesses as such, one store can incarnate several different patterns in it. As an example, we can take the Polish delicatessen on St-Viateur, owned by a couple who are Polish immigrants:

I start my business here in '92, my husband find this place because it's near the Polish church, and there are lots of Polish people coming. [...] Around 2000, the street it's more popular, okay, it's [...] young people, students, musicians, artists, okay. And they going here and the business, it starts better, and I prepare Polish food, and people coming, okay, it's really home-made, okay, like your mother make!
(StVw10, delicatessen)

The owner thus uses an authentication strategy of specialization (“like your mother make!”) that attracts both Polish-origin and other customers. Many of her Polish customers come from some distance away, because they attend the next-door Polish Catholic church; they are using the shop in a „traditional“ mode of consumption, on a spatial pattern akin to that of the founding neighbourhood. The customers who don't identify as Polish are using the store in exploration mode; many live or work in the local area, while others come to the store or St-Viateur as a destination of consumption. Intra-urban mobility thus has a considerable impact on multiethnic commercial streets.

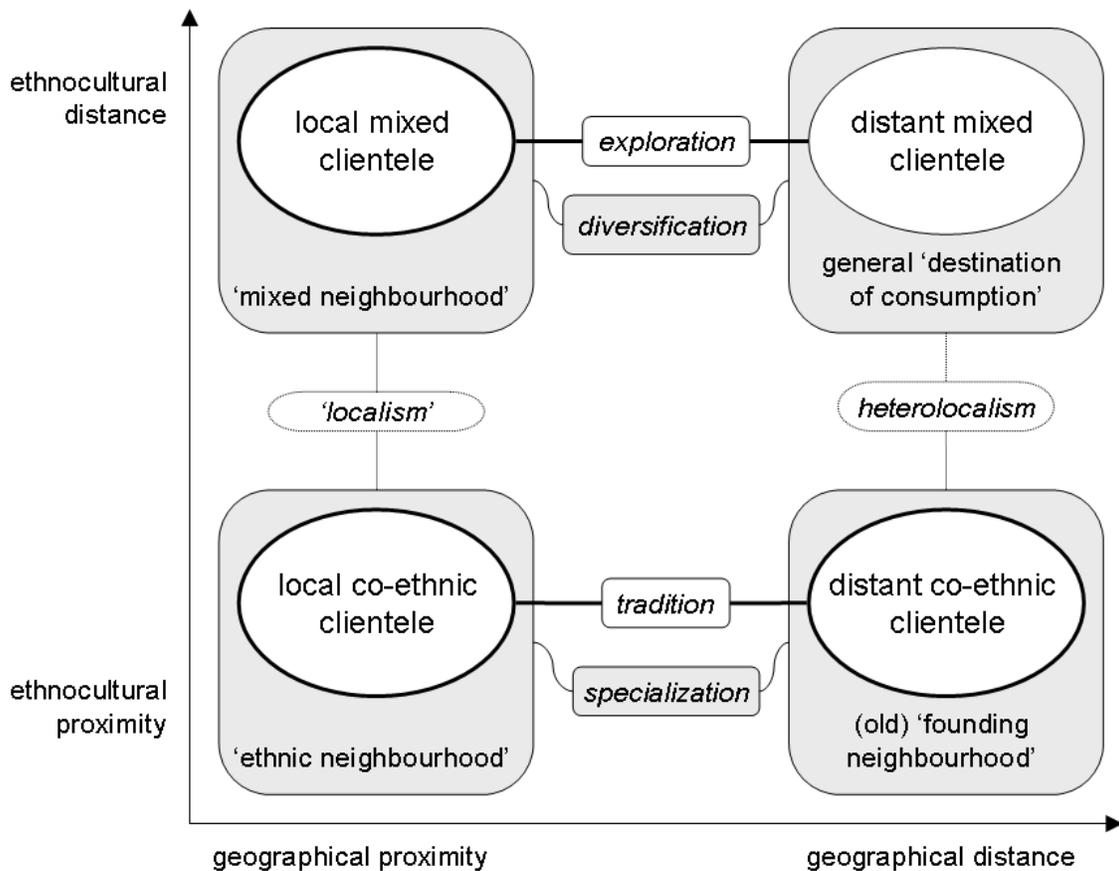


Figure 5.1 Patterns of „doing ethnic business“

5.3.3 Exploration and its limits

Having established the basic patterns of „doing ethnic business“, I return to the dynamic of exploration, since it is the meaning of that dynamic that has been the most challenged in the debates about interethnic consumption discussed above. It is a theme that emerged strongly in interviews with many merchants, among whom there was a definite sense that customers – perhaps particularly those described as „Québécois“ or „Canadian“ – are willing to explore products they don’t know, as this merchant told me:

Québécois, Canadians in general, well... you sense that they buy things that they’ve never tasted before. For instance, a month ago, two months ago, it was the month of Ramadan. So, during Ramadan, we make things that we don’t make the rest of the year. They really liked that. Now they come and say, “Monsieur, don’t you have that thing...” I say, “You’ll have to wait till next year! Next Ramadan, if you come back, you’ll find it!” So yes, there are things that they like, that they love. Exactly because they never tasted it before, they come back for more. (JTEw1, baker, T)

Indeed, I had participated in exactly such exploration, which ended up involving other customers:

I ask what one of the desserts on the counter is. “Hmm, how can I explain it, it’s got nuts, syrup, it’s a dessert that we make for Ramadan.” The Arabic-speaking customer wearing a hijab chimes in, “That one’s really good.” “Oh yes? What’s it made of?” “It’s made with large-grain couscous, there are almonds and syrup, of course. I like that one best, well, my children like that one best, but my husband likes the other one.” “I like the other one too,” says the man behind the counter. [...] The Franco-Québécoise woman says, “It looks really good, I’m going to buy some.” (JTE fieldnotes 2006-09, quotes translated)

In the light of studies criticizing dominant majorities for “eating the Other”, it is important to note that such exchanges do not only take place between members of the „exotic“ minority and the adventurous majority. Members of different minority ethnic groups can be equally curious about each others’ products:

Before it was like [...] we’d go to the Italian bakery and the Greeks would go to the Greek bakeries, and the Portuguese – and so on, but not anymore, it’s like I’ll have Greek customers and Portuguese customers and, I’ll go to the Polish, or I’ll go to the, the Greek bakery on Parc Avenue to get my cookies and she comes here and gets my pizza. (StVw5, baker, Italian)

There’s so many people [*on de Liège*], it’s Montréal. I mean there’s different nationalities, so many different things. Like before, I didn’t know about this threading [*an Indian way of shaping eyebrows*], they do threading, your eyebrows, it’s so different, it’s like other nationalities, you see a little bit of everything. (deLb2, daughter of Greek immigrants in her 40s visiting the street)

There is a box of green mangoes inside the store; they are expensive but [deLw7] tells me the Haitians like them a lot and recognize them straight away. A couple of women who aren’t Haitian ask questions about them, thinking they are green (sour) mangoes. [DeLw7] says no, they are not like other green mangoes, they are sweet mangoes. “They are same as Pakistani mangoes,” she tells one of the women, who looks to be of Pakistani origin (wearing a shalwar kameez and a dupatta). [...] The Pakistani woman says, “We learn about each other’s food.” (interactions during interview deLw7 with a Sri Lankan grocer)

This finding is, of course, conditioned by my field sites: it would be less apparent in less multiethnic streets.

By and large, merchants generally appreciated and accommodated their customers’ „exploratory“ tendencies, but what it is interesting is that these had not necessarily been part of the original business plan. Several had opened up their store thinking that it would attract members of their own ethnocultural background, and were surprised that others had shown interest:

We were astonished. We opened a little halal shop, it was, we were really aiming for the Muslim clientele, but then we were surprised that it was the Québécois who

bought the halal meat first of all, yes. [...] After that it was the Italians, after that the Arabs, after that the Latinos, it's really multicultural. (JTEw10, T)

I thought it would be only West Indian people that would buy that product because they know the product and they're used to the product. It's amazing! Because of the internet today and because people travel more than they did 30 years ago, people go to different places and they see things or they taste things, and when they come back, even if we don't have it they ask questions about certain products. (ShOw6)

As I observed, some customers ask questions, and some merchants spontaneously offer advice or comments on their purchases: both sides may nurture the exchange. That said, the exchange does not always come easily. For example, the manager of a Korean grocery store found it hard to explain Korean food to „Canadian“ customers, in part because of a language barrier and because he hadn't found any Korean recipes in French. A young waitress in a Korean restaurant said she kept her explanations simple because she didn't know enough about the cuisine herself. And as I was leaving a grocery store whose Iranian manager I had interviewed, a white anglophone customer told me:

You know my wife and I often tell the man you've just been talking to that they should do more to explain Iranian food, because we don't know what a lot of the products are, especially the things in bulk, and we always have to rely on our Iranian friend to tell us what they are. We're very glad to have the store here, but we don't always know what the products are. (ShO fieldnotes 2007-03)

Lastly, there are limits to what people are willing to explore. The owner of a lunch counter on St-Viateur found that the tacos, tamales and *chiles rellenos* (stuffed chillies) of his homeland didn't fit his customers' expectations of lunchtime food: they wanted straightforward sandwiches to take out to the street or back to the office. Similarly, at a Chinese pastry shop on Jean-Talon Est (a second branch of one in Chinatown), the Franco-Québécoise cashier told me:

There are people who don't know whether they should come in or not, who aren't familiar with what we make. And then maybe that intimidates them a bit, all that, maybe they have the impression that if they came in they'd have to ask too many questions and they'd annoy me or something! *[laughs]* I don't know what holds them back.

[and later in the interview]

Often people mistake it, they think it's French or Italian... and often if I then tell them, "No, it's a Chinese pastry shop," their face falls because they don't know that Chinese people make pastry too, [...] so often I try only to say it as the last thing, after they've seen what we have. If they ask me I'll tell them it's Chinese. But... if it's something I say just like that when they come in, "Oh, what do you have here?" "It's Chinese pastry" "Aaghhh!" *[she gives a mock shout of shock then laughs]* (JTEw3, T)

It seems, therefore, that some ethnic products are just too foreign in some contexts. This shop had to stop selling pork buns, which sell like hot cakes in the branch in Chinatown, because they were too unexpected in the local context and were left on the shelves. (Interestingly, just after

the cashier told me this, a customer of East or Southeast Asian appearance entered the store asking for... pork buns.) In the end, after less than eighteen months in business, the Chinese pastry shop closed. I asked a nearby Italian shop owner what she thought about this:

Why do you think the Chinese pastry shop didn't last? ... Why? ... I don't know why, I thought that was a really foolish move of him, I mean open up a Chinese restaurant, open up... I mean it just... I don't think people – do you ever eat Chinese pastries? ... Do I? Yeah. I don't really know Chinese pastries. There you go.

In this case, local customers seem to have nothing to hook their interest on. It is as if the „insider“ knowledge that it would take to explore and enjoy pork buns and other Chinese pastries is too far away for outsiders to acquire, at least in the context of this street, where only a very small proportion of the population is of Chinese origin. Far from its „traditional“ customers, the Chinese pastry shop largely remained uncharted terrain, a kind of „unexplorable“ ethnic business, and eventually has to close. A sushi counter has taken its place, selling food that is ethnically marked but recognizable, already assimilated, already known.

5.3.4 „Ethnic“ business?

I now turn to the question of what is „ethnic“ in the idea of „ethnic business“. Not surprisingly, the term „ethnic business“ is not used as an emic or insider concept, and many shopkeepers and workers asked for clarification when I posed the question of whether theirs was an ethnic business. Among those interviewees who felt able to answer, most thought about „ethnic“ in relation to their customers; since they serve a mixed clientele, they do not see their business as ethnic. However, some defined „ethnic“ in relation to products, which made it more likely they called their business ethnic. The distinction is well summed up by the cashier at the Chinese pastry shop:

Would you say your business is an ethnic business? Ethnic... well... hmm. Ethnic in the sense that we sell products that are typically Chinese but, in some ways we adapt to the public too. There were things here that were a little bit too exotic, that people simply didn't try, that we had to take off the shelves because they didn't sell. (JTEw3, T)

A few thought also in terms of the origin of owners and employees (as in the „ethnic economy“ literature):

Er, ethnic do you mean for certain nationalities? ... Yes. But I don't know, because we have lots and lots and lots of Québécois customers. We have Italian customers, lots of nationalities, certainly most of them are Arabs, Syrians, Lebanese, but even so, there are lots of Québécois – at Christmas time we see a lot of them, even sometimes at weekends a lot of Québécois come by, more Québécois than other nationalities even. So I don't know if I should say at this point in time – we've been open for 30 years – that we're still ethnic, because we have a lot, it's like we're for

everyone. But, for the working environment, we're still ethnic because everyone who works here is Syrian or Lebanese and we always speak Arabic, yeah. So that hasn't changed. (deLw3, T)

However, interviewees also used the term „ethnic“ in the colloquial sense as meaning member of a minority (recalling the original etymological and vernacular meanings that I discussed in Chapter 1). „Ethnic“ therefore evokes a relational rather than inherent quality, which implies being „different“ or „other“. Thus, a business can be qualified as ethnic not because of its own specificity, but in opposition to being „Canadian“ or „mainstream“, precisely because it serves people of many different ethnic origins:

I guess when you see, like, different cultures going in, and all being served and satisfied, I guess that would be an ethnic... yeah. (deLw5)

Ethnic? Yes, yeah, because you have ethnic people coming in, different nationality, yes... [...] We have Spanish, French [*i.e. French Canadians*], the Haitians... Armenian, the Greek, you know. (deLw6)

The owner of a large grocery store presented his business as ethnic in this way, not because (Anglo- or Franco-) Canadians don't shop there, but because it fell into the market niche for immigrants of many origins:

Well it's an ethnic business, basically we have all the immigrants coming here, and of course a lot of Canadian, Québécois, they like us too, they come here. And they see many things that we have that the other store, which is Canadian [*does not*] – of course Canadian store here means either chain store, very big – nothing. So us as a ethnic business, because we have many product that they don't have, they have many product that we don't have, so.... But this is related back to the [...] immigration of the past 20-30 years. We have a lot of immigration from Caribbean countries, East Europe, these people they eat same foods.¹¹ When it's not available somebody has to work, somebody has to provide that. We are lucky, we providing that and that's it, simple as that. We don't plan. We don't plan. It just happened, and that's it. (ShOw9)

In this sense, there is also a fairly strong image of ethnic business as being in opposition to chain stores and large companies. One interviewee at the St-Viateur festival de rue celebrated the neighbourhood's *depanneurs*, owned by successive waves of immigrants:

Each, each wave kind of, they bring their own food and their own style to the *depanneur*, but they have their old customers. So they have to leave the old stuff on the shelves. You go into these *depanneurs* and you've got food from all over the world, you know. Four or five layers of owners. That's the kind of stuff I like is the mix of cultures. (StVf8)

¹¹ „Same foods“ here is ambiguous: it could mean the same foods that they always ate, or the same foods as each other, but the former seems more likely.

These small businesses, without necessarily meaning to, stock their shelves with things that are interpreted as signs of ethnocultural difference. But they do not represent or serve a single ethnic group, and the products they sell could be incorporated into any kind of world of “cultural stuff” (Barth 1969: 15), which reflects the heterogeneity of the streets themselves. For this St-Viateur merchant as well, small is beautiful:

Okay, we have a lot of more nationalities that... that integrated their stores on the street so you know, we're gonna have the little, ah, Latino charcuterie, you know we have the African restaurant, the Caribbean one further down, we have Polish, so like, more nationalities, came into the street, you know? What I like, is that, it stayed... smaller than other places [...] And we integrate very well in the street, you know we don't ask to say „ph, you know, we're Italian and you know, this is what we have,” no, we listen to the customers, maybe we should put this, or that, you know? So we've been doing that, with, with our, we are in Quebec, so you know, so we respect that too. You know? And uh, the changes are that people are who they are, what they are, and that's what I like. It's like there's no judgment, where you come from, what you do, that's it. That's what I like. (StVw5)

She likes the „ethnic” businesses not only because they are small, but also because they are flexible and open-minded in their ethnicity. Although they are on the one hand identifiable as ethnic, on the other, “there's no judgment, where you come from, what you do, that's it”. In a sense, then, the differences as such – the actual characteristics or qualities – between ethnic businesses and, by extension, the people that run them, are minimized. This recalls the principles of public sociability as conceptualized by Simmel (1950[1911]) and applied by de La Pradelle (1997, 2006) and Lallement (2005). On these multiethnic commercial streets, a temporary equality among all users can be constructed because the symbols of their „ethnic” differences are produced and consumed on an equal footing.

In this section, I have identified merchants’ authentication strategies of specialization and diversification, along with customers’ consumption modes of tradition and exploration, and I have shown how they combine with urban mobility. Taken together, these patterns seem to me to call into question the commonsense meaning of „ethnic” in the label „ethnic business”. In both everyday parlance and much of the „ethnic economy” literature, „ethnic” qualifies a pre-existing, bounded and internally culturally homogenous group, and businesses are ethnic when they depend on labour and/or serve customers from this same group. As I have shown, the ethnic affiliations of stores on multiethnic commercial streets are rarely so straightforward. Even in some of the sociocultural literature, particularly in the field of cultural studies, cuisines and culinary practices are treated as straightforward manifestations of ethnic groups engaged in unequal power relations. In this perspective, foodstuffs or goods sold may well be authentic but they lead to inauthentic intercultural exchange (“cultural food colonialism,” (Heldke, 2001)). I do

not wish to minimize the unequal power relations in which the owners, workers and customers of „ethnic“ businesses are obviously engaged, thanks to their positions in the socially (and sometimes ethnically) stratified urban capitalist economy. But I would suggest that, at least on the streets I studied, almost the reverse pertains: foodstuffs and goods sold may well be ethnically „inauthentic“, but they lead to „authentic“ exchange between people of different ethnic backgrounds.

„Ethnic“ businesses are therefore not in themselves all that ethnic. What these shops offer are mere fragments of ethnicity (barely even symbols), in a play of sameness and otherness, strangeness and familiarity. Without conveying much of the „content“ of ethnicity, they contribute simultaneously to the construction of ethnocultural difference and the apparent equality of differences. One could say they emphasize diversity (i.e. the multitude of different others) instead of difference as such (i.e. the characteristics signified) (cf. Grillo, 2007). They are contexts in which ethnic identity is likely to become salient, but only to the extent that it lubricates the social exchanges of public sociability. Some of the goods they offer are indeed treated as symbols of ethnicity, presented, discussed, exchanged and taken away – and then perhaps integrated into an ethnocultural context far removed from the one from which they came, in the next stage of their „social life“ (Appadurai, 1986). But they are not „authentic“ so much as they are „authenticated“. The ways in which „ethnicity“ is mobilized in „ethnic“ businesses may therefore seem superficial, inconsequential, but it can nonetheless be significant. Even if what one buys or exchanges is a mere fragment of ethnicity, the conditions of exchange allow individuals to become accustomed to ethnic difference, and thereby set the scene for broader interethnic relations.

5.4 Imagining interethnic relations: us, the Others and the other Others

Ethnicity is not only about the circulation and exchange of symbols. It is also one of the ways – and given the current urban context of increasing ethnocultural diversity, one of the most interesting ways – in which people sort themselves into groups of „us“ and „them“, „us“ and the „Others“, and find ways to maintain those boundaries. As Barth puts it:

the ethnic boundary canalizes social life [...]. [A] dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest. (Barth, 1969: 15)

This sections deals with individuals' perceptions of those limitations, differences and restrictions between ethnic groups on each of the four streets. It thus comes full circle back to the scale of the street as a whole, as in section 5.1. It examines the lines drawn and sometimes crossed between „us" and the „Others", and some of the judgements people make about the moral worth of the different groups they identify.

Before going any further, I want to make two points about the analysis that follows. Firstly, it deals with what individuals say about ethnocultural groups, i.e. their representations or social construction of „the Other", and does not delve into „actual facts". Thus, if I find that some Greek immigrants view South Asian immigrants as „all on welfare", I am interested in drawing out why they hold this view, rather than how many people of South Asian origin actually depend on social benefits. I also do not necessarily have the material to be able to draw conclusions about the actual behaviour of those Greek immigrants towards South Asians. While discourse is undeniably as much a component of interethnic relations as practice, there is always a gap between the two (De Rudder, 1991; Valentine, 2008), and here I privilege discourse. Secondly, the sometimes conflictual interethnic relations I identify by no means indicate neighbourhoods on the verge of social breakdown. While it generally is, or at least has been, „politically correct" for Montréalers of all origins to approve of the city's ethnocultural diversity, there are always people who perceive some ethnicized groups' ways of „being diverse" as more acceptable than others, and who mark them out for exclusion rather than inclusion. The kind of conflicts or tensions I describe can be understood as structuring people's perceptions of interethnic relations, rather than constituting a crisis of them.

The following analysis not only deals with what I called earlier the construction of ethnicity, but also highlights several important points about the *place* of ethnicity relative to other societal dynamics. The ethnic boundaries that are drawn most starkly often have very little to do with cultural differences as such. Instead, the differences that make the most difference to (perceptions of) interethnic relations are often those to do with temporal and spatial context, not cultural content. For instance, the time of arrival of a given ethnic or social group on a local scene (e.g. „wave" of immigrant settlement), and the contours of the context in which it arrives, may be more critical to subsequent relations than its perceived behaviour.¹² For this reason, it is

¹² Geographer Valerie Preston (2008) demonstrates this point by comparing the implantation of „Asian theme" businesses in Toronto and Sydney. The negative reception of such businesses in Toronto was largely due to their construction over a compressed time period by a single immigrant group (Hong Kong Chinese); the more gradual and more multiethnic developments in Sydney – at a time when Australia was fostering trade links with Asia – help explain the favourable reception there.

important to attend to the cogent arguments made by Valentine (2008) and Wells and Watson (2005) for the „rematerialization“ of studies of interethnic relations.¹³ By this they mean thinking about how interethnic relations are affected by the distribution of both material resources and political power (as opposed to limiting one’s focus to questions of identity or cultural differences, for example). As we shall see, the social trajectory of a given ethnic group – whether it is upwardly or downwardly mobile – can have a great impact on the perceptions its members hold of other ethnic groups with whom they may be, to revert to Chicago School terminology, „competing“ for a niche in the local social ecology.

Given the many factors that affect interethnic relations, it is also important to try not to paint them as black and white (as it were), but rather to capture their many shades of grey. Individuals are perfectly capable of holding ambivalent and indeed contradictory views about ethnic „Others“ (De Rudder, 1991; Hage, 1997; Leloup, 2002; Valentine, 2008). These can include, for example, exceptionalism (when a group in general is disliked and rejected, but individual members are liked and accepted) and a sharp contrast between discourse and practice (e.g. being civil in public and racist in private). As I aim to demonstrate, attending to the fundamental ambivalence of interethnic interactions is crucial to understanding how social relations work in places such as multiethnic commercial streets – to which we now return.

5.4.1 Rue Jean-Talon Est: opposing social trajectories

Interviewees on rue Jean-Talon Est are by and large happy with the street’s ethnic diversity, which many see as a strength: “The mixture of people. Different nationalities, different religions, different everything, that’s what’s nice about it. That’s why I like this neighbourhood” (JTEw4). Interaction between the various ethnic groups is generally reported to be good. Opinions differ, however, as to the extent of actual mixing: some say that there is a lot of it, others note that although there are many different groups present, they tend not to mingle. One immigrant shopkeeper, who was rather given to quantifying things in this way, even suggested a percentage rate of mixing:

They mix, I couldn’t say 100%, but really I could say 60%, yes. Yes. Because already the people who accept to come into the store like that, they know that they’re going to come and communicate with... well with people who aren’t Québécois, that’s for sure. (JTEw10, T)

¹³ These arguments echo the call mentioned earlier to rematerialize studies of cultural commodities.

Of course, the variation depends on what the interviewee has in mind by mixing. Family groups or close friends are often seen as monoethnic, even though all groups rub shoulders in the street. As this Iranian worker explained:

I think they – not 100% mix, but I see a lot of them they have er, Quebecer girlfriend, Quebecer boyfriend, no, but mostly, to chitchat they are all the Arabs together, same nationality together. Algerians with Algerians, Tunisian with Tunisians. ... It's not that they don't talk to other nationalities, they talk, but to get close, not really. They keep their distance. *So it's with people you know, talking in a way you're used to.* Talking about the... what they know. Because they have something in common. If you don't have something in common, it's just, hello, how is your life. That's it, bye-bye. But when you have something to talk about from before, some memories, *[it's]* mostly the same nationality. Like the way I speak to my *[Iranian]* boss, I cannot speak to *[my Tunisian co-worker]*. Because we know our background, you know. *Yeah, you have your – Yeah, we have a history – your common history.* Exactly, exactly. (JTEw7c)

As another interviewee put it, "Stick to who you know, that's what it basically comes out to be" (JTEw9a). This kind of limited, "distant but peaceful" (Germain, 1997; Germain et al., 1995) interethnic cohabitation is only to be expected in urban public space, since city-dwellers usually do not actually want or need to interact with each other to any great extent, preferring to keep a certain reserve (see Chapters 1 and 4).

However, two groups on the street have a tricky relationship: the long-established Italian immigrants, and the recently-arrived Maghrebi immigrants. Among the latter, who are mainly from Algeria and Morocco, there are internal ethnic and cultural differences (not to mention linguistic, political and religious ones), yet they are usually seen as a single ethnic group by outsiders. Moreover, in many contexts they also present themselves as a single ethnic group, to outsiders and even among themselves, at least on this street (perhaps for similar reasons that Latin Americans engage in „strategic essentialism" in Toronto, Veronis, 2007). My presentation of them is therefore not intended to mask the differences or essentialize them, but rather reflects local usage.¹⁴ The area around Jean-Talon Est has been heavily marked by Italians, who in 1996 made up 28.4%, and in 2001, 23.5% of local immigrants (see Appendix P). Now, however, they account for only 17.5% of immigrants. Meanwhile, people born in Algeria and Morocco combined now make up 12.9% of the immigrant population, up from 7.7% in 2001.¹⁵ This change is echoed in the commercial landscape:

¹⁴ This is also an instance where I sacrificed depth of detail to comparative breadth: had I been able to devote more time to this street, I would have learnt more about the differences between Maghrebi groups.

¹⁵ In the 1996 census, Moroccans made up 2.6% of the local immigrant population, but figures for Algerian immigrants are not publicly available. Countries of origin are listed according to the frequency of response throughout Canada in the previous census, so Algeria was not among the top countries of origin in 1991.

I worked here before, in 1995. There were a lot of Italians. So they moved out. They got old, they died. Now mostly it is Arabs, from North Africa. Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Big changes, big changes, yeah. All Jean-Talon from I think from St-Laurent to St-Léonard. [...] There used to be so many bars, Italian bars, now it's more specially bakeries. (JTEw7c)

Round here, more and more, the Arabs have come in, it's changing. But the Arabs are beginning to go into business round here with the groceries, the cafés – I don't know whether they're bars or not, cafés, sometimes they bring out a big bottle to chew on [*i.e. hookahs, water pipes*]. (JTEw6, T)

None of the seven businesses that are currently owned or run by Maghrebi immigrants were listed in the 1996-1997 Lovell's Street Index (Lovell Litho & Publications, 1996), which features six businesses with Italian names that have since closed down (although two other Italian ones, a dry cleaners and a café, have since opened). This confirms the perception that the street has become less Italian, and more Maghrebi.

A hypothesis circulates among some members of both these groups that there are strong affinities between them. This rests partly on their shared Mediterranean history, and above all, their distinct public sociability. Men from these backgrounds spend time in public spaces, in cafés, on terrasses, resting on street corners or benches or strolling down the street. They seem to see themselves as people who like being sociable outside the house, and in this, different from their Québécois or other northern neighbours.

The neighbourhood in England doesn't exist. One guy beside you, a guy lives beside your door, you can live there for 20 years, never say hello to him. Then you go to the Mediterranean, and this is a way of life for Mediterranean people, even Arab, Christian, they have the same idea because we in Italy, in Spain, in parts of Yugoslavia, we were conquered by the Arabs for so many centuries, you know. (JTEb2, Italian)

I also encountered claims that they understand each other's way of doing business:

How can I say it, we understand each other. [...] Italians and Maghrebis are going to get [together] because they know that if they're with each other, business goes well, [*inaudible*]. That's why, I think. [...] You can make good purchases with these people, there you go. So we will put ourselves on the Italians' side, get to know them. We'll get good deals. It works. We understand their way of thinking. (JTEw1)

As Raulin notes, this reference to a common Mediterranean heritage is significant, because:

it helps place the different emigrations from the southern or northern Mediterranean on the same footing. It weakens the distinctions between the categories of Northern Africa/ Southern Europe, Arabs (Berbers)/Latins, Muslims/Christians... by evoking a

shared identity, engendered in the same region. (Raulin, 1986: page unknown, my translation)¹⁶

Yet the view of Italian-Maghrebi affinity is not equally shared between the two groups. While some Italians agreed with it, others disliked and distanced themselves from “les Arabes”, their way of doing business, even their way of baking bread.

“They [the Arabs] have a very limited point of view,” he said. I think by this he meant that they were only out for their own direct profit. He slides from talking about the shopkeepers to talking about “Arabs” in general. “It’s like taxes, they say that in their country they didn’t pay taxes so why should they pay any here? They don’t understand that we have to support the government so we can have education, health services, garbage collection. And then they say that they’re expecting a cheque from the government, and you ask what it is, and it’s welfare, so you so say well where do you think it comes from, that money?” He insists that “they are nice people” but they don’t have the same way of doing business. (quotes translated)

They may be “nice people”, according to this point of view, but they are definitely *not* like “us”. Moreover, they supposedly refuse to adapt appropriately to Canadian or Québécois culture: “they are more fundamentalist. They don’t accept that this is a Catholic country, well, Catholic-Protestant” (elderly Italian man, JTE fieldnotes, 2006-07, T).

This view seems to echo the prejudices that currently abound in Québécois society about Muslims (Helly, 2004; Lenoir-Achdjian et al., 2009), particularly since the „reasonable accommodation” controversies (see Chapter 1), and it is not exclusive to Italians. A non-Italian interviewee had the same view: “they’re more closed. Yes, they’re not ready to change, they would like to make a little country within a country” (T). But the aversion to recent Maghrebi immigrants seemed to be most prevalent among older Italian male immigrants. Two structural, material factors might help explain – although not excuse – the racist resentment of older immigrants. The first issue relates to the appropriation of space. Although the area around Jean-Talon Est was and still is markedly Italian, it is far overshadowed by the symbolic prestige of the nearby Little Italy neighbourhood, a dozen or so blocks further west along Jean-Talon (centred on boulevard St-Laurent). This leaves the less concentrated commercial stretch between Fabre and d’Iberville much more open to change brought about by new waves of immigrants, who make their own ethnic mark upon the shops and services (although their landlords may still be first generation Italians). One elderly Italian told me:

“But Little Italy would be more interesting for you. Over there people get on well with each other.” “It’s not the same here?”, I asked. He shrugs, as if he is not quite

¹⁶ Interestingly, the idea of cosmopolitanism in the field of history has been strongly associated with the port cities of the Mediterranean (Driessen, 2005; Waley, 2009).

comfortable with what he is about to tell me. “No, let me tell you, in fact, the Arabs here... We’re more civil. Them, when they talk you can’t understand them, when they write you can’t read them, they don’t adapt.” (JTE fieldnotes, 2006-07, T)

The section of Jean-Talon Est that I studied is therefore up for symbolic grabs, as it were, which seems to make some of the Italian immigrant inhabitants uncomfortable. The second issue relates to the immigrant experience, specifically, Italian immigrants’ story of success – or failure. The population of this area of Jean-Talon Est enjoys somewhat less than average incomes for the Montréal CMA (see Tables 3.2 and 3.4). Many Italian immigrants have moved out of the neighbourhood to houses they bought or even built in Saint-Léonard or suburbs further afield. In comparison, those who are left living in the census tracts around this stretch of street probably do not feel they have „made it“. The lack of an immigrant success story is compounded when they think of Italy, where EU membership and economic growth have now solidly trumped the postwar destruction and poverty that their families were fleeing when they came to Canada.¹⁷ I interviewed one man, born near Palermo, who had immigrated with his family to Canada in 1954:

I was 13. My father came here first, but my father came here to go to the United States. He wasn’t able to go there, so he came here. But, I can tell you one thing, if we’d stayed in Italy, we’d have had just about the same evolution we had here. We would have had a house, we would have had a car. Because afterwards things changed everywhere. (JTEb2, T)

Had the family stayed in Italy, things would have turned out well, maybe even better than here.

These two issues, relating to the symbolic appropriation of space and the immigrant experience, help explain (interviewees’ representations of) the dynamics between the Italian and Maghrebi communities on Jean-Talon Est. They quite plausibly feed the bitterness of some Italian immigrants, to be expressed in resentment against newer arrivals and, occasionally, their businesses. Others feel differently. Regarding the first issue, not everyone of Italian origin wants to be in Little Italy; they may prefer Jean-Talon Est’s multiethnicity. One told me, “Well Little Italy IS Italian, I mean... It’s just too much Italian for me. It’s just, too, too, too much if it sets up a, in-your-face type thing. Like, I don’t do Little Italy at all” (JTEw4). Of the two interviewees whose experience originally led me to the second issue, while one was tetchy, even volatile in his frustration and explicitly expressed his hostility towards Maghrebi newcomers, the other was philosophical about his relative lack of success and open-minded towards all kinds of „Others“.

¹⁷ It could well be argued that this generation of immigrants paid the price for Italy’s success, since their emigration eased postwar demographic pressure and their remittances eased the poverty of those left behind.

Maghrebi immigrants, in contrast, appeared happier about their relationship with the previous generation of immigrants, and more optimistic about their place on the street. The enthusiasm with which the Maghrebi merchants I interviewed engage in intercultural exchanges in their stores (see sections 5.3 and 7.2) suggests that they grasp and are comfortable with the model of multiculturalism (or interculturalism) whereby one shares cultures through consumption. They perhaps also appreciate the “cultural comfort” (Germain et al., 1995; McNicoll, 1993) of arriving in a multiethnic context in which no single ethnic group is (now) predominant. As one put it:

It’s good here, it’s multicultural, here it’s easier to integrate because if you don’t get on with some people, there are always the other people. It’s easy like that. It’s like you have the choice. (Tunisian immigrant, JTE fieldnotes 2007-02, T)

So while Italians may feel their opportunities on Jean-Talon Est are closing down, Maghrebis are perhaps more likely to feel that they are opening up. The overall trajectories of the two communities are both in transition, but in opposite directions: the Italians’ influence on the street is dwindling, while the Maghrebis’ is on the rise.

Despite – or, more likely, because of – this sense that the social environment of the street is in transition, Jean-Talon Est also seems to be a place where differences are expressed:

I’m thinking of a bistro near my place, it’s run by Romanians and there are lots of Arabs who hang out there, we have discussions about religion, about the role of women, it’s enriching. It’s the clash of cultures but with respect for difference and there is a certain solidarity. It’s very cosmopolitan. (JTEb4, from notes, T)

At first, when people told me they talked about issues such as why Muslim women wear the hijab, I found it hard to believe. It sounded like exactly the kind of ideal of intercultural exchange that doesn’t really happen. However, I changed my mind after listening to a discussion between one merchant, an older Italian immigrant, and his friend or at least regular visitor to his shop, a recent Algerian immigrant. The merchant started talking about one of the „reasonable accommodation” controversies (see section 1.2.2), in which the management of a commercial sugar-shack had provided a pork-free menu and space for prayers to members of a Muslim association on a group visit (Rioux and Bourgeoys, 2008). Thanks to a sensationalist report in the tabloid newspaper *Journal de Montréal*, this informal agreement was widely taken to be yet another example of „unreasonable accommodation” of a demand by a Muslim group that curtailed the other sugar-shack visitors’ rights to enjoy a Québécois tradition: the sugar-shack received over 1 500 emails and hundreds of phone calls ranging from complaints to explicit threats (ibid.). The Italian merchant shared this view, and launched into a long and vehement tirade about Muslims’ refusal to adapt to Canadian society. His Algerian visitor tried to explain

what he understood to have happened at the sugar-shack, and to point out that, to the contrary, Muslim immigrants do generally adapt to and want to be part of society. (During this, I felt extremely uncomfortable, unsure of whether and how I ought to intervene.) The argument was never quite resolved: pressed for time, the visitor left. And perhaps if I had not been there, it would not have taken place. However, the controversial subject seemed to follow on quite casually from the discussion we had been having about the street in general. It seems to me that given the opposing trajectories of two of the most visible communities on Jean-Talon Est, they are perhaps particularly alert to the societal debates that seem to relate to their local circumstances.

5.4.2 Rue St-Viateur: one unsettling minority

Rue St-Viateur's image as a multiethnic street is tightly bound up with that of its surrounding neighbourhood. Mile End still has a reputation as a place where many different ethnic groups live in harmonious cohabitation (Germain and Radice, 2006), but as I noted earlier (section 5.1), it is much less of an immigrant settlement neighbourhood than it used to be. Moreover, people on St-Viateur Street are, by a large majority, white (see Appendix S), and there is no clear *group* that stands out as a minority except one – the Hasidic Jews. Attitudes towards Hasidic Jewish communities are complex, even paradoxical. On the one hand, their presence „proves“ that Mile End is a multiethnic neighbourhood. They were often the first ethnic group listed when I asked people which different groups of people they saw on St-Viateur:

And what different kinds of people do you see using the street? Every kind. Every kind. Well, you know there's uh... a lot of uh... a lot of uh... Hasidic Jews. (StVf7)

Would you say there are one or many communities on this street? Well, I'd have to say more than one, because of the, because of the Hasidic community. I'd have to say that. But, besides them, everybody else is, is, is, pretty, well, you could call the artists a whole community, if you wanted to. [...] But, besides that I don't see – you know I, I, I don't see, let's say, if, if, if I'm Italian or someone else is Greek or someone else is Russian, as a different community. (StVw7)

But on the other hand, the Hasidic Jews do not conform to the model of intercultural and even “hybrid” (Olazabal, 2006; Simon, 1999) cohabitation that many Mile-Enders like to think characterizes the neighbourhood. This section deals with how these „other Others“ are perceived and understood by the non-Hasidic users of St-Viateur Street.

Hasidic Jewish communities arrived in Montréal in the 1940s, fleeing the ravages of the holocaust, and mainly settled in Mile End, which offered a familiar milieu as the centre of Ashkenazi Jewish life in the city at the time (Anctil, 1997, and see Chapter 1). The only traces left on St-Viateur of the Ashkenazi community now are the famous bagel stores, which now

belong to an Italian immigrant who had started working in them at age 14.¹⁸ There are two Hasidic stores on the section of St-Viateur that I studied, a fishmonger's and a butcher's, plus a grocery store on St-Viateur on the west side of avenue du Parc and clothing and religious articles boutiques on Parc itself. Several Hasidic institutions are located nearby, including a large synagogue on Jeanne-Mance south of St-Viateur and a school and synagogue on Hutchison behind the YMCA. Some Hasidic Jews work and many shop in the remaining textile companies near St-Viateur east of St-Laurent. They therefore have many reasons to use rue St-Viateur (see Figure C.6).

On account of their religious beliefs, Hasidic Jewish communities (for there are several congregations) lead a distinct way of life that they seek to preserve from outside influences as much as possible. They have separate schools, avoid socializing with non-Hasidic people, and reject many facets of life in late modernity that other groups take for granted, orienting themselves instead to the spiritual world (Anctil, 1997; Beitel, 1991; Gagnon, 2002). The Hasidic Jews are *the* „visible minority“ of Mile End, visible not by the colour of their skin (as the Canadian government defines the term, see Chapter 1, n. 13) but by the manner of their dress. They are also an audible minority who speak in Yiddish among themselves and mostly in English with the rest of the world. And they are, to coin a phrase, a temporal minority: they closely follow a daily, weekly and seasonal religious calendar which means that the paths they trace between home and synagogue, shops and workplace are distinct from and not synchronized with those of other city-dwellers. In sum, Hasidic Jews' self-segregation engenders particular codes of behaviour in public space, and leads them to interact with their fellow city-dwellers in ways that the latter do not deem „normal“.

I was not able to directly interview any members of Hasidic Jewish communities for this research. My overtures to the two shopkeepers on St-Viateur were repeatedly met with a „come back next week“ apparently delivered in the hope that I wouldn't. I spent one sunny morning approaching Hasidic women in the street to conduct short interviews (considering that women would be more likely to accept than men). But they politely refused, usually saying they didn't have the time. I also had a lead to a former member of a Hasidic Jewish community, but in the end she too refused to participate. What follows is therefore my attempt to disentangle the social representations of Hasidic Jews among non-Hasidic users of St-Viateur Street. In line with my research objectives, I have focused my attention specifically on representations of public

¹⁸ The bagel business has two store fronts on St-Viateur, the main one on the north side of the street near Parc and a smaller one on the south side near Waverley (selling only the sesame seed variety...).

sociability in commercial streets and businesses. I look first at what kind of relationship people think there is between these two groups, and then at how they interpret this imagined relationship as, for example, desirable, acceptable, or aberrant.

As my fieldwork material shows (echoing that of Gagnon, 2002), many users of St-Viateur perceive that Hasidic Jews do not follow the same code of public sociability as everybody else. The difference specifically crystallizes around norms of acknowledgment of the Other in public space. Hasidic Jews are reputed to ignore non-Hasidic people by not returning explicit or implicit greetings, especially when the contact would be between men and women; they avoid the gaze of the opposite sex.¹⁹ At the same time, they are gregarious among their own same-sex or family groups, walking and talking sociably together, such that their presence on St-Viateur is as obvious as that of the groups of young „hipsters“ hanging out there: they sometimes seem to take over the sidewalks (about which there is a fascinating argument among non-Jewish women in Beitel’s [1991] film). By both their appearance and their behaviour, Hasidic Jews stand out.

Broadly speaking, among non-Hasidic users of St-Viateur Street, there are those who believe there is some kind of contact between Hasidic Jews and other people, and those who say there is none. The hypothesis of non-contact, as it were, focuses on three things: face-to-face interaction (or lack of it), the use of public space, and commercial transactions:

It’s never aggressive or anything like that, it’s never... it’s very discreet... yeah. Like a... a Hasidic man will never look at a woman... ... who isn’t – he’ll always look at the ground, the women will always look at the ground too, so as not even to meet your gaze. (StVu3, T)

There are the Hasidic Jews, too, they use the street more just to pass through it (*rue de passage*). [...] Although they do have their own businesses, they don’t go to the other ones. (StVu1, T)

The Jews never come here to buy anything, nothing. So as not to mix with us. (StVw2, T)

¹⁹ This gendered code of behaviour was at the root of two of the „scandals“ contributing to the debate on reasonable accommodations: the advice to police officers that male Hasidic Jews might prefer to be dealt with by male police officers, and the possible accommodation of requests for same-sex driving examiners at the Société d’assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ). It should be noted that neither issue was brought up by Hasidic Jews themselves; the first was a police officer’s own initiative of providing intercultural advice, the second was a long-standing SAAQ principle of service to all customers that was presented by a journalist as pertaining specifically to male Hasidic Jews (Rioux and Bourgeois, 2008). Another case, in which the YMCA on Avenue du Parc frosted the windows of an exercise room at the request of the next-door synagogue that overlooked it, was arguably about questions of modesty rather than mere contact between the sexes.

It doesn't feel like they want to integrate and participate in our economic, social and cultural activities. [...] That's what hits me most, all the ethnic groups that are here, well, I don't feel that different from an Italian, I feel very close to the Italians, very close to the French, even very close to the anglophones that are around here – maybe that wouldn't happen everywhere, but in this neighbourhood I feel very close to them, not different – with the exception of that community who deliberately don't want to integrate into the rest of the population. It's too bad [*laughs*], it's a negative point for the whole society, not just for the neighbourhood. *Because they're still visible, but distant?* They're, they're, I mean they're visible because there's a lot of them, but they're not visible in our stores and, you know, I mean they don't integrate, they don't want to integrate, they won't go and spend their cash anywhere except in their own stores. (StVw9, T)

However, other users of rue St-Viateur, like these interviewees during the St-Viateur festival de rue,²⁰ see things differently and claim that there *is* contact between the two groups:

There are even Hasidim here today. There weren't any before, and now there are Hasidim who are coming and passing through to enjoy the atmosphere. (StVf6, T)

No you can't say that we don't bother them, they don't bother us, it's, you know, we co-exist with them. They wouldn't come to something like this because it's not, first of all, it's after sundown, so it's Shabbat for them. They can't, you know. But they're curious about what it is that goes on. And then of course, the gentile people as they call them, they're curious when the Jewish people have [*theirs*], when they bring the Torah to the synagogue, they have a whole big, a whole big thing going. (StVf10)

Notwithstanding the views quoted earlier, some interviewees had specific examples of everyday interaction in gentile (non-Jewish) businesses on St-Viateur:

Now I'm beginning to build up a customer base and there are some [*Hasidic Jews*] that come in regularly, they're nice, but they're very demanding. [...] But there are some among them, the ones I see more often, in the end you get attached to them, so I'm happy to – there's one lady in particular, one or two or three ladies who I think are really friendly. (StVw11, T)

I observed some such exchanges. One Saturday, for instance, a Hasidic Jewish woman brought a covered dish into the bagel shop and asked it to be cooked in the big oven (on the Sabbath, strictly observant Jews cannot turn on their ovens or other machines). The man at the counter accepted, and said she should pass it over to the worker sliding bagels in and out of the oven, but to be sure to “give him something for his trouble,” which she did. Although the Hasidic woman seemed timid and not quite at ease, this definitely counts as an interaction.²¹

²⁰ See Chapter 3 for details of the fieldwork conducted at this event, and Chapter 6 for an analysis of the event itself.

²¹ Two recent newspaper articles (Elkouri, 2008; Nadler, 2007) also claim that Hasidic Jews are not as anti-social in public as they are made out to be. That these articles address public sociability at all underlines that it has captured the public's imagination as a contentious issue.

These two hypotheses, of contact and non-contact, are not mutually exclusive, given that the registers of contact vary. Someone might perceive there to be no contact except in shops, for example:

They're quite happy to sort of to be left alone – but at the same time they, they frequent the shops too, that, that aren't just based off their community, aren't run by people from their community. And um, and we frequent their shops, because... we're freaks and we're not afraid to go into their grocery, and buy matzo ball soup, or whatever it is. We hear something neat about their culture, and we wanna know about it, whether French or English. (StVw3)

But whatever the perceived extent and register of (non-)contact, the point is that the Hasidim are talked about. Their marked presence cannot be ignored; it provokes a reaction. And it is particularly interesting to see how different users of rue St-Viateur „manage diversity" in their own discourses, how they account for or react to this very obvious group.

First, there are those to whom the Hasidic Jews' difference is „not a problem", whether or not they think there is any contact. In their discourse, they mainly try to assimilate this group (that is not that easy to assimilate) into their model of easy interethnic cohabitation.

They pass every day, and I never have a problem with them. Never, I even actually helped, once or twice somebody with the carriages in winter because they couldn't, you know, push, you know, without help. Me, I don't have a problem. At all. I mean you know, it's just like us, they do their own lives and, we do our own business, and um I don't know. (StVw5)

Do you think the different groups of people in the street get on with each other? I think so, yes. Yes yes yes. Yes, especially because they're not that different, I mean, well, the Hasidic Jews pretend that we're not there, but in general people from the neighbourhood know what the Hasidim are like, so that means that I don't think there's any – you know, when you come to Mile End you know that there's a big Hasidic Jewish community so you're mentally prepared. If you aren't, it's because you're really a tourist, you've arrived and you've only just seen the Hasidic Jews. (StVu1, T)

I think it's surprising at first, because in general people look at each other a lot, they say hello to each other or uh... there's an exchange, you could say. Well they [*the Hasidim*] keep it really to a minimum, so at first it surprises you. But at the same time, the fact that it's not done arrogantly... You have to respect the space of the other. (StVu3, T)

This latter interviewee added that she had sometimes accompanied Hasidic groups when working as a tourist guide in the Vieux Port, and they had always been as interactive and curious as any other group. “But here in the neighbourhood, they have everything, they have their grocery store where they go and buy things, they don't need anything from outside, so there's no contact really” (T). She felt that the Hasidic Jews had to “protect their culture” (T), which therefore justified the lack of contact.

Secondly, there are those who express a wish for greater interaction between the two groups. These are usually people who believe that there is some degree of contact already:

The Hasidic Jews can't come *[to the festival]* because it's on Shabbat. So called, a local hiphop klezmer artist, is playing, and it might be fun for young Hasidic Jews to come and see something that relates to their roots, but he's playing at 7:30 which is right in the middle of Shabbat supper. So it's not very inclusive. The Hasidic Jews are living in a remote world, but you can't give up on them. You are missing an opportunity to create something in the neighbourhood, especially since it's called a *fête de quartier*. (StVf1, from notes)

Similarly, a merchant I interviewed shortly after the street festival talked about what she'd like to see in future festivals:

But if there was someone in the Jewish community, not necessarily Hasidic, who could explain what this neighbourhood means for the Hasidic Jews, you know, a bit, that would be really cool, and then as well people would, maybe people are very critical, but at the same time I think they're curious, I think that could be interesting. (StVw11, T)

And finally, there are those who perceive Hasidic Jews' behaviour as rudeness or arrogance. In the 100 questionnaires completed at the St-Viateur festival de rue, there were five responses that were quite vehement regarding Hasidic Jews (all translated from the French):²²

Q5 What do you like least about [St-Viateur Street]?

the arrogance of the Hasidim (Respondent 04)

the impoliteness of the Hasidic Jews (R08)

the Hasidic Jews (don't answer, don't mix...) (R44)

the Hasidims who don't want to say hello to us (R63)

Q8 How would you describe the atmosphere of St-Viateur Street (on a normal day) in just one word?

Lots of nationalities – except the Jews, who seem really rude (R79)

One can assume that these are people who think there is no contact between the groups. They sometimes present themselves as having made an effort in the past, but have since become frustrated with the lack of response:

In the long run I must say that after eight years, at the beginning I was so open, but it becomes, it starts to get irritating *[laughs]* and I can't believe I'm saying this but today, I must say, I can say without hesitation that it becomes uh... well it's irritating when you don't get, we're talking about a nod here, nothing to say thank you for

²² The anonymity of the self-administered questionnaire doubtless allowed people to express their prejudices freely. Anglophones were the only other „ethnocultural“ group targeted in this way, but to a lesser extent, and for different reasons (perceived increasing dominance of the English language).

letting me past, or, normal courtesies that you have in a society where people help each other out, it seems to me. (StVw9, T)

According to the sociological concept of public sociability, this kind of non-contact is still a form of public sociability. If we return to the typology I developed in Chapter 4, this is „spiky“ sociability: the actions of one party do not conform to the norm and provoke a certain discomfort:

[In the street there's] a kind of proximity with other communities and no one minds, they live in... pretty much in harmony except the people who are bothered in one way or another by the Hasidic Jewish community, who are... they live in autarchy, they live in isolation and they don't really mix with the community, that's really quite unusual. (StVw4, T)

At the very least, the Hasidim arouse curiosity on St-Viateur. One interviewee, who was just getting to know the neighbourhood, had heard from some people that the Hasidic Jewish merchants wouldn't serve *goyim* (gentiles), and from others that they would. He was looking forward to testing these hypotheses himself. And after having fanned the flames of the „reasonable accommodation“ debate, particularly as regards the Hasidic communities,²³ *La Presse* eventually dedicated a two-day series of articles on “the parallel Montréal of the Hasidim” (Laurence, 2007, my translation).

It is possible that if the Hasidic Jews were not such a visible minority, their supposedly anti-social behaviour in public space would go completely unnoticed, since many individuals in the city will fail to return a voiced or silent greeting, or will avert their gaze from a passing stranger. Alternatively, if they were a picturesque folk minority, quaint but harmless and friendly, the Hasidim would doubtless be more fully accepted, since they would better reflect back to Mile-Enders the cosmopolitan image they have of themselves. According to Erving Goffman's analysis, this duty of reflection is exactly what is expected of a stigmatized person:

The stigmatized individual is asked to act so as to imply neither that his burden is heavy nor that bearing it has made him different from us; at the same time he must keep himself at that remove from us which ensures our painlessly being able to confirm this belief about him. Put differently, *he is advised to reciprocate naturally with an acceptance of himself and us*, an acceptance of him that we have not quite extended him in the first place. (Goffman, 1997[1963]: 76, emphasis added)

The ways in which Hasidic Jews interact with the other users of St-Viateur Street are certainly not felt by the latter to be a natural, reciprocal acceptance (whatever the former's intentions may be). Thus, as things stand, the Hasidim reject the role of the stigmatized person that Goffman describes. and refuse to soothe the unsettling effect that that their distinctive presence provokes.

²³ Potvin et al. (2008: 203) found that media coverage of the reasonable accommodation controversies was particularly negatively biased against Hasidic Jews.

5.4.3 Rue de Liège: the established and the outsiders

On rue de Liège, if one goes by indicators of physical appearance or language, it is easy to observe a great deal of everyday interaction between people who belong to different ethnocultural groups. For instance, I saw the school crossing guard, a man in his 40s of South Asian appearance with a Muslim-style skull-cap and beard, chatting at length one day with a black man in his 30s and, later, with an elderly white woman as he helped her cross the road. Of course, one cannot assume that ethnocultural identity is salient in these exchanges: the first could have been one of neighbour to neighbour, or father to father, the second a common courtesy associated with his job. Interactions where language is a barrier, however, almost certainly make people more aware of the „otherness“ of their interlocutors, and these are fairly frequent. I found myself translating several times between shopkeepers and customers as I shopped on the street, usually between French-speaking Haitian customers and English-speaking South Asian shopkeepers, when each one’s knowledge of the other language reached its limits.²⁴ One South Asian shopkeeper had learnt Creole while working in a factory with Haitian women when she first arrived in Montréal. During our interview, I witnessed her intercultural skills in action:

Some customers either leave money or buy things on credit. One old Haitian man came in and asked about the lottery tickets. He left \$5 with deLw7 to play a draw for him tomorrow. An old Haitian woman came in to buy some small citrus fruit that deLw7 told me they use when cooking meat, called *oranz soo* (sour orange, as I find out on the internet later). She didn’t have any money to pay for them, and made deLw7 write down the price (\$3) on a little chit of paper where there was already another \$3 in the same handwriting. “*Bien aimable* (very kind),” said the lady. DeLw7 tells me afterwards that the old lady makes food for her church but doesn’t always have the money to pay for the ingredients, so she lets her pay later. “Some people are very honest, some forget. Some forget, you have to help them! [i.e. remind them that they owe money] Some don’t care and they don’t come back. Sometimes you lose the customer.” (deLw7, from notes)

In this way, a shopkeeper (or a school crossing guard, or an elderly resident) has to get to know people whose cultural codes and references are not the same, even though the most important distinctions may not be between ethnic groups but between trustworthy and forgetful customers, or friendly and grouchy neighbours. “Maybe one Chinese they like [to] complain, then the other

²⁴ Appendix T shows the languages spoken at work by the population of the area surrounding each street. I chose this variable as the closest available proxy for language regularly spoken in public. People living near de Liège are the least likely to speak French at work, and report the most use of non-official and multiple languages.

Chinese they don't like complain... it depends [on] the people," explained one shopkeeper (deLw4).

In many cases, the ethnocultural diversity was portrayed positively or neutrally (i.e., as a mere description of the street) by the people I interviewed. For instance, it was a dominant theme in the answers I received when I asked people to describe the street in one word:

I'm thinking of that one word, like diversity, is you know, like all of them different, multiculturalism, that's for sure, this is um... you're watching multiculturalism at it's best here. You wouldn't see multicultural at Monkland Street,²⁵ no, very little, but this is more, much much more. (deLu2)

A small globe because everybody's here – Italians, French, Greek, Pakistani, blacks, Indians.... (deLb4)

The street of all the nations! Everyone talks to each other, you can talk to everyone. Even at night, *I feel safe, you know?* Because I know everyone. We get on. (deLb5, T, italics denote English in the original)

These quotes come from people of varied origins (Greek, Indian and Italian). Several shopkeepers too spoke of the relatively harmonious cohabitation between different ethnic groups, whether or not they were said to mix or keep their distance from each other.

The strong points? Firstly that there are a lot of ethnic groups and that that doesn't cause many problems. There are no arguments, nothing. The safety is really remarkable. (deLw3, T)

Yeah the younger people I find are mixing well, yeah. *And the older ones are, maybe...?* The language has a lot to do with it, the older people sometimes won't talk very good English or French, so it's hard for them to communicate with other cultures, you know, so... so they don't, they'll say „hi“ or whatever, but it's not that they hate each other, but they don't really communicate too much „cause of the language purposes, you know. That's what I find. The young people like I said are mixing so it's good. (deLw4)

Besides language, „culture shock“ can be seen as a barrier to interaction. Another interviewee, an immigrant herself, thought that immigrants can change a lot when they arrive in Canada, because there is almost too much freedom; there are so many cultures from so many countries that they don't know how they should live any more: “some people's minds change” (deLw7). Still, regular interaction between people who perceive each other as belonging to different ethnocultural groups is generally experienced positively.

However, a different theme also emerged in some interviews, namely, the expression of resentment, repulsion and, ultimately, racism on the part of long-established immigrants or their

²⁵ Monkland Street is a street in NDG, DeLu2's neighbourhood of residence; see Chapter 6 for discussion of Monkland in relation to Sherbrooke Ouest.

children towards more recent immigrants. As noted in section 5.1, people perceive a divide in Parc-Extension between Greek, European and Middle-Eastern populations on the one hand, and newer arrivals from South Asia on the other, with some groups (Haitians or Ghanaians) apparently classed as temporally (if not culturally) in between the two. This divide is constructed by the older groups through a discourse of neighbourhood decline that establishes solidarity among themselves while lumping together and rejecting the newcomers.

A Greek guy is left, sipping on his coffee. An Italian comes up to him and greets him, starts horsing around with him in Italian, saying "You don't speak Italian? But Italy and Greece are neighbours, the same *raza*" [*race*]. (deL fieldnotes 2007-09)

It is a good neighbourhood before but not any more, no. *No, why?* Well because it changed a lot, the residents, the tenants, it changed a lot. *Are the buildings less nice or – ?* Well yes, like Indians, Pakistanis. We are not used to that before, before everything was classy, Arabs, Armenians there were, a few Greeks, well, everything, everything. It is changed. *It changed. And is the atmosphere in de Liège good in general?* There's no atmosphere! (deLw2, T)

The sense of change is strongly felt, as indicated by the (not very funny) „jokes“ about the name of the neighbourhood that I heard on two separate occasions: "This by the way used to be called Parc-Extension, now it's called Paki-Extension," the middle-aged son of Greek immigrants told me (deLb10). Echoing Elias and Scotson's (1965) groundbreaking research into social differentiation in a small English town, the „established“ residents perceive their neighbourhood in terms of a „before“ and an „after“ the „outsiders“ arrived. As the "everything was classy" quote above suggests, the differences between the two focus on aesthetics and social class.

Like the other three streets, the merits of rue de Liège were often discussed in terms of its cleanliness or dirtiness. However, in clear contrast to the other streets, (un)cleanliness was persistently *ethnicized*, that is, associated with specific ethnocultural groups – namely, the more recent arrivals:

What do you dislike about de Liège? The Pakistanis. They are dirty. I know, I go to their houses, I see how they live. It smells. *What do you think about the appearance of de Liège, the way it looks?* [At this point a large South Asian family walks by.] This is its appearance, I see all Pakistanis. Not Italians and Greeks any more. I wouldn't live here. I live in a very clean neighbourhood, Ville d'Anjou is very clean. (deLb1, Greek immigrant in his 60s)

These people [*i.e. the South Asians*] don't care. I'm not racist, but for example, they wash their clothes and hang them to dry on the fence. I want to sell a house and people come over to see, who's going to want to buy something round here? I wanted to call the city, see if they had a right to do this. They drop things in the lane. I clear up the lane and people laugh at me. Next morning, it is dirty again, I go out and pick it up. (deLb3, Greek immigrant in her 60s)

I'm not racist, I have some Indian friends and they're good people, but I've been inside their homes and I've seen the way they live and it's not pretty. Sheets on the floor and five families in a 3½. They're dirty, you can always smell them. They ruin all the good apartments: you rent them a renovated place and they'll wreck it. The "Asians" depanneurs are dirty. The Greek ones are supposed to be clean, because their culture means they should be clean, but the Asians don't care. (deLw9a, son of Greek immigrants in his 20s)

South Asian immigrants are thus constructed as „dirty“ and „smelly“. Although the quotes above are from people of Greek origin, a couple of interviewees of Middle-Eastern origin echoed the same sentiments, albeit more faintly. And it is important to note that not all interviewees from the long-established groups thought this way, as I will show shortly.

The second theme of prejudice towards recent immigrants relates to social class, spending power and the standing of the neighbourhood. Dansereau et al. noted in 1995 that:

the exodus of young families has been accompanied by a certain retreat (*repli*) of the „Greek village“, the incontestable rise of feelings of dissonance among an ageing population who tend to see themselves as middle class, and therefore look disapprovingly on the invasion of the neighbourhood by „poor people“ from all continents. (1995: 193, my translation)

Twelve years later I found the same sentiment, expressed unambiguously by this elderly Greek immigrant, for example:

I have lived here for 35 years. It has changed a lot, believe me. When I first came here, Parc-Extension was the only place to live in Montréal, the best place. It was clean, there were nice houses with nice gardens, it was close to downtown, close to the markets, near the hospitals, there were good buses. And now it stinks, believe me. *What has changed?* Before there were no coloured people at all, just Europeans: Greeks, Italians, Polish, Hungarians. Europeans. Now it is all coloured people. They are the majority now. (deL fieldnotes, 2006-07)

Seeing themselves as more middle-class, the established immigrants supposedly care for their homes and environment better than the recent arrivals, who „bring down the tone“ of the neighbourhood. And given their poverty, the recently arrived groups do not necessarily make good customers, nor are they always viewed as good merchants; they are seen by some as „bringing the economy down“:

You know there is poverty in Parc-Extension, a lot. Apart from that, the Indians don't buy, they save their money, their welfare to send money back home, I see that they buy a lot of gold, and they don't care about their clothes. (deLw1, T)

They came here, a lot of the immigrants come here... they seem to start businesses and start working for, "scuse my language, for almost nothing. They seem to be selling a lot of products for the price they are getting it, how they're doing it I have no idea, whether they are doing something illegal I refuse to say! [*laughs*] (deLb10)

Again, related to the theme of dirt, two young shop workers, both children of Greek immigrants, described de Liège in one word as “a piece of crap” and “dirty”. I asked whether the problem was garbage, and one of them replied:

No, not so much. It's more things like, take the video store across the street. It is covered in old papers, you can hardly see. Greek shops have to be clean and you can see into them, but the others just don't care, they don't put up a sign that's beautifully written, they just put up any old thing any old how and just want to make money. And inside some of their shops it's really dirty, you see cockroaches walking around. (deLw9b)

This recalls the persistent ethnicization of commercial practices in certain neighbourhoods in Paris, where immigrant shopkeepers are blamed for bad smells and sidewalk encumbrances (Clerval, 2004).

These two interviewees' particularly virulent views also exemplified a kind of contradiction that underlay negative attitudes towards recently arrived immigrant groups, namely, the recognition that the latter are following – and have the right to follow – the „Canadian dream“ just as the older immigrant groups did. As another interviewee said:

Their kids are going to grow up, they're going to get educated, their kids are gonna want what we want, you know they want to have the nice house in the West Island or whatever in a nice suburban area, they're going to move out, who knows what the next, who the next wave of immigrants is going to be in this [area]. It's the way like my parents came, when they first came to Canada, they came poor, they were working in the factories, my father took a chance, bought a business, and it went well. (deLb10, Greek origin)

Probably because their own relatively similar immigrant experience is in the not-so-distant past, established groups' attitudes towards the recent arrivals are thus complex and can be quite ambivalent. Some recognized and took a critical stance towards their own group's racism, perhaps explaining it by reference to generation or a lack of education:

And you know maybe there are some who don't want to be open to others. Like, speaking for my community, [...] I can say it honestly, we are not very open towards the Indians and Pakistanis... I don't know why, it's racism I think, it's not good. But maybe more towards the Greeks, they are very close [to us], the Greeks, the Arabs, the Turks, it's all close. (deLw3, Middle-Eastern origin, T)

A lot of them [*the older Greeks*] are narrow-minded and um, ignorant and um, barbaric thinking... Yeah, I've argued with them many times. Yeah... that's all they're thinking, it's cause they came from, okay, from the village, racist too... Ooh, not all of them, but, but a good portion of them, racist, narrow-minded, ignorant. But, it's not because it's in their blood, it's because that's [what] they were taught, you know. (deLu2)

Likewise, some interviewees who thought that recent immigrants made the street dirty reasoned that they might simply have different ways of doing things, and even that the City should adapt to that:

Sometimes you will find this street is a, a little dirty. Not as clean as uh, as the street, uh, where I live [*in Rosemont*]. Maybe because it's too much, uh... it's too much multi-... nationality people live here, they have different kind of uh, habits. (deLw4)

But if some are understanding, others instead distance their own group's experience from that of recent arrivals, insisting, for instance, that the latter choose to stay on welfare rather than work (cf. Valentine, 2008; Wells and Watson, 2005). The young shop workers of Greek origin (deLw9a, 9b) claimed, "We came with nothing, we ended up with nothing, they came with nothing and ended up with welfare cheques every month". However, they also claimed that recent immigrants were "good people", too: "Everyone's trying to make money, no one's a bad person, there's good and bad in everyone"; "They're nice people, they're good people, but...". Another woman who I interviewed in Parc Howard while she watched her grandchildren at play said "I'm not racist," before complaining about the newcomers drying their washing on the fence, leaving a mess in the lane and appropriating the park:

"Sometimes I come and there is no place at all left to sit down, they are all sitting here, especially all the women, talking loudly together. I sound really bad, don't I?" She looks over her glasses, leans towards me and strokes my arm. "But it's the truth! It's the truth." (deLb3)²⁶

The newcomers I interviewed were never so negative in their views of the street's ethnocultural diversity. Three Bangladeshi men I talked with complained of drug-dealing by "black people" and bar brawls on the street attributed to all non-Muslims in general. But while a few newcomers alluded to the difficulties of the immigrant experience (losing cultural references, making business mistakes), they did not blame other ethnic groups for them. Rather, they concentrated on the prosaic advantages of the street, such as its convenience (see Chapter 6).

The state of interethnic relations as I observed them on de Liège Street thus seems to be full of contradictions. There is plentiful regular and relatively easy (if ephemeral) interethnic interaction, in stores and other public spaces, and the street is appreciated by many – both old-timers and newcomers among them – for its multiethnicity. But more ambivalent views also

²⁶ One man, an elderly Greek immigrant who I saw quite often, did *not* preface his prejudice with a claim not to be racist. "You can call me racist, I say, nature is racist, all the world is racist. You see the trees, one is taller than the other, one is better than the other. That is nature. So the world is racist. These people are, I would say, 200 years behind the Europeans. In what way? In the way they live, the way they behave, the way they smell. They are dirty." (deL fieldnotes, 2007-07).

circulate. While some members of longer-established groups say that the newcomers are “good people”, and may recognize that they are just doing what they or their parents did, they may simultaneously believe that these same “good” people are blighting the neighbourhood. As in Jean-Talon Est, this ambivalence may stem from a sense of failure to „make it“. Some interviewees seem to fit this model, such as the elderly and poorly Greek widower who hardly ever sees his children, or the young Greek store employees who can’t wait to move out of Parc-Extension. Thus, the experience of regular contact with other ethnic groups does not *necessarily* lead to greater openness or respect towards them.

5.4.4 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest: the cultural comfort of diversity

In contrast to the other three streets, interviewees’ representations of interethnic relations on Sherbrooke Street West show no signs of tension or conflict. As indicated in section 5.1, the local population is perceived as highly ethnically diverse. Over 60% of the population claims British Isles, French or Other North American origins – and therefore probably see themselves as white Anglo-Canadian and/or French-Canadian – no particular groups here seem to be the „other Others“. Some groups are mentioned more often than others, and some are mis-labelled or misrecognized, but none seem to be more marginalized than any other. There seem to be no common judgments made about any one group; rather, the prevailing moral judgment is that the diversity is „a good thing“. One Korean worker explained to me that she liked Sherbrooke Street because, while other immigrant areas were usually rather impoverished:

around here it’s a mix, everything’s a mix. French Québécois, English, Anglophone, immigrant, black and Asian, all mixed so it’s really great. It’s the people’s quality, I guess, [...] here, it’s rare to find the people who [...] talk like, „I’m the king, you’re the servant“. That’s the thing, people are really nice, I like that, it’s really good, it’s really good, you know. When the people are nice, you’re gonna be nice to them too. It’s good. Here it’s a lot of mixed peoples, so it’s really good, I like it. It’s not poor, but still all the cultures are mixed, yeah, I like it. (ShOw13)

If you could describe Sherbrooke Street in just one word, which word would you use? Um... Great! *Great, why? Why?* First thing is that Sherbrooke Street name is very famous. And then... ... lots of kinds of people is came here, it’s like a mosaic. It’s all on Sherbrooke Street. (ShOw7)

What are the strong points of Sherbrooke Street, for you? Um, strong points I think... [4-second pause] There is different kinds of nationalities. the area mostly is uh, English language, then French. [...] I think the Italians are the first persons who came in this area, I’m not sure, but now there is different nationalities, there is a lot of Iranians, Italians. (ShOw5)

There are three plausible explanations for this apparently harmonious interethnic cohabitation. The first relates to the high level of ethnocultural diversity, of which perceptions are fairly

accurate. Rue Sherbrooke Ouest appears to provide the ideal conditions for the “cultural comfort” that people of diverse origins take from contexts in which no particular groups dominate (Germain, 1999b; McNicoll, 1993). The top ten countries of immigration (see Table P.3) account for just under half of all immigrants (the lowest proportion of all four streets), indicating that the spread of the immigrant population among countries of origin is more evenly balanced than elsewhere. In the same vein, the figures on ethnic origin also indicate a high number of multiple responses (since they add up to 146%, see Figure Q.1 and Table Q.3). The on-line Immigration Atlas for the Montréal CMA in 2001 shows the zones around Sherbrooke Ouest to be in the top quartile for diversity of countries of birth, regions of birth and visible minority group among immigrants, and in the top or third quartile for their ethnic origins (Apparicio et al., 2004).²⁷ None of the zones surrounding the other streets display such high diversity indexes. Similarly, the ethnic affiliations of shops show greater variety than on the other streets. Moreover, the most common ethnic affiliations of businesses on the street – Iranian, Jamaican (or other Caribbean), Korean, South Asian – are culturally quite dissimilar. There is thus no potential for a contentious „Mediterranean“ alliance, as on rue Jean-Talon Est, but nor is there a clear split between two culturally distant groups, as on rue de Liège, or between one highly visible minority and the rest, as on rue St-Viateur. As the following interviewee put it, “no one has the particular use” of the street:

I think it’s so mixed up, like if you look outside our street you have like a Greek restaurant, a Cajun restaurant, you have two Indian places, then you got a Greek guy that has a laundromat, and two brothers that own the paper store, I forgot what country, I think they’re from Turkey or somewhere around there. So I mean it’s a mish-mash, there’s everything. So no one has the particular use, you know so here we have Cosmo’s next door, that’s a special place on its own, after that you got my friends who have the Jamaican barber shop, they have all kinds of people going in there, and I mean it’s this whole... That’s like really the, where the multicultural part of Sherbrooke is. They don’t come and eat here, but they’re outside, they’re going by. (ShOw4, restaurateur)

A second explanation relates to the history of the street. Sherbrooke Ouest, as one of the main arteries of the predominantly anglophone neighbourhood of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG), arguably suffered from the out-migration of anglophones from Quebec in the 1970s-1990s. The

²⁷ The Atlas’s diversity index measures the diversity or specialization of immigrants living in a given zone on a scale from 0, completely homogenous, to 1, very heterogeneous. So if you are looking at ethnic origin and the index is 0, all the immigrants in that neighbourhood have the same ethnic origin; if it is 1, equal numbers of immigrants of each ethnic origin live there. The diversity index for the four variables I mentioned ranges from 0.83 to 0.94. The relevant zones are De Maisonneuve, Monkland Village and Loyola; between them they cover all the census tracts around Sherbrooke Ouest that I selected for my use of statistics but tracts 98, 101.1 and 101.2 are included too, in the Loyola zone (see Chapter 3).

so-called „Anglo exodus“ had a powerful hold on anglophone communities“ imaginations and certainly had an impact on individual trajectories (see Levine, 1990; Locher, 1988; Radice, 2000). The combined effects of the departure (or thoughts of departure) of local residents and the economic recession of the early 1990s created a climate of uncertainty that hardly augured well for small businesses. An active member of the merchants“ association, explained to me that:

[our store] opened in 1990 and we were growing very nicely, and in 1995 there was a huge change. There was a referendum. And the effect on NDG in particular was rather substantial. Because it was so close that people were in shock. As a matter of fact, what we saw was an almost 40% or so drop in sales. Overnight. It lasted almost six months. It was an anglophone area, and that affected the street. What happened is you had all of a sudden quite a few people over a period of time left. It was too close for comfort for some people and they just basically left. [...] There was a high turnover of residents too, it’s not just that people left the province. [...] And this of course results in a tremendous economic downturn for the street. Because you’ve lost your customer base. Even though there are newcomers, their shopping habits are not the same. They don’t know the district. So there was, I think, there, a big decline. The street, after ’95, it took three or four years of decline, I think about 30% of the stores were empty. I counted 77 stores out of about 300. And this was a quick count. This does not reflect of course the number of stores that were opening and closing. Something would open, six months later it’s gone, something else would come in, and then it would be gone. A very persistent uh... difficult time. And, and uh... The street was in trouble. And this is a wealthier area but it’s not immune to this type of thing. (ShOw3)

This state of affairs led to the creation of the Sherbrooke Street West Merchants“ Association, which I shall write about more fully in the next chapter. It is corroborated by comparing the street inventory that I compiled with the Lovell’s street index for 1996-1997. There are now 15 businesses open at addresses that had no listing back then, while six addresses that were listed as businesses now have no commercial activity (not including the disused gas station, a potentially profitable site that awaits decontamination). The net gain of nine gives a useful indication of the lower level of commercial activity a decade ago. My point is that the high vacancy rate on the street probably created something of a vacuum that new businesses would fill. In combination with the „Anglo exodus“, that meant that by the latter half of the 1990s, no single ethnocultural group held sway over the symbolic space of rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Newcomers – businesses and residents – could take root and flourish with little resentment from old-timers.²⁸

²⁸ Indeed, the only resentment directed towards any specific ethnic group was expressed by two older Anglo-Canadians talking about Franco-Québécois, but at a general and governmental level rather than a local one. “Sherbrooke Street has evolved from its original, WASP area, it’s been a [...] forced [...] evolution I should say, and I think that has a bearing on the street too. It’s still trying to maintain its Anglo

The third explanation is a matter of urban form. As noted in Chapter 3, Sherbrooke Ouest is one of Montréal's major thoroughfares, called the "spine of the city" by Smith (2006). In the slice of it under study here, the double traffic lanes and the sidewalks are broad, and the street is served by the frequent 105 bus. This is a commercial street, but it is also arterial, channelling people and goods between east and west, between the suburbs and the city. It is an interstitial street, and therefore not an easy street to appropriate (Remy, 1987): it can be said to „belong" to the many people who use it, whether they live locally or not. Although I define Jean-Talon Est as similarly interstitial (see Chapter 3), we have seen that that street's history and current population have led to a different and more antagonistic configuration of ethnocultural groups.

So, although Sherbrooke Ouest is marked by some social and ethnocultural groups more than others, none can lay an exclusive or even dominant claim to this street as their territory. This does not mean that no individuals sense interethnic tension or discrimination: "the experience of „successful" everyday multiculturalism is not necessarily shared by all the people in one locality – rather it is subjective, varying across ethnicity/race, age, gender in highly complex ways such that one person's experience or imaginary of a particular place does not mirror another's" (Watson, 2009a). But overall, the combination of Sherbrooke Ouest's high level of ethnocultural diversity, its period of decline in the early 1990s and its interstitial urban form means that there are apparently no major and widely perceived ethnicized conflicts between different groups of users on the street. There may be „Us" and the „Others", but there seem to be no „other Others".

5.5 Conclusion: ethnicity or alterity?

This chapter has shown some of the workings of the mobilization of ethnicity in our four multiethnic commercial streets. In the first section, I investigated the role that ethnicity played in the identification and subsequent (in)visibility of different social groups in each street. While every city-dweller conceivably has an ethnic identity, and potentially belongs to an ethnic group, in each street some ethnic groups stood out more than their weight in the local population would suggest. Furthermore, certain other kinds of social groups were more widely noticed and named than some ethnic groups.

roots, but it's not allowed, [...] in a lot of things there's too much government interference, not only linguistically, that goes without saying, but in other areas too, the government is the Big Brother so to speak which is not always a good thing." (ShOw12)

We thus saw that rue de Liège was imagined as being chiefly populated by an older wave of Greek, other European and Middle Eastern immigrants followed by a recent wave of South Asians; in addition, “poor people” were a highly visible group. On Jean-Talon Est, the visible groups included Italians, “Arabs” (i.e. Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians), Latin Americans (in fact, mostly Salvadoreans and Peruvians), Haitians, Vietnamese/Chinese and Québécois or French Canadians; beyond any ethnic differences, interviewees thought of the street as populated by ordinary, hard-working people. On Sherbrooke Ouest, what struck users the most was the mix – of origins, skin colours, languages and lifestyles (including groups such as students). St-Viateur, meanwhile, is less recognizably “ethnic” than it was: while the Hasidic Jews and the Italian cafés „prove” that the street is still multiethnic, other ethnic groups (Greeks, Portuguese, Chinese...) were named less often than the young „artist” (or hipster, musician, creative or bohemian) crowd.

These variations in visibility can be due to local history and reputation, manifestations of socioeconomic trends (e.g. gentrification, commercial decline), or practices of sociability in which similar people cluster together – or dissimilar people mingle – in particular places (see Chapter 4). In a sense, users triangulate the available information in order to identify different groups. But their view is always partial, as well as positioned from their own standpoint of ethnic belonging. I suggest that individuals’ perceptions of the local population are not anodyne, but are among the processes by which they imagine and construct ethnic (and social) boundaries and, ultimately, recognize only some groups as actors in the streets.

The presence of ethnically and culturally marked businesses also contributes to the visibility of ethnic or „lifestyle” groups on the streets. In the second section, I showed that any single business may have its own mix of ethnic markers in its products, décor, employees and clientele. They can point to single, multiple or nested ethnic origins, and may be immediately obvious or somewhat opaque. Businesses also display markers that are not directly linked with ethnicity, such as representations of locality (*produits de terroir*, local sourcing) or non-specific „otherness” (such as the „exotic”, „oriental” ambience of certain clothes or jewellery boutiques). All these markers require a certain amount of „insider knowledge” to decode, and each city-dweller approaches these markers differently equipped with resources to „read” them, for instance, prior knowledge, or stereotypes, or basic curiosity.

Ultimately, attributing single ethnic identities to businesses on multiethnic commercial streets is an inadequate, if not impossible, exercise in classification. Rescuing the exercise from futility is the fact that it underlines the lack of correlation between the ethnic composition of

commercial streets and that of their surrounding population. While some groups that are numerically large in the population disappear from sight in the commercial street, for others, the shop window, as it were, provides a stage for much greater visibility in the city than their weight in the population would suggest. Overall, “[t]raditional understandings of ethnic commercial landscapes as more-or-less organic outgrowths of ethnic residential landscapes is [sic] increasingly problematic” (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005: 232). This fractures the model of the multiethnic metropolis as mosaic, while supporting the model of the metropolis as a vast array of culturally distinctive opportunities, which mobile denizens draw on to construct their identities through highly differentiated individual patterns of consumption and sociability (Ascher, 2005; Bourdin, 2004a, 2005; Zukin, 1998). As Bourdin (2005) suggests, the idea of multiculturalism – understood as parallel but separate cultures – does not characterize the “metropolis of individuals” as aptly as that of cosmopolitanism, understood as an eclectic *bricolage* or dabbling in many elements of many cultures (and thus, in my schema of Chapter 1, both a personal and commodified cosmopolitanism).

It follows that ethnic affiliations cannot be read off the façades and labels of multiethnic commercial streets: they are presented, performed and perceived by people, in part through the commodities in circulation. One current of cultural studies has tended to interpret these performances and commodities as representing bounded cultures in unequal relation to each other, and has argued that the exchanges between individuals that they generate are therefore inauthentic, even exploitative. Granted, practices on both the production and the consumption sides of „ethnic business“ are embedded in the uneven distribution of material and symbolic resources, such as jobs, business capital, disposable income, cultural capital and recognition, as Parker’s (2000) work on racism at the UK Chinese take-out counter shows. But the relationship between ethnic or cultural difference and these inequalities is not straightforward, nor can it be detached from their immediate context. As Dwyer and Crang (2002: 427) put it:

commodification is not something done to pre-existing ethnicities and ethnic subjects, but is rather a process through which ethnicities are reproduced and in which ethnicized subjects actively engage with broader discourses and institutions.

As I analyzed what users of the streets told me about their „engagements“ with ethnically marked businesses, it became clear that they operate according to a wide range of principles: authentication strategies of specialization and diversification; modes of consumption of tradition and exploration; and patterns of mobility summed up by the notions of the local „ethnic“ and mixed neighbourhoods, and the distant founding neighbourhood and consumption destination. Depending on which people and products are in contact with each other at any given moment,

several of these principles can operate at once in a single store. Moreover, they generate a variety of interethnic exchanges driven by curiosity and exploration, which, however banal, are no less genuine or „authentic“. The case of the Chinese pastry shop on Jean-Talon Est, by revealing the limits of exploration, arguably demonstrates that there are „real“ issues involving ethnic difference and social interaction that are at stake on multiethnic commercial streets. The ways in which ethnicity is mobilized (or not) in commercial settings shape users“ experience of and attitudes towards ethnic difference, and certainly have the potential to habituate them to difference. Paradoxically, the presentation of ethnic differences in the commercial array of the streets as interchangeably equivalent to each other may temporarily suspend the significance of differences between their quite different users (cf. de La Pradelle, 2006; Lallement, 2005). “In this context of generalized social differentiation, does the Other not become – precisely because she is different – an object of interest, and therefore, in a way, a vector of social ties?” (Bourdin, 2005: 36, my translation).

That said, interethnic encounters in commercial settings are also shaped by broader dynamics in which ethnicized (and otherwise labelled) groups occupy quite different positions in the perceived social universe of each street. My analysis of individuals“ perceptions of interethnic relations on each street found the following situations. On Jean-Talon Est, there is a certain tension in relations between the Italian and Maghrebi communities, accounted for by their opposing social trajectories – and perhaps also their imagined affinity. On St-Viateur, one visible minority, the Hasidic Jews, unsettles other people“s representations of how multiethnic cohabitation ought to work in the public space of the street. On de Liège, some of the „established“ (mainly of the Greek community) resent the „outsiders“ (recent South Asian immigrants) whose arrival crystallizes their own declining importance. Lastly, on Sherbrooke Ouest, the marked diversity of the local population, the vacuum left by the „Anglo exodus“ and the interstitial form of the street seem to have avoided its appropriation by any single group and fostered its use by all.

Ethnicity itself is thus not always central to the construction of interethnic relations (cf. De Rudder, 1991; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009; Glick Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen, 2006). They can be influenced by broader historical forces: Sherbrooke Ouest“s circumstances were shaped by the political and economic transformation of Quebec (Levine, 1990), and de Liège“s by changes in immigration policies that have switched flows from Europe to Asia (Poirier, 2006, and see Chapter 1). The social trajectories of particular groups are also often more relevant than their ethnic differences as such: Jean-Talon Est shows the potential for friction between an

upwardly mobile group and a downwardly mobile one (as does de Liège to some degree). Both these factors – historical circumstances and social trajectories – result in changes in the perceived atmosphere in each street, and affect which group(s) will be in a position to set the tone of intergroup relations.

Moreover, the construction of interethnic relations is full of ambivalence (Leloup, 2008). As we have seen, users of the streets can simultaneously conduct smooth, peaceful interethnic cohabitation and hold quite negative views about one or another of the groups among whom they live. And not only may they say one thing and do another, they may also say two apparently incompatible things in the same interview. Non-Hasidic users of St-Viateur often feel quite ambivalent about the distinctive public sociability of the Hasidic Jews: some resolve this ambivalence by accepting or rejecting the unsettling group outright; others remain ambivalent (consciously or not). Such apparent contradictions need to be analyzed in conjunction with the material circumstances that structure people's experiences. Valentine reminds us that:

being prejudiced can actually serve positive ends for some people, for example, by providing them with a scapegoat for their own personal social or economic failures (Valentine, 2007a). This means that prejudiced individuals can have a vested interest in remaining intolerant despite positive individual social encounters with communities/individuals different from themselves. (Valentine, 2008: 328)

This helps account for what I found on de Liège and Jean-Talon Est, where longer-established ethnic groups sometimes translate their anxiety about the declining fortunes of their own communities into resentment and even scapegoating of recently arrived groups (see also Watson, 2009a; Wells and Watson, 2005). Conversely, people in a more comfortable material position, and with more options available to them, can „afford“ to maintain a more tolerant discourse towards „Others“ (perhaps despite negative individual social encounters) (cf. Chamboredon and Lemaire, 1992 [1970]). This is why it is important to unpack and „rematerialize“ the mobilization of ethnicity on commercial streets, both inside businesses and outside on the street as a whole.

*

What, then, is the place of ethnicity on multiethnic commercial streets? If only insofar as it is „there“, a remarked-upon feature, ethnicity can be understood as a kind of resource that is mobilized in the making of social ties. It can both lubricate those ties, as it often does in „ethnic“ businesses, and irritate them, as it does when certain commercial practices or aesthetics are ethnicized and attached to ethnic stereotypes. Thinking about the many material and symbolic, cultural and social (including sociable) dimensions of ethnicity helps account for the ambivalence

and contradictions that are rife in people's perceptions of interethnic relations – but are part and parcel of the multiethnic city. It is important to try to tease out, rather than cancel out, this ambivalence. As Ghassan Hage argues in relation to his research on migrants' relations with their long-established neighbours in Sydney:

it would be ludicrous to classify these interactions with a simple „racist“ or „not-racist“ binary, as the intercultural interactions varied not just according to how long people knew each other, their levels of education, whether they had children, degrees of assimilation, and so on. But the relation itself and the conception of the other within it was also always ambivalent and constantly fluctuating. (Hage, 1997: 114-115)

Overall, what is at stake on these streets is perhaps better captured by the notion of a fluctuating conception of the Other than that of the construction of ethnicity. The apparently „interethnic“ exchanges in which people engage on multiethnic neighbourhood shopping streets are not so much about ethnicity as about the interplay of otherness and similarity. They involve less the mobilization of ethnicity than the mobilization of alterity. The question of how people handle that otherness – whether they dislike or take pleasure in being surrounded by „Others“, and whether they are open to engaging with alterity or not – will lead us to reflect on whether and what kind of cosmopolitanism is in the air on these streets.

The following chapter shifts our attention to another facet of the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street. It turns from the social relations of ethnicity and alterity that traverse the street's places, to the production of the street as a place as a whole.

CHAPTER 6 PLANNED AND UNPLANNED PLACE MAKING

This chapter deals with how the space of a street comes to be a meaningful „place“. It draws on concepts refined during the „spatial turn“ of social theory in the 1990s to describe how formal and informal interventions, by groups and individuals, produce these four neighbourhood multiethnic commercial streets as distinct, recognizable places. Although there is often a broadly shared sense among users of what kind of places these streets *are*, there is considerable variation as to what kind of places they *should* be. Looking at the streets as places raises the questions asked by Lefebvre:

The analysis of any space brings us up against the dialectical relationship between demand and command, along with its attendant questions: „Who?“, „For whom?“, „By whose agency?“, „Why and how?“ (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 116)

In order to discuss these issues, I begin by identifying the most useful concepts from the theoretical literature on space and place. I then use these concepts to analyze the case of each street in turn, drawing on fieldwork material that relates to collective issues of place such as municipal interventions, the role of merchants“ associations, special events and the image and power of attraction of the four streets. Since each street is shaped by a different context, each section has its own narrative structure, appropriate to the themes that arose on that street. I conclude by discussing how place making in the four streets relates to practices of public sociability and the mobilization of ethnicity.

6.1 The street as place

In this section, I tease out three related sets of theoretical concepts that allow us to explore the street as place. These are, firstly, place making and senses of place, secondly, place marketing, and thirdly, strategies and tactics.

6.1.1 Making space for place making

During the 1990s, the social sciences of the English-speaking world took something of a „spatial turn“, as scholars beyond the discipline of geography began to think seriously about space and place (Thrift, 2006). All kinds of social scientists turned their attention towards the sociospatial dialectic, i.e., the ways in which the social organization and the spatial organization of society mutually constitute each other. (A simple example of the sociospatial dialectic is that a city might build a wall to separate two groups of people considered distinct, but once the wall is there, they are considered distinct *because* of the wall.) The spatial turn was propelled by three major influences: phenomenological geography of the 1970s-80s (Agnew and Duncan, 1989; Gold and

Burgess, 1982; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977); critical social and cultural geography of the 1980s-90s (Harvey, 1989; Massey, 1991; Massey, 1994; Soja, 1989); and the space-and-place-related writings of significant theorists such as Foucault, Bourdieu, Giddens and Lefebvre, especially the English translation of the latter's *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]). It also reflected the broadening of scholarly horizons beyond the more narrowly-defined historical-materialist and Marxist debates, which tended to have little regard for spatial context in their analyses of social relations. The burgeoning literature on the consequences of economic globalization, including its capacity for „time-space compression“, doubtless also prodded scholars to think spatially. Thus, anthropologists began to realize that the local knowledge in which their field specializes (Schwimmer, 1994) was also actually *located* somewhere – as well as potentially deterritorialized or relocated elsewhere (Appadurai, 1996a; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Sociologists similarly began to pay attention to the entwinement of society and space, particularly in the field of urban studies, in which the objects of research are unavoidably spatial (Bourdieu, 2005; Eade, 1997; Joseph, 1998; Rogers and Vertovec, 1995; Shields, 1991; Zukin, 1991b, 1995). The overarching premise of the spatial turn was that space is constitutive of social relations, rather than a mere container for them.

In the French-speaking world, the spatial turn was much less marked, because spatial issues had been much less neglected. Social scientists in post-war France and Belgium were heavily involved in applying their expertise to social problems such as urban growth and the housing shortage (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot, 2000). A concern for the impact of space and place on social relations permeated the work of sociologists and anthropologists such as Gérard Althabe (1984; Althabe et al., 1993), Michel de Certeau (1990 [1980]; De Certeau, Mayol and Girard, 1990 [1980]), Yves Grafmeyer (1999; Grafmeyer and Joseph, 1979b), Isaac Joseph (1998, 2007b), Jean Remy (1972; Remy and Voyé, 1974), and of course Henri Lefebvre (1974). New towns and large housing projects provided particularly rich fields for social inquiry (Chamboredon and Lemaire, 1992 [1970]; Pétonnet, 1979), sometimes conducted at the behest of the state. It seems to me, though, that this „vocational“ mission kept francophone sociospatial research rather more prosaic than, say, the English-language phenomenological geography of the 1970s-80s.

There are two main paradigms in the sociospatial literature: social constructivist and phenomenological. The first paradigm sees „space“ as an empty expanse that is transformed into „place“ through the social production and social construction of space (Low, 1996, 2000; Shields, 1991). The social production of space consists of “all those factors – social, economic,

ideological and technological – that result, or seek to result, in the physical creation of the material setting” (Low, 2000: 127-8). These could include land ownership and development dynamics, architectural plans, markets of materials and labour, infrastructure, zoning laws and so on. The social construction of space is “the actual transformation of space – through people’s social exchanges, memories, images, and daily use of the material setting – into scenes and actions that convey meaning” (ibid: 128). The two processes are often intertwined: shopkeepers, for instance, are involved simultaneously in the production and construction of space, renovating their storefronts in response to their own changing image of the area, which will in turn influence others peoples’ social constructions of the place. But conceptually, in these processes it seems that empty space comes first and is then transformed into a material setting that then conveys meaning, place.¹

In contrast, the second, phenomenological paradigm, also known as „dwelling theory“, does not make this temporal distinction that sees space as the „raw material“ of place, since in practice and analysis, there is no way of separating the two. As embodied creatures, humans always find themselves in a particular place, attending to it, shaping it and being shaped by it. We can never perceive the raw stuff of space, but rather, are always dwelling in a place that already exists (Casey, 1996; Cloke and Jones, 2001; Feld and Basso, 1996a; Gray, 1999; Heidegger, 1975; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). Proponents of the two paradigms have had the pleasure of seeing their debate appear in print (Ellen et al., 1996). It is not pertinent for our purposes here to explain in detail the different epistemological foundations of each current. Generally, one could argue that dwelling theory is better suited to the study of societies that seem to have in the first place a phenomenological way of being-in-the-world (e.g. hunter-gatherer societies (Ingold, 1996)), while social constructivism is more suited to the kind of occidental, Cartesian ontology that has produced Canadian cities. But that is not to say that phenomenological insights are not relevant to city places. Indeed, paying attention to the embodied experience of place is a crucial part of understanding urban experience.

Whether we apprehend place through social construction or dwelling, the point is that we can only ever be *in place*, situated somewhere, somehow. We come to know our culture, our

¹ As Shields (2006) notes, the French words *espace* and *lieu* do not map exactly onto „space“ and „place“ – although I think they are close enough. Unusually, de Certeau (1990 [1980]) inverts the terminology by using *espace* as the meaningful stuff made from the raw material of the *lieu*, a conceptual quirk that those who cite de Certeau usually resolve by transposing his terms back to fit the more widespread usage (e.g. Gray, 1999; Radice, 2000). There is also the question of the concept of „territory“, which I shall address in section 6.1.3 below.

society and our world at large through places and the meanings that we attach to or find in them. These meanings can be captured by the untidy but useful concept „senses of place“:

Senses of place: the terrain covered here includes the relation of sensation to emplacement; the experiential and expressive ways places are known, imagined, yearned for, held, remembered, voiced, lived, contested, and struggled over; and the multiple ways places are metonymically and metaphorically tied to identities. (Feld and Basso, 1996b: 11)

As this quote suggests, senses of places are not inherent in the places, but rather are made by people engaged in processes of „place making“. These can include actual use and activity over longer or shorter periods of time, as well as imagination and stories that are told and retold, from person to person (e.g. Basso, 1996) or in the media (e.g. Gilbert and Brosseau, 2002; Zukin, 1991a). Therefore, the places that people make encompass a wide variety of practices, experiences and meanings even if they refer to the same geographical location. It follows that any one place is connected (by association, by trajectories of people or products) to myriad *other* places of different scales in various ways, which quality is also referred to as the „multilocality“ of place (Rodman, 1992). In this vein, Massey (1991) conceptualizes place as a constellation of social relations bursting out from one place to others across the world, via various calibrations of time-space compression and various distributions of power. (And she uses Kilburn High Road, a commercial thoroughfare in north London, as her starting point.) For Massey, this is why the concept of sense of place can be “progressive”, in opposition to its reactionary incarnation as a static, bounded celebration of being local. Augé (1992), for instance, asserts that advanced or excessive modernity (*surmodernité*) creates *non-lieux*, non-places that are divorced from history and identity, as did Relph (1976), but this seems absurd. No place has a single, authentic sense of place, to be unearthed through the layers of its history or prised from its most „local“ inhabitants (Massey, 1991). *Pace* Augé and Relph, no place is a non-place. Any place is the product of the society that creates it, and is therefore unavoidably meaningful – however negatively its meaning may be judged. Designating some places as „real“ and others as „non-places“ feeds a romantic view of authentic versus soulless places, which does little to help us really understand how space and society shape each other (Cloke and Jones, 2001).

In sum, as Rodman wrote in an article that broke ground in anthropology, “Places are not inert containers. They are politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions” (1992: 641). For qualitative social scientists, it is precisely this variation that is exciting in the study of place. How is it that people with quite different characteristics, backgrounds and trajectories come to have a similar sense of a place? Do major variations in

senses of place map onto different *groups*” experiences of a place, or do they instead just represent a range of *individual* experience? As well as experiencing place in diverse ways, people differ in their power to affect and alter place. For example, the place making in which middle class gentrifiers engage (Bidou-Zachariassen and Poltorak, 2008), does not have the same impact as the place making of, say, Ethiopian immigrants (Chacko, 2003), real estate agents (Young, Diep and Drabble, 2006) or property use, health, and liquor inspectors (Proudfoot and McCann, 2008). Whose senses of place predominate or most shape other people’s senses of place?

As the title of this chapter indicates, I propose a distinction between the planned, formal place making led typically by institutional actors, and the unplanned, informal place making in which less organized actors engage. Thus, zoning laws, construction of buildings, public works, commemorative parades or festivals, public transit routes, local election campaigns and the like would all be kinds of planned place making. Everyday use and memories of places, practices of public sociability, individual actions that change the environment (e.g. embellishment or vandalism), stories recounted and relayed: all these are kinds of unplanned place making. This distinction recalls that made between social production and social construction of space, but it is not quite the same, since planned place making can include actions that do not “result [...] in the physical creation of the material setting” (Low, 2000: 128), like holding a festival. Conversely, domestic gardening would be an example of unplanned place making that changes the material setting as well as “convey[ing] meaning” (ibid.).² It is not always easy, however, to tell what is planned and what is unplanned place making. For instance, how would one class an orchestral performance in a neighbourhood park? If the park just happened to be one of the venues in a tour, one might treat it as an instance of unplanned place making; however, if the concert were part of a programme designed to increase the use and value of the park, one could say it was planned place making. This example shows why it is important to understand the context in which places are „made“, as ethnographic fieldwork allows us to do. As we shall see, the conceptual distinction between planned and unplanned place making is useful in accounting for the variation in senses of place in the four streets.

The distinction between planned and unplanned place making corresponds better to Lefebvre’s (1991 [1974]) triangular conceptualization of the production of space than to Low’s

² Obviously, domestic gardening can be quite carefully planned by the gardener(s), but it is still an informal place making activity.

dichotomy between social production and construction.³ Planned place making draws heavily on ideological *representations of space*, “which are tied to relations of production and to the „order“ which those relations impose” (ibid.: 33). Planned place making expresses and seeks to bring into being space as it is *conceived*, in other words:

conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent – all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. [...] This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production). (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]: 38-39)

Unplanned place making, on the other hand, relates instead to spatial practice, i.e. space perceived through everyday use and activities, and representational spaces, i.e. the lived space of symbols, which I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

This brief theoretical overview has identified several concepts that emerged from the „spatial turn“ of the social sciences, especially sociology and anthropology: the social production and social construction of space; „dwelling“; senses of place; and place making. For the purposes of this chapter, I use the language of place rather than the social production/construction of space, which allows me to focus on planned and unplanned place making. It also ties in well with another major concept in the literature on space and place: place marketing.

6.1.2 Place marketing

Place marketing is what happens when certain actors mobilize and manipulate particular senses of a place in order to „market“ it (Kearns and Philo, 1993). These actors often consist of alliances between public and private bodies, including, for example, municipal civil servants, businesspeople, property-owners, urban revitalization consultants and public relations consultants, as well as those journalists who pick up on their press releases (Zukin, 1991a). As far as these „place marketers“ are concerned:

places are not so much presented as foci of attachment and concern, but as bundles of social and economic opportunity *competing* against one another in the open (and unregulated) *market* for a share of the capital investment cake (whether this be the investment of enterprises, tourists, local consumers or whatever). In this discourse, places become „commodified“, regarded as commodities to be consumed and as

³ In spite of the similarity of the turn of phrase, it should be clear that Lefebvre’s „production of space“ is much broader in scope than Low’s „social production of space“; the former elucidates all the processes involved in the sociospatial dialectic whereas the latter focuses more narrowly on those that create the material setting.

commodities that can be rendered attractive, advertised and marketed much as capitalists would any product. (Philo and Kearns, 1993: 18, italics in original)

The aim of place marketing is typically to attract those outside investors roaming the globalized postfordist economy, such as entrepreneurs and tourists. But sometimes, it is intentionally directed back to local residents, perhaps in order to engineer a consensus about local well-being or pride. Place marketing may thus be “operating as a subtle form of *socialisation* designed to convince local people, many of whom will be disadvantaged and potentially disaffected, that they are important cogs in a successful community and that all sorts of „good things“ are really being done on their behalf” (ibid.: 3). Place marketing is therefore an integral part of what Zukin (1995) calls the urban symbolic economy: the symbiosis between the production of space – which she understands as the processes that bring into being the material setting – and the production of symbols, “which constructs both a currency of commercial exchange and a language of social identity” (Zukin, 1995: 24). The symbols of the city (images, meanings and representations of places) are thus tightly bound up in the urban economy (including land value and land use, and markets of investment and consumption); the former are increasingly mobilized in the service of the latter (see also, in the case of Montréal, Bélanger, 2005; Paul, 2004).

Places can be marketed at different scales. At the inter-urban level, cities or towns compete against one another for tourists, lucrative large conferences, high-tech industry relocations, or affluent retirees (as Aguiar, Tomic and Trumper, 2005 show in the case of Kelowna, BC). At the intra-urban level, particular zones of the city – including commercial streets – may compete to become “destinations of consumption” (Zukin and Kosta, 2004). In industrialized cities, one of the most common kinds of place marketing organizations is a „business improvement area” (BIA, also known as a business improvement district or BID, especially in the USA, and as a Société de développement commercial or SDC in Quebec) (Ward, 2007). A BIA is a merchants’ association of which membership is compulsory for all businesses located within a given zone; dues are typically collected in conjunction with the local authority through business taxes. Originally, BIAs were one of the strategies used to combat the decline of the neighbourhood commercial street, which was precipitated by the rise of the suburban shopping mall (Zukin, 1995). However, since the „return” to the central city of more affluent residents, commercial streets are recognized as valuable places in and of themselves and their promotion is part of a more general dynamic of the “re-enchantment” of public space (J-P Garnier, 2008).

Table 6.1 Timeline of policies and programmes affecting the revitalization of commercial streets in Montréal

1980	Inspired by the BIA movement in Ontario, the City of Montréal amends its charter to allow the creation of Sociétés d'initiative et de développement des artères commerciales or SIDACs (Associations for innovation and development of commercial streets) (Gouvernement du Québec, 1999)
1981	City of Montréal adopts rule n° 5641 governing SIDACs, and the first four are set up over the summer on Saint-Hubert, Monk, Ontario Est and Masson (ibid.).
1982	Similar powers are adopted in other cities and then throughout the province of Quebec (ibid.), under the jurisdiction of the <i>Loi des cités et villes</i> .
early 1980s	City of Montréal commissions Daniel Arbour & Associés to conduct a series of studies on the physical, social and economic characteristics of commercial streets, including Sherbrooke Ouest (Daniel Arbour & Associés, 1982)
1986	In light of declining or dispersed commercial activity in central neighbourhoods, the City proposes to rezone many peripheral commercial streets as residential, including rue St-Viateur
1990 – 1994	City of Montréal reviews and standardizes its complex mosaic of zoning rules and regulations and adopts its first city-wide zoning regulation (règlement U1) in 1994
1990* – 2002 *slow start due to change in tax law, municipal elections, etc.	City adopts the <i>Plan d'action commerce</i> , which has three axes: 1. Encouragement and support of merchants' associations <i>Programme Opération Commerce</i> (POC) helps fund physical renovation of businesses via SIDACs, up to \$50 000 per street. The City provides one third, the business-owner two thirds of the cost of renovation (with no minimum grant, so merchants can include quite minor improvements). 2. Physical improvements of the public domain (street furniture, etc.) NB The downtown borough of Ville-Marie maintains a form of the POC after 2002.
Nov 1994	Urban planner Jacques Bénard founds the Centre d'intervention pour la revitalisation des quartiers (CIRQ), later to become Convercité, after having worked as a consultant with the SIDAC Mont-Royal.
Jun 1997	The name SIDAC is changed to Société de développement commercial (SDC) at the request of the Regroupement des centres-villes et des artères commerciales.
2002	Merger of all municipalities on the island of Montréal followed by decentralization of urban planning and public works departments, which are transferred to the borough level. (In 2004 several boroughs de-merge from the City, but this has no particular impact on the policy on commercial streets.)
2007	City of Montréal announces the commercial axis of the Programme réussir @ Montréal („Success@Montréal Programme"), the Programme de subventions relatives à la revitalisation des secteurs commerciaux (Programme of Subsidies for the Revitalization of Commercial Sectors). "PR@M > Commerce" will provide: support for merchants to create and structure their association support for diagnosing the sector's needs and developing a master plan up to \$4000 towards planners' fees for designing physical improvements to the sector up to \$33 000 per sector for the renovation of storefronts The programme is open to both voluntary associations and SDCs, but is competitive – they must apply by a certain date to the City's Executive Committee, which will select 17 streets for the programme (Ville de Montréal, 2007)
Oct 2008	City announces investment of \$11.6 million, plus \$11 million from the provincial government, in the revitalization of commercial streets under the PR@M>Commerce programme. In the end 28 streets are chosen to benefit from the programme (none of the streets I studied applied) (Clément, 2008; Ville de Montréal, 2008).
Sources: interviews with municipal officers, meetings at Convercité and cited documents.	

Taking on the tasks of improving physical, promotional and surveillance infrastructure, BIAs represent a widespread new form of urban governance, which Ward (2007) argues is an example of neoliberal urbanization. “The Business Improvement District programme reflects the growing interweaving of market-based and state-based regulatory arrangements, the combined effects of which have profound implication for notions of spatial and social justice” (Ward, 2007: 12-13). However, it should be noted that not all place marketing is conducted by agencies as formal or as novel as BIAs. Voluntary merchants’ associations and local authorities also take on place marketing roles. Indeed, the City of Montréal has developed a range of policy instruments for the revitalization of its commercial streets since the 1980s, such as match funding for the renovation of façades (see timeline, Table 6.1), in order to counteract economic stagnation and in some cases boost residential gentrification (Rose, 2006). There are currently 13 SDCs in Montréal, but many more voluntary place-based merchants’ associations. As the timeline shows, a new programme to revitalize commercial streets was announced in 2008, the recipients of which are a mix of SDCs and voluntary associations. Ultimately, the actual form and direction that place marketing takes varies considerably according to the political choices made by the marketeers involved (Bourdin, 2005: 167).

As Zukin’s work suggests, place marketing is an example of the extent to which „culture” and its symbols are bound up in the economy. Place marketing is only possible because there are culturally distinct and variable senses of place to commodify. Urban spaces of consumption have long been promoted on the basis of their centrality or distinctive history. The widespread appropriation of ethnicized senses of place to „add value” – or, to use another marketing term, create a „unique selling proposition” – is a much more recent trend.⁴ For instance, London’s Brick Lane has been promoted by the local authority (the borough of Tower Hamlets) as distinctively Bangladeshi, a „Banglatown”, while the borough of Newham has drawn on Green Street’s multiethnicity as its distinguishing feature (Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). The multiethnicity of the Bijlmermeer, a deprived high-rise housing estate in southeastern Amsterdam, is now being marketed to outsiders as an attraction as part of the area’s urban revitalization programme (Bodaar, 2006). In Toronto, ethnically branded BIAs centred on sections of commercial streets include Little Italy, Corso Italia, Greektown-on-the Danforth and Gerrard India Bazaar. In these four cases, “ethnic packaging” has contributed to residential

⁴ The earliest examples of ethnicized place marketing probably include the promotion of Chinatowns in various cities (Anderson, 1987; Umbach and Wishnoff, 2008), and cases where heritage is ethnicized, e.g. San Antonio, Texas (de Oliver, 2001).

gentrification, “function[ing] in a way that art has functioned in the past for gentrifying communities – as a way to anchor bohemian culture for an outside community looking for something unlike the suburbs” (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005: 232). “By cooking up ethnic quarters, we render them visible and accessible,” as Bell puts it (2002: 16). However, the consequences of ethnicized place marketing do not necessarily bode well for the local minority ethnic residents who effectively lend their identity to the marketeers in the first place (see Chapter 2). They rarely receive any of the economic benefits of place marketing and, at worst, suffer the effects of increased stereotyping rather than greater openness towards them (de Oliver, 2001; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). Place marketing, in other words, serves the interests of particular groups at the expense of others:

Every effort to rearrange space in the city is also an attempt at visual representation. Raising property values, which remains a goal of most urban elites, requires imposing a new point of view. But negotiating whose point of view and the costs of imposing it create problems for public culture.⁵ (Zukin, 1995: 24)

One last pair of concepts will allow us to tease out this negotiation of competing senses of place in the four streets under study: strategies and tactics.

6.1.3 Strategies and tactics

In order to compare planned and unplanned place making in the four streets under study, I borrow Michel de Certeau’s (1990 [1980]) well-known distinction between strategies and tactics.

The strategy, according to de Certeau, consists of:

the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships (*rappports de force*) that becomes possible when a subject possessing will or power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an „environment“. A strategy presupposes a *place* that can be circumscribed as *proper* to the subject, and that can serve as the basis for managing relations with external targets or threats (customers and competitors, adversaries, the countryside surrounding the city, research objects and objectives, etc.). (ibid. : 59, my translation, italics in original⁶)

The idea of a place “*proper* to the subject” corresponds to the concept of territory, which emphasizes the appropriation and political control of space to produce a clearly bounded place. As Rose and Gilbert put it, in the context of how the term *territoire* is used in francophone geography, “territory results from an encounter between major forces that shape the world, and

⁵ For Zukin, the term “public culture” seems to refer to social relations in public spaces (somewhat like my conception of “public sociability”, see Chapter 3), rather than the broader range of cultural representations and debate and culture-making activity covered by Appadurai and Breckenridge’s use of the term (1988).

⁶ I prefer this translation to the one given in the English version of the book (De Certeau, 1984).

the capacity of men and women within the territory to endure or react to these forces” (Rose and Gilbert, 2005: 273). Strategies thus require territories (and indeed, place marketing acts upon territories). The tactic, in contrast, is the calculated action undertaken by actors who cannot count on a territory, a “proper” or appropriated place as their base (De Certeau, 1990 [1980]: 60). While strategies presuppose the mastery of space, tactics require the mobilization of time: “strategies depend on the resistance of place to the passing of time; tactics depend on a clever use of time, of seizing opportune moments to make plays with or against the foundations of power” (ibid. : 63, my translation).

The strategists of a commercial street would be those subjects who can treat it as their territory of action, such as urban planners, merchants’ associations, residents’ associations and municipal officers. The tacticians would be those who take action in the street without being able to claim it as „their“ territory, such as storekeepers, workers, residents, customers and passersby. I should specify that although merchants can deploy strategies with respect to their own businesses as their own “proper” territories, they do not have territorial dominion over the whole street, which is where they have recourse to tactics. This distinction allows us to confront the strategies of institutional actors, „planners“ in the broadest sense, with the tactics of merchants, workers, residents and other users of the streets. I will now explore the tension between strategies and tactics, drawing on fieldwork material that relates to municipal interventions (zoning, public works), merchants’ associations, special events (sidewalk sales, festivals) and the image and power of attraction of the four streets. Maintaining my focus on the street as place, it is appropriate to visit each street in turn.

6.2 Rue de Liège: a convenient traditional street

Whenever I describe my research to people who know Montréal, their first question is always, “So which streets are you studying?” Sherbrooke Ouest and Jean-Talon Est elicit nods of recognition, since everyone knows at least one slice of those two thoroughfares, and St-Viateur elicits approval, as people tend to see it as a good case study. But rue de Liège is often met with a blank look or a shake of the head, “No, I don’t know that one.” Although described by Dansereau (1995: 147) as the most convivial commercial street of Parc-Extension, it barely features on the mental maps of those who do not live in the neighbourhood, including the municipal civil servants I interviewed. “In the three years that I’ve been here, I’ve never had a single dossier on de Liège,” said one who worked for the borough of Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension. She and her colleagues received no questions about urban planning issues nor asked for any news from de Liège, and the street is not mentioned once in the City’s recent

urban plan (Ville de Montréal, 2005b).⁷ Rather, it is the neighbourhood of Parc-Extension that is the focus of strategies of social intervention by public, parapublic and community organizations (Boudreau et al., 2008; Poirier, 2006). Seen as an enclave because it is bounded by railways to the east and south, a highway to the north and a busy thoroughfare to the west, Parc-Extension is one of the poorest and most densely populated neighbourhoods in Canada. Not only were two-thirds of the population born abroad, but there is also a high turnover of population; for many, it is a neighbourhood of arrival and transition rather than long-term settlement (although Poirier (2006) argues that it is becoming a neighbourhood of “integration” rather than mere transit, particularly for South Asian immigrants). However, the neighbourhood’s transitional character and the street’s „invisibility“ do not stop the people who work or live there from investing rue de Liège with a sense of place.

People’s senses of rue de Liège as a place are very much bound up in its urban form and relation to the rest of the city, as well as its commercial composition. For all that de Liège is seen by outsiders to be trapped in an enclave, I was struck by how rarely local residents (or visiting ex-residents) perceived it to be so. On the contrary, many feel that it is very well situated: downtown is easily accessible by the frequent number 80 bus, which goes from its terminus just next to Parc Howard on de Liège right to the city centre at Place des Arts, via the main artery of Avenue du Parc. Accessible as it is, de Liège is felt to be a street that is chiefly local in scope, serving its neighbourhood. Nearby public facilities are seen as being quite good, especially the parks with playgrounds, benches and picnic tables, the Howie-Morenz skating rink and the Rockland shopping centre.⁸ The commercial streetscape of de Liège itself is one where you can easily find more or less any everyday thing that you forgot to get elsewhere:⁹

It’s the place you go when you need little things for your home, nothing major, like a packet of chips because you’re going to watch a DVD or some ice-cream or something, you know, little things for your home. (local resident in his 30s, deL fieldnotes 2006-07)

“Convenient” was a frequent description of the street, as in this quote from a woman of Caribbean origin who has had a store on de Liège for 20 years:

⁷ See Appendix W for details of zoning (Arrondissement Villeray - St-Michel - Parc-Extension, 2001).

⁸ The Centre Rockland is a fairly big and successful shopping mall located in Ville Mont-Royal, a few minutes’ walk from rue de Liège. It houses many well-known chain stores including La Baie, H&M, Zara, etc.

⁹ There is an even wider range of goods available since the small pharmacy relocated to slightly larger premises on the street and became part of the Uniprix chain in summer 2007.

It's not really special, you know but it's so... it's convenient and it is very nice, but I don't feel like something special about it. But you could say it's special then, if you find it so convenient and it nice, and I feel the city they keep it clean, this area here, nice... And I love that, when it's clean. When the neighbourhood is clean, you find more people coming in here. And there are lots of people who move out and they come in back, yes, like a lot of customers I know who move out, and they are back, so they come to this store and they tell me so then I know. [...] I think they're coming back maybe it's so convenient... And it is, yeah. (deLw6)

As she says, the street has nothing special except its convenience – which in a way does make it special. A recent immigrant summed up rue de Liège with the word *évident*, „obvious“:

“Évidente. C'est la rue évidente pour moi.” (Obvious, it's the obvious street for me.) I ask her to elaborate and she explains that as a new immigrant, she feels very much at home on the street “because it's like back home”, in Haiti, because there is traffic, there's “everything you want”, you don't need to take the car to pick things up, she's near the park and a school for her children, there's the bus service for downtown, “everything's there, there's a good atmosphere”. So she basically feels at home here, and she doesn't feel isolated. (deLb7, T)

This sense of convenience may stem from the location and commercial range of the street, but it seems to be equally bound up with a warm public sociability that is apparently not hindered by ethnocultural differences (not at the level of public contact, at least¹⁰):

The strong points? Firstly, there are lots of different ethnic groups (*ethnies*) and that doesn't cause any problems. There are no arguments, nothing. Safety is really remarkable... What else. You can buy all kinds of things, there's even a beautician's somewhere. So someone who lives nearby can get almost anything they need on this street. Restaurants, a Greek restaurant nearby, a supermarket, pastry shop, clothes, fabric. You can get anything you want. You don't need to go far. Those are the strong points, I think. And also the fact that, I'm not always here but I know there are lots of people who know each other now. Especially the ones who live in the building where the pastry shop is, and us too, so there's a contact there. (deLw3, T)

If you could describe rue de Liège in just one word, what word would it be? [...] To describe the overall atmosphere of the street? Yes... Family-oriented (familial). There are lots of families, there aren't young people causing problems, everything's very „family“, people accept how it is in Canada, yes, it's families, good families, there aren't any problems on de Liège. But they are poor. (deLw1, T)

Thus, the strengths of rue de Liège seem to be hidden from outsiders – perhaps because they are tactical, rather than strategic. A municipal official told me, “Liège as a commercial street is not open, there's no promotion, no address there that everybody knows.” In her view:

For commercial streets to become destination places, you really need a business that is THE place to buy this or that, you know, like bagels on Fairmount or St-

¹⁰ As I showed in Chapter 5, the ways that people treat each other in public may be quite contradictory to the negative opinions that they hold about each other in private; see also Valentine (2008).

Viateur, or er.... I don't think that on de Liège there's any [...], I don't know if you could call it a landmark, or really an address that people, that really becomes a destination in terms of purchases. (T)

This assertion, however, shows that she does not know the street intimately.¹¹ As I regularly observed, there are two businesses to which customers flock to buy boxes of Armenian pizza (*lahmajoune*) and Syrian pastries, usually arriving by car (one can tell because they have their car keys in their hand as they enter the shops). But their reputation does not spread far beyond Montréal's Middle-Eastern communities; they remain unknown to the majority of white Anglo- or Franco-Québécois, like the street itself.¹² A search of the electronic archives of the francophone press resulted in barely 30 articles mentioning rue de Liège or Parc Howard.

There is no merchants' association on rue de Liège, and there are certainly no strategies of place marketing. Each summer of my fieldwork, Parc Howard hosted a couple of small one-day festivals, but these were organized by community rather than commercial associations: the „Can-Pak Welfare Association“ organized a Canada Day celebration in 2007; the well-known Parc-Extension Youth Organization (PEYO) held a children's party in 2008; and the longstanding local city councillor Mary Deros hosted an “annual picnic” also in 2008 with the help of her brigade of volunteers.¹³ Even though they are held on the same street, these festivities do not seem to involve the merchants of de Liège at all (besides the fact that they put up the posters in their store windows). Indeed, the two festivals I attended seemed to be highly politicized affairs that drew on senses of belonging to entities other than the street. As she handed out raffle prizes, Mary Deros made sure to remind everyone that the annual picnic was only able to be held thanks to her sponsors, her volunteers and “your vote, because without your vote I wouldn't be able to do this any more because I wouldn't be your elected member” (deL fieldnotes 2008-07). The Canada Day celebration in 2007 appeared to serve as a showcase for the Liberal Party, heavily featuring the local Liberal MNA as well as the prospective federal Liberal candidate Justin Trudeau (son of Pierre Elliott Trudeau), plus a variety of „multicultural“ song-and-dance acts typical of Canadian celebrations (Mackey, 2002). Many of the latter were

¹¹ Note that her counter-example is St-Viateur, which has become well-known across the city, as I will explain.

¹² A few Montréalers of other origins know these shops thanks to their enthusiasm for „ethnic“ food; recall the woman who had recently „discovered“ de Liège, quoted in Chapter 5. These shops have also featured in some newspaper articles. Like St-Viateur Bagels, the Armenian pizza is now available in grocery stores all over the city (and made in a small factory in the suburban municipality of Laval), but unlike St-Viateur Bagels, the original store on de Liège is not particularly famous.

¹³ See photos in Appendix V.

parachuted in from elsewhere in the city or even from Toronto (deL fieldnotes, 2007-07).¹⁴ These events thus mobilized allegiance to places other than the street or the neighbourhood, namely, electoral jurisdictions or the nation, and seemed strangely detached from the immediate surroundings.

Of course, it is possible that storekeepers on de Liège were approached but refused to contribute to such events (although none mentioned this to me). Most of the merchants – who are, by and large, immigrants – are too busy getting on with the precarious business of survival to engage in any kind of formal association. Although many know each other to talk to, and to exchange small services, “everybody does his own business, and at the end of the day we all go home, you know?” (deLw5). Many of the businesses are clearly not very prosperous, and several are very similar to each other in size and stock: about a dozen of the 50 businesses on the street are small grocery stores or *depanneurs* that offer a wide range of groceries. This proliferation of parallel services is something of a puzzle. One might suppose that it is due to their „ethnicity“: each shop is known to be run by people from different countries (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Greece...), so perhaps each serves its own „ethnic“ group. That is certainly what this municipal official suggested:

There are pluriethnic businesses that develop such a speciality that it’s like you’re going into a part of their world, their country, so people feel at home and can consume things feeling a bit they were in their country of origin. (T)

But no one from the street claims that the market is ethnically divided: merchants like to say that everyone shops at their stores, while customers say they shop by price and convenience, going wherever they can find what they need for the least money or trouble. An alternative explanation for the great number of similar small stores was the demand, in terms of density of population, plus considerable distance from big grocery stores:

Yeah cause, well, you have to keep in mind, even though this district is small in size, it’s dense in population. There’s a lot of apartment buildings. Unlike suburbia, you know a family would occupy so much land, look at here, there’s one block here, [...] you’ve got how many apartments, [*he counts the apartments of the building facing us*] you’ve got one balcony, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6... behind that tree, 7, maybe 8, maybe there are two, so there’s like 20 apartments here, that’s all over, every street eh, so the population is there, and I guess uh... there’s enough, to feed all these businesses so, they’re still, if they weren’t making money I’m sure they wouldn’t be around, so, that’s probably the reason why there’s a lot of businesses... That’s one theory, it’s just a theory, eh? (deLu1)

¹⁴ They included Bangladeshi folk dances, Greek folk dances, Indian Bollywood-style song and dance and Pakistani pop (all countries of origin were named as such by the MC). Many were performed by children.

A more popular explanation, however, rested on supply, as a local resident whose family owns but rents one of the stores told me:

Well the problem is it's just like when the Greeks first came. It was one store next to each other. Like one guy sees you were doing well, "I can open a store and do well too." So they all open up next to each other. But what they're doing actually is hurting themselves by doing so. Because they're all competing with each other, and they end up working for nickels and dimes. (deL fieldnotes 2007-07)

Opening a small business is a way for immigrants to integrate into a labour market that often discriminates against them, as much research on „ethnic economies“ concludes (Hiebert and Pendakur, 2003). However, the context in which they run their business is crucial to their success – but not necessarily easy to calculate. The owner of a small supermarket explained that his customer base was extremely local:

you see that way [*north*] is highway. There's no people live on there, that way, that would come this side, no... Here [*west*] is l'Acadie and there is Rockland, we are separate. Of course we have few customers [*from over there*] but not much. So for the location, this side is not as good as, the best, no, it's not the best location. That's what I told you, I don't think too much about the neighbourhood before I buy the store, I only think about the business. (deLw4)

However, this man, a recent immigrant who had previously owned a *depanneur* in another neighbourhood, aimed to run this supermarket for a few years and then sell it and move on to a more profitable enterprise. Another merchant (also a recent immigrant) miscalculated the accessibility of the location rather more seriously when he opened up a luxury goods store:

"It was a mistake." He and his business partner had chosen the place for its large windows that look out on Boulevard l'Acadie, thinking people would stop by, but they never do. There is no passing trade. He sees people looking from their cars as they drive by, but they don't stop. "They have the idea that this is a poor neighbourhood; they cannot imagine that there can be a luxury business in a poor neighbourhood." So in the end most customers are neighbours. He wants to open up another shop. "In another neighbourhood?" I asked. "For sure," he said. But the problem is getting out of the business lease: it can be expensive to leave one lease and look for another. (deL fieldnotes 2007-12)

Business success thus depends on context, and competition can be close on de Liège; storekeepers pay attention to each other's prices. "If I put at 10 cents, the other store puts it at 8 cents. There's not too much profit" (deLw7). Occasionally, resentment erupts. One of the businesswomen I knew became quite cross when she found out that a grocery store down the street was giving space in their shop to someone selling clothes, which was her line of business:

They are selling clothes with meat? That's not allowed! I pay my taxes and you know they don't have a permit to sell clothes, they sell food, they can't sell clothes there. [...] If they give space in their store to friends, maybe for money, maybe for \$200,

that means they're not declaring it, they're not paying taxes, that's not right. (deL fieldnotes 2007-06)

One worker even said that the city should intervene by not allowing similar businesses to open up within a certain distance (deLw9) (*contingement* in the zoning terminology). More generally, though, people on de Liège recognize the right to try one's luck at small enterprise: "I hope they're all making money, they're all happy you know, with their sales..." (deLu1).

This recognition contrasts with city officials' view of what constitutes the ideal street, which equates to Lefebvre's „representation of space“. Two that I interviewed together said streets like de Liège constituted a "subsistence economy" and were filled with unattractive stores:

O1: You have to really want to go inside. And I reckon that even if the inside is very modest, but the couple who owns the place, maybe their French isn't that good but they smile and try to give a good service, and in the end you're pleased to have met them and you're pleased with the product that you're going to eat and that's in a pretty box that you can take home – so much the better. But there are so many things that make you often not want to go inside these stores, on de Liège or other streets. You know – the *depanneur*. The *depanneur* with 62 calling card posters, and then –

O2:– and bright orange signs for specials, Indian radish at 59 cents, and there's one like that and then another like that, and there's dust everywhere in the front –

O1: – and then the poster in the window, because it's winter and there's condensation it's got all damp and the cardboard has gone all like that [*he mimes crumpled, wavy*], and the writing has started to fade. How can you expect me to go inside? Whatever origin you are, there's a kind of barrier there. (T)

In spite of the relativism of this last sentence ("whatever origin you are"), this aesthetics of the commercial street is quite clearly ethnicized: these two municipal officials are referring to immigrant merchants, speaking of calling cards and Indian radishes, which is also clear earlier in the interview:

O2: Dust, dirt, calling card posters in the windows, everything that couldn't attract any customers except the ones who know there's something they need there, it's a bit of a luxury to enter into that kind of logic, isn't it. They haven't reached that stage. (T)

Here, we have an evolutionary kind of reference to a certain "they" who haven't reached a certain "stage" of sounder, cleaner business strategies. It also recalls the ethnicized storefront aesthetics I described earlier (see section 5.4.3). There is a dominant norm of cleanliness and transparency of facades that rue de Liège does not seem to meet. But nor does rue de Liège seem to matter enough for city civil servants to set up any strategies to make it conform to the norm.

The aesthetics of de Liège also feature strongly in individuals' discourses. A few interviewees – all of whom had lived or worked on the street for a long time – thought that the street was cleaner, and that the City had done a better job of cleaning and decorating the street (e.g. with flower planters) in recent years. But most – including old-timers and newcomers of all origins – thought it was dirty, although they varied in what they attributed the dirt to (recent arrivals' bad habits or the city's neglect). However, dirt is an easy target of criticism, as the following excerpt shows. One summer morning, I conducted a short interview with a woman and three teenage girls who were sitting eating pastries in Parc Sinclair-Laird. They turned out to be a mother (M) and three girls (G1, G2 (her daughter), G3), all of Greek origin, who do not live in the neighbourhood. They were passing the time before their appointment at the beautician's to get their eyebrows shaped. I asked:

What do you like best about the street, looking at it?

M: What do I like best about the street. I don't know.

G1: I guess I like that it's not big and there's so many things on it, you know.

M: It's a busy street, but it's happy, it's busy, like there's always things to do or see or, usually we don't really take our time to sit and observe, but today we have an hour to kill, so we just decided to... have our breakfast here and wait for that hour to pass until we have to leave.

And what do you like least about it?

M: It's very ... dingy and dirty, I find it's very dirty. I find it's very...

G3: They leave their garbage everywhere.

M: I don't like it. It's very dingy.

So on the streets it's dirty. And the buildings as well, or?

M: Very old. I find very old.

G3: I like the old buildings.

M: I don't like them. *[laughter]* I find it so crowded, too many people on balconies. Too overcrowded, I don't know. I wouldn't like that. I don't like that. (deLb2)

What is interesting here is that although the interviewees dislike the street's density, dirt and garbage, the things they like about the street are social: "it's happy, it's busy, like there's always things to do or see". It seems easier for people to criticize physical faults than social ones, although a connection between the two dimensions is made when the physical fault is attributed to social actors, the unnamed "they" who leave garbage around. Nonetheless, it is striking that the strengths of the street are clearly related to its public sociability.

In many ways, de Liège resembles the ideal neighbourhood street praised for its sense of solidarity and community by Jane Jacobs (1961). The residents, the merchants and other workers (the taxi-drivers at their stand, the school crossing guard, the delivery truck drivers) know each other and greet each other, acting as the "eyes on the street" (ibid.) who discreetly

ensure its safety and security.¹⁵ They help each other out: the pastry-chef might leave an order of baklavas for a late customer to pick up at the *depanneur*; a neighbour will watch over a store while the owner slips out to buy her lunch.

The sum of such casual, public contact at a local level – most of it fortuitous, most of it associated with errands, all of it metered by the person concerned and not thrust upon him by anyone – is a feeling for the public identity of people, a web of public respect and trust, and a resource in time of personal or neighborhood need. The absence of this trust is a disaster to a city street. Its cultivation cannot be institutionalized. And above all, *it implies no private commitments*. (Jacobs, 1961: 56, emphasis in original)

As Jacobs suggests, it would be impossible, not to say inappropriate, to cultivate such association by formal means on a street like de Liège (let alone to instate strategies of place marketing!).

De Liège, to sum up, is a convenient street in spite of its enclave location, little known to outsiders but appreciated by many, though not all of those who have set up their home or business there. It is a street shaped much more by tactics than strategies. The merchants, residents and visitors whom I interviewed were seizing the casual opportunities that the street offers: to make a home in a convenient and not too unfamiliar neighbourhood; to make a living by selling convenient foodstuffs; to make casual contact and conversation and, if needs be, to cooperate with the people around them. They have little recourse to strategies in relation to their street, besides their concern that the city keep it clean and prevent traffic accidents. Meanwhile, the designated municipal strategists of the street pay it little attention, since it is of no strategic importance to the urban symbolic economy. It is a place where people are just „making it“, rather than marketing it.

6.3 Rue Jean-Talon Est: ordinary and proud

The municipal strategists of Jean-Talon Est are the same ones as for de Liège, since both streets fall within the boundaries of the borough of Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension. But while little de Liège is left to its own devices, as it were, Jean-Talon is the object of more concerted place making strategies. This is unsurprising, since it is one of the few arteries that runs through

¹⁵ A worker from a community safety organization explained in an informal interview at a festival in Parc Howard that de Liège seemed to her to be one of the safest streets in the neighbourhood, precisely because it was so lively and well-used, in part due to having several key facilities such as the parks, a school and a pre-school daycare centre.

the whole borough from east to west, and the only one with considerable commercial and pedestrian activity:

I don't think we've got another artery that structures the area as much as Jean-Talon does for this borough, I think it's the only one. There are other big boulevards that are zoned for commercial functions, like St-Michel, but it's not the same kind of theme, it's much more vehicle-oriented than pedestrian. [...] So Jean-Talon is really important in structuring the network, in terms of commercial activity but also accessibility, because aside from the Metropolitan expressway, it's pretty much the only road that crosses our borough from one end to the other. (municipal officer, T)

However, municipal civil servants' strategies are hardly oriented towards branding or marketing the street. Instead, they are preoccupied with ensuring commercial continuity and stability along Jean-Talon Est, which is zoned for relatively intensive commercial use,¹⁶ although in fact the section that I studied has considerable gaps in commercial activity, filled by a park, churches and residential buildings. As part of the borough's service to businesses, one municipal officer helps match prospective tenants to empty business premises, drawing on the extensive network of contacts made during his 15 years working for the City.¹⁷ He explained that his goal was first to attract retailing "anchors" to a street, and then to fill in the spaces around or between them with stores with "unique selling propositions" (USPs). In Quebec, these anchors are the pharmacy chains such as Jean-Coutu, Uniprix and Pharmaprix, which deal in high-volume everyday goods. On Jean-Talon Est, he said:

I put a Jean-Coutu in the old Canadian Tire, and then Pharmaprix moved in a bit further along, so there I set up two anchors, and between the two, all the businesses [...] need to have a USP, what we call in marketing a *unique selling proposition*. If you don't have that, if you don't find your niche inside of that, *you're dead*. (T, words in italics said in English)

Commercial stability and continuity on Jean-Talon Est are precarious, and take work to strengthen:

You know, you have the Italian cafés, you have all kinds of very local businesses where you get lots of people. But if you don't reinforce that, little by little the street will crumble, crumble, crumble away. And then finally [...] pressure from business developers will mean that with the next wave of buildings to convert [*i.e. convert to residential or renovate*], they'll be asking questions, maybe they'll be saying that

¹⁶ See Appendix W for zoning details (Arrondissement Villeray - St-Michel - Parc-Extension, 2001).

¹⁷ The exact services a borough provides to businesses vary according to the territory served and, apparently, the expertise of the officers the department employs. This municipal officer seemed particularly knowledgeable and „hands-on“, but that style seemed to match the needs of the borough's industrial and commercial sectors. Each officer I met in this role had a unique approach, in spite of their similar careers (bachelor's degrees in business administration, a little private sector experience and a decade or more working for the City).

commercial activity isn't profitable on the ground floor. From then on, we'll have to ask ourselves the question do we carry on trying to keep it commercial or not. (T)

Commercial development is also a long process, since there are certain businesses things that „shouldn't“ really be on the street, in the municipal officers' view. “A second-hand car sales lot, does that belong there?¹⁸ No. That doesn't belong there. One of those bar and video-lottery businesses, does that necessarily belong there? No,” (T). But such businesses will only move when it becomes profitable for them to do so. Besides which, in this borough, municipal officers have to be careful that any improvement of one commercial street is not at the expense of neighbouring ones:

For sure, when you open up a commercial artery to more functions, it will always be to the detriment of another one. [...] There are streets where it's maybe not so important to extend commercial activity, but rather to consolidate it in certain pockets, and our goal for Jean-Talon, to make sure it stays strong and structured, is not necessarily to open it up. (T)

Indeed, consolidation is at the heart of plans for this section of Jean-Talon Est in the borough's chapter of the City's recent *Plan d'urbanisme* (Ville de Montréal, 2005b). Objective 7 is to “Support the improvement of the main commercial streets,” by means of maintaining commercial continuity, possibly physically improving the public domain along certain sections of Jean-Talon Est and perhaps authorizing more café-terrasses (Ville de Montréal, 2005b: 12). The redesign of Jean-Talon Est could include, in the short to medium term, “greening” the street, burying the electricity lines and installing new street furniture (ibid.: 41), like lamp-posts, benches, flower planters and garbage bins. But in light of recent budgets, a municipal officer also confessed that it was unlikely to be high on the borough's list of priorities of public works.

To turn to other strategies, there is a longstanding voluntary commercial merchants' association, the Association des gens d'affaires des îlots Jean-Talon, whose territory runs from Papineau to de Lorimier. Its main *raison d'être* is to hold one or two sidewalk sales a year (the City will only grant permits for such events to formally constituted associations). In theory, the sidewalk sale (which is literally on the sidewalk, rather than out on the street) could have a rallying effect:

I told him [the chair of the association], if you and him you do [...] a sidewalk sale, two, three, four of you, [...] in two, three year's time, maybe that will inspire other people to do it and then that'll create some activity, and then if a store becomes available [...] maybe a nice little pastry shop will move in there. (municipal officer, T)

¹⁸ The used car lot takes up a whole block on the north side of the street, between Cartier and Chabot.

But, as another municipal officer put it delicately, “As far as I understand it, I think there has been some difficulty in obtaining a consensus on certain activities” (T). The chair of the association, a merchant of Italian origin whose family business has been on Jean-Talon since 1966, has had trouble in the past few years convincing his fellow businesspeople to help pay for the insurance that they must take out before a permit is granted. He also ethnicized the issue, seeming to blame in particular the “Arab” (i.e. Maghrebi) merchants (cf. Chapter 5), although in fact several of Italian origin do not participate either:

He said he even offered to split the costs with them 60-20-20, going on the size of the store, but they didn’t want to. “They have a very rigid point of view,” (“Ils ont une vue très droite,”) he said. I think by this he meant that they were only out for their own direct profit. Who is “they”? The “Arabs”, it seems. Here he seems to slide between talking about the shopkeepers and talking about “the Arabs” in general. “It’s like taxes, they say that in their country they didn’t pay any so why should they pay any here?” [...] Clearly, he thinks that if he does do the sidewalk sale, the other merchants might well join in without paying anything, and that would really annoy him. “If they come out, I kill them!” he says, jokingly. (JTEw4, from notes)

However, he says that even at its peak the sidewalk sale only involved about ten to fifteen businesses, and most of those have since closed. One of the other long-established merchants said:

[The sidewalk sale] didn’t work out well, because I mean... we didn’t get involved too much on publicity, we just left it, you know ah, we put little signs up but that was it. So it was only the real local people that knew about it. So we realized that in order to do it you’ve got to do it big, and no one was willing, the shop-owners weren’t ready to put in thousands and thousands of dollars so we said, let’s just leave it the way it is and that’s it, you know. *So now there’s just, it’s just kind of...* No, we leave it alone. *Yeah, yeah. Everyone’s doing their own thing, yeah.* Working for themselves. (JTEw9b)

While some merchants say they appreciate the idea of a sidewalk sale, in practice they aren’t always ready to invest, as in the case of this new business owner:

They came over and said, „Do you want to finance the activity?” I didn’t accept, because, well, I’d only just been open for a couple of months, I needed the money, and on top of that, I didn’t have anything to take outside. [...] I wasn’t ready, you had to pay, I don’t know, 800 dollars,¹⁹ I don’t know how much. [...] So uh... I wasn’t really interested. *Would you do it another time?* Next time they contact me, yes. Now I’m ready. Because now I can do it, take out the barbecue, because I’ve started doing barbecue, I can sell sandwiches outside, I’m prepared, now, I can do lots of things. Now I’m prepared, but when they came, I wasn’t ready. (JTEw1, T)

¹⁹ This amount is roughly the total cost of the insurance, rather than a single merchant’s share.

Nearer the d'liberville metro, further east than the limits of the existing association, a few storekeepers thought a merchants' association could be a good thing, to complement each others' businesses or to make demands of the city (like changing parking regulations).

You really need to think big in business, because if you always stay small, you're always going to be struggling to make ends meet. [...] So an association would make business bigger and bring a bigger variety and everything. *So for you an association would be a good thing?* Yes, really great, we need to get other businesses open that would complement each other, because it will make it – I'm on my own and you're on your own, but it's as if we're working together, because I attract clientele for you and you attract clientele for me, you can send people over to me, I can send them over to you. (JTEw10, T)

But they were not necessarily optimistic. "People are very independent, they don't want to discuss these things too much, I don't know why" (JTEw6, T). It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that if anyone did approach them to form an association, these merchants would be as circumspect as most of the ones at the other end of the street.

As on de Liège, many merchants know each other to talk to and exchange services informally:

And do you ever help each other out? All the time. Everything. Yeah, um, like if I'm missing something or I need, you know, a delivery the flower shop will deliver something for me, or vice versa, yeah you know, um the [name of store] is missing, I don't know what, semolina, I will give them semolina and vice versa. I need loonies and toonies²⁰ I'll go to the depanneur, uh, yeah, we help each other out. (JTEw5)

I'd love to sit down and have a coffee with the owners, but that is our interacting, them coming here and me coming there, that already is interaction, this is [really] enough. We know we're busy and they know they're busy, and it kind of speaks on its own. (JTEw9a)

But there is little impetus for formal association, even among the second generation of Italian storekeepers (including the two quoted above), who pretty much grew up together on the street and later took over their immigrant parents' businesses. Several simply don't see the relevance of promoting their street:

[More investments] might like, scare away the little guys, which make Jean-Talon a little special, you know, you've got the little coiffeurs [*hairstylists*] in the front, and... that might make them say, „well I can't afford the rent anymore“, because obviously, you know, the shop owner put money into it, so... you know, it could mean, it could scare away those guys, which in turn'll scare away the average... We have a bit too much high-end shops in Montreal already, so you wanna keep low-key too. You've got to stick to a certain clientele, you know. It doesn't mean necessarily that they're

²⁰ One-dollar and two-dollar coins, so called because the one-dollar coin depicts the loon bird and the word „toonie“ was coined as a combination of „two“ + „loonie“ (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2004).

cheap, but they, it's just because they don't look for the fancy-schmancy stuff, which in turn can be a good thing, you know. (JTEw9b)

It does you good, too, with all the changes and all the new things in other neighbourhoods, that here it stays a bit quieter. [...] It's not businesses that are very flamboyant, either. There are grocery stores, an optometrist, a kindergarten, a... I think the street has identified really well what the needs of the neighbourhood are, and then it's just making sure it satisfies them. And I think that's good, it's much more humble than other streets where everything's really flashy. I think it does you good, in fact, to have a street that's practical, and I don't know, it's nice. (JTEw3)

Jean-Talon is decidedly *not* a flamboyant street. It is perhaps the most „ordinary“ of the four streets, in that not only is no one trying to induce an „ambience“ that would attract city-dwellers from elsewhere (Bourdin, 2003), there is also not much of an atmosphere to begin with. (Even for the chair of the merchants' association, the sidewalk sale is really about getting rid of old stock rather than creating a buzz about the street.) There are occasional spurts of excitement and animation on Jean-Talon Est: the soccer World Cup of 2006 attracted avid audiences to the cafés and a joyful celebration when Italy won; and a remarkably healthy crowd still pours in to Sunday mass, funerals and weddings at Notre-Dame de la Consolata, the Italian church on the southwest corner of Papineau. And in summer, the bang and screech of an automobile accident will cause a good number of people to leave their seats on the café-terrasses to see what has happened. So the street is certainly not socially „dead“ (and certainly not a „non-place!“). Rather, it is simply represented as a normal, workaday street for normal, hard-working people who just get on with their lives (see Chapter 5). It is even repeatedly called a “quiet” street, even though it is every inch the busy thoroughfare, with plenty of cars and trucks going by. “It's people who have their own lives, walking down the street, that's it” (JTEb3, T). “It's diverse but at the same time it's... uh, same-old, same-old!” (JTEw3, T).

In one word? It's a quiet neighbourhood, it's a neighbourhood where you can find everything, it's middling, you might say, average. Not too rich, not poor, in the middle. People work, we sort things out, we're all [families] together, we recognize each other, we say hello, everyone, each person tells their stories, it's a good neighbourhood. Yes. (JTEw7a, T)

People's sense of Jean-Talon Est as an ordinary kind of place is, it seems to me, bound up in its interstitiality: it is also an in-between kind of place, in several ways. Firstly, it falls in between neighbourhoods: interviewees find it hard to name the immediate surroundings, and sometimes use names of the metro stations as a proxy. Part of Jean-Talon, immediately to the west of the section I studied, lies on the border between two city boroughs (Rosemont–Petite-Patrie and Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension). Secondly, it falls between other commercial streets or zones that are not far away and that may have better commercial continuity or generate more activity, such as Rue Bélanger, a parallel street to the south that has a

comparable range of services and less heavy traffic. Thirdly, this section of Jean-Talon Est falls in between two more strongly ethnicized places. As noted in Chapter 5, it is just beyond the scope of Petite-Italie, the area to the west around Jean-Talon market which is a citywide attraction... but considered too ostentatious by some. In spite of the changes in the ethnic composition of the population and the commercial landscape, this section of Jean-Talon Est is not part either of the area that is coming to be known as „Petit Maghreb“, thanks in part to a keen campaign by a budding merchants“ association that has formed on Jean-Talon east of Boulevard St-Michel (Gaudreau, 2007; Saint-Pierre, 2007). Lastly, this part of Jean-Talon Est is also in between two different kinds of uses – local and regional – and, perhaps, two different phases of evolution:

Right now, it’s in transit between the needs of the neighbourhood (*rue de proximité*) and then the need for people who are in transit. We’re in transit at two levels [...]. We’re just, we’re not quite there, we’re in the process of bringing a new quality to this street, slowly. There are a few indicators that show us we’re getting there, but it hasn’t quite crystallized, you might say. (municipal officer, T)

For all these reasons, the merchants, workers and users of Jean-Talon Est are generally keeping to their place making tactics, rather than committing to any strategies.

The existing institutional strategists, while engaging in place *making* strategies, are not (yet) launching any place marketing. But this should not necessarily be seen as something negative, as a lack. As the quotes on the previous page show, staying ordinary in an increasingly flashy city can be a point of pride, or at least quiet satisfaction. The in-betweenness, interstitiality or indeterminacy of Jean-Talon Est gives people a chance to invest it with their own sense of place, to make it, as one man put it, “a people street. It belongs to everyone. It’s not a, it’s not like St. Lawrence, that’s mainly known for the Italians, and you know, in town it’s more for the Portuguese, there’s like... it’s no-man’s-land” (JTEw9b). I would say that perhaps more than a no-man’s land, it is everybody’s street.

6.4 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest: the rise and fall of a merchants“ association

Like Jean-Talon Est, rue Sherbrooke Ouest is a very busy thoroughfare, but people also construct it as a friendly, comfortable place:

I like it, I like the people. Even if I don’t know anyone on the street, most of them nod their head when you pass, say hello. (ShOb4, who lives outside Montréal but regularly visits his daughter in NDG)

I think people are, I don’t know, I, people say hi. Like my sister doesn’t like coming to visit me because she says it takes too long to go from one spot to the next because

you're always saying hello to so many people, and I'm like, „come on, it's just friendly hellos". (ShOw1)

I'm comfortable with this, with the people. They are very friendly here together, they know each other mostly, and um... it's, it's not a cold street. There is too many traffic always. (ShOw5)

Even if people do not use the street to socialize, the fact that they use it a great deal to get from A to B means that it becomes familiar and ultimately „friendly" for them (see Chapter 4). Again, urban form comes into play here: Sherbrooke is a key east-west artery, linking well with the Décarie expressway and served well by the 105 bus service.²¹ It may not be a place to “promenade”, as this storekeeper puts it, but it is always populated:

St-Denis has people walking up and down all the time, and here, Sherbrooke is kind of, people straggling along, like there's no real sense of you know like it's a place to do a promenade. People don't go, “let's go walk down Sherbrooke,” no one will say that, you know what I mean? (ShOw4)

Its location and physical and visual structure, as much as its commercial structure, have long been key to its success as a commercial street (Daniel Arbour & Associés, 1982: 17). As the „main street" of the south side of the NDG neighbourhood, Sherbrooke is often compared to its nearest „rival" commercial street, Avenue Monkland, in the more affluent north end of NDG, which has more upscale kinds of businesses (see map, Appendix B):

Monkland has a positive vibe too, but it's more upscale, it's richer, whereas here there are more students, more lower-income kind of people. I don't mean that in a bad way. Monkland's more yuppyish. Here there are more people I can connect with. (ShOb1)

I like it better here, Monkland is too snobby. *With the fancy food stores and everything?* The people, too. The people are more stressed out. If you turn into the street, they'll beep their horns more, they have no patience. (ShOb10, a street cleaner with a handcart who works on both streets, T)

w1: it's a different feeling completely, Monkland. Monkland is more,
w2: money

w1: more snobby. It's more uh, it's more uh... cliquey, you know, it's got the Starbucks or the Second Cup, here there's none of that. (ShOw1, w2)

While Sherbrooke Ouest now shows signs of commercial gentrification too (see Chapter 3), many users still perceive it as a down-to-earth street. This is certainly due to its contrast with Monkland, but probably also because of its recent past. As I explained in Chapter 5, in the mid-

²¹ The frequent stops of the 105 spread public transit passengers out along the length of the street. In contrast, Jean-Talon is served by the metro, so passengers tend to arrive in bursts and cluster near the metro stations.

1990s, Sherbrooke Ouest was suffering from a high vacancy rate, plus a reportedly high turnover in stores and population:

So small businesses really rely on each other, and when we have 30% vacancy, it's a huge loss. And some of the businesses were new, they don't have the same drawing capacity. An established business has regulars, a new business doesn't. (ShOw3)

This was compounded by an air of physical neglect, and even a reputation as an unsafe area:

w1: my friend lived here for at least eight, nine years, and I remember we used to, she lived on Décarie Boulevard, and we'd never come past Girouard Park,

w2: yeah, same with me,

w1: because it was „dangerous“, you know?

w2: that's true, there was a bit of a feeling in there. (ShOw1, w2)

Commercial activity on the street was therefore in a rather precarious state and perceived to be at risk of following a downward spiral. At this point, some of the merchants started to “get organized”, feeling that if they banded together they might be able to improve their situation.

There were graffiti, there were, I mean boarded up places, garbage all over the place, it looked like a war zone, literally. I have some pictures of that era. And we started getting organized, there was a study done by an organization that was looking at these type of issues, funded by the government, they did a survey. And they called a meeting and we started looking at the results of the survey. [...] And there was tremendous energy in the room, and frustration, anger, and that's where it hit me, I said, you know, if we only channel this constructively maybe we can do something. And that's how our association was born basically, from that. (ShOw3)

The merchants' association was founded in 1998, with encouragement from the parapublic Corporation de développement économique communautaire (CDEC) of Côte-des-Neiges, which had done a survey to find the streets most in need of revitalization (Sokoloff, 1998), and Convercité, a private “urban enhancement agency”²² (then known as the Centre d'intervention pour la revitalisation des quartiers, CIRQ), which was making a name for itself in helping to revitalize commercial streets. A new strategic actor was thus born, the Sherbrooke Street West Merchants' Association, with its territory running from Avenue Grey, at the border between NDG and Westmount, to Boulevard Cavendish in the west. Its goal was clearly one of place marketing, as this family-run delicatessen and restaurant owner's understanding shows:

I think that if everyone pulls together and then you start pulling people away from other areas of the city, it's good for your business. Other parts of the city do the same, so, I mean, we're all fighting for the same thing. (ShOw4)

²² This is their own translation of *agence de valorisation urbaine*, given on the English home page of www.convercite.org, accessed 24 May 2009.

Chaired by an energetic gift-shop owner, the association published business directories, organized sidewalk sales and clean-up patrols (Lampert, 1998) and a children's festival in the park – and even managed to get its share of Christmas lights from the City, thanks to one particularly feisty and persistent businesswoman. More importantly, it managed to obtain a grant towards building and façade renovations from the City's Programme Opération Commerce (POC, see Table 6.1). As a municipal officer confirmed, this grant was exceptional, since normally only SDCs (as opposed to voluntary associations) were eligible for funding from the POC. The chair of the association recounted how they had won this funding:

So we applied for that, and we were refused. ... And the reason was that we were told that we were not mature enough [*laughs*]. As an organization, I guess that's what they meant, but I remember the board meeting where people were furious. And I have some contacts, I knew the councillor, and I requested a meeting with [*person working in community economic development*]. And an idea occurred to me, I know that visuals are very effective, so I hired a photographer, and I told him, from one end to the other just... document this street for me. So he took pictures of the empty stores, and he took pictures of the graffiti, took pictures of garbage. He took pictures of broken sidewalks, furniture thrown. Incredible documentation, and I catalogued it. And then I went to the meeting. It was me, and a councillor, and all the department heads and another person from another organization, community organization, and so I made the request again, explaining how terrible shape the street was in. And everything I would say, they would have a response. Garbage? "Oh well you know, sometimes garbage comes late." Furniture? "Oh well you know," I mean, they, they had an answer to everything. And so I said to them, "Here's something you should take a look at." And said, "If you wait another six months or year or two years it may be too late." That's precisely the point I was talking about, and I gave them examples of three other streets that they were having problems with. I said, "When it goes beyond a certain level, you can go and put money in if you want." And I also reminded them that empty stores mean lost taxes, loss of taxes for them. And that they will have a bigger problem on their hands. So I just said, and they started looking at the catalogue, it went from one to the other, ended up with the big boss. And they looked, and that was it. They said, "Give us six months, we'll get the money for you." (ShOw3)

The strategy of documenting the dismal side of Sherbrooke Ouest – almost a kind of reverse place marketing – thus convinced a more important strategic actor, the City of Montréal, to invest in the physical improvement of the street. The City exceptionally granted the association \$50 000 a year for three years, which enabled it to employ a part-time assistant and organize the activities.

It made a huge difference, not only in terms of embellishing the street, which is one thing, but it changed the attitudes of people. Because from "ah, nothing's gonna work," to all of a sudden, they see physical change. So a lot of the merchants became more motivated, I think it was a turning point for us. (ShOw3)

By 2003, however, members of the merchants' association were struggling to maintain mobilization on the limited funds that a voluntary association can raise, and decided to incorporate to become a fully-fledged business improvement area, or Société de développement commercial (SDC). Membership then became compulsory rather than voluntary for all businesses in the zone, with fees collected along with municipal taxes as a "special business tax" (Gouvernement du Québec, 1999), determined as a prorata of the rental value of the business in relation to the total rental value of all businesses within the zone.²³ There was, however, a fatal flaw in the plan. Since SDCs in Quebec are governed by the *Loi des cités et villes*, they can be created not by a vote in their favour, but by ten people signing a register and an absence of opposition. An SDC can therefore be incorporated on the basis of relatively little dissemination of information and mobilization.

Sure enough, some time later, one storekeeper started a campaign against the Sherbrooke Ouest SDC, saying that it was anti-democratic: not only was it being imposed on the street by a minority (which was true, given the terms of creation of an SDC), but the majority had no say in the way the funds were managed (which was less true, in that all members had the right to participate in meetings to plan SDC activities). He opened a register to call for a referendum to dissolve it, and each camp, for and against, took to the street to convince the other storekeepers of the justness of its cause. When the referendum was held on 5 June 2005, the vote came out against the SDC and it was dissolved, to the disappointment of several merchants whom I interviewed. "It didn't bother me when I voted because I knew damn well that he wasn't going to win and I was really surprised when he did. I mean I thought that everybody could see the advantage of it" (ShOw12).²⁴

What explains the ultimate rejection of this place-marketing strategy? The SDC's supporters claim that the leader of the opposition had „personal problems“; one added that this man had resented operating under the usual formal rules for running meetings. They also blame the fact that the referendum was held on a Sunday afternoon:

The naysayers were there, probably, in all their numbers, but the people that uh, the people who were pro-association, I don't think turned out. I was there, I know, but I

²³ See the frequently asked questions section of the Quebec government's web page on SDCs, <http://www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=2316>, accessed 25 May 2009.

²⁴ Besides raising more funds to continue the promotional activities on Sherbrooke Ouest, and potentially securing more grants for physical improvements, several merchants thought the SDC would add the advantages of having a stronger voice to lobby the city and, on a more practical level, obtaining discounts on financial services (e.g. the charges made by banks for credit and debit card purchases).

think – and it’s just a pity – everybody I think was so sure that it would never happen that they figure why go waste my time. And these things you know are done on a beautiful, it was a beautiful Sunday afternoon too, you know like uh, who the hell wants to go vote on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. (ShOw12)

City officials think the SDC supporters did not do their job properly. One told me:

That’s the problem with human relations. The dissolution was to be expected, I don’t want to be negative, but in the borough, we knew it would happen. Because the secret of success is to convince a significant majority of merchants of the benefits of the SDC, in terms of pooling marketing, sidewalk sales and other activities, but they didn’t do enough to raise awareness of that. They had the support of about 30% of the merchants, when they really needed 60-70%. (T)

According to this official and his colleagues, the City’s long experience with revitalization initiatives on commercial streets has taught them that there is only so much the City, or its allied private consultants, can do; merchants really have to take over their associations themselves. “we’re not there to tell them how to run the place” (*“on n’est pas là pour leur dire comment gérer la shoppe”*). But running an association means merchants have to take on a distinct workload and acquire a new set of skills. Some supporters of the SDC recognized that they perhaps hadn’t gone about promoting it in the best possible way, and that there could have been more discussion. “I know one person that was negative, who voted no. When I approached him, he said „well, nobody told me what the benefits were.” I guess we missed the boat on that one. [...] But anyway, it’s gone” (ShOw12). The failure of the SDC is therefore variously attributed to the personal failings of its supporters to properly promote its benefits, the personal „problems” of its main opponents, and also the failure of interpersonal relations on the street as a whole and between the two sides, i.e., the idea that “one gang just couldn’t stand the other” (municipal officer, T).

However, I heard less personalized arguments against the SDC. Firstly, since the City collects membership dues with the taxes, many merchants saw it as undue municipal interference in their affairs, even some of those who supported the idea of some collective intervention. For instance, one family-run restaurant chef was firmly in favour of any group initiative that would improve the physical environment, such as ensuring that signage on façades was in harmony with the architecture. Comparing Sherbrooke Ouest to Monkland he said:

Monkland, it’s up to date. You know? And then... it’s not the same, you know but Monkland is nice, people going there, it’s busy up, they have everything is uplift, you know? But Sherbrooke doesn’t have that, but, I guess we’re still surviving still. I mean if they could get more help, the people, the merchants, could get more help to, to get it going. (ShOw11)

But when I asked if he had been involved in the merchants' association, he said, "Oh, to try to stop that tax thing?" It thus appears that he understood the merchants' association to be those who were campaigning *against* the SDC, which he perceived as a hike in taxes. Even among those who better understood the stakes of the SDC, some thought it was too closely tied to the City:

After being there for a while, I realized that... it wasn't gonna do any good. That's my interpretation of it. It wasn't gonna do any good because Montreal is run, by politicians. Okay? They do what they want when they want it, and sometimes it, when it's coming on to election time they make you feel as if they're doing something [laughs] you know? (ShOw6)

This businesswoman argued that she could not afford the raise in taxes. She was also under the impression that the City, rather than the association, was free to determine the membership rate:

That just blew my mind. Because, you know, when the city or the government takes control of certain things, they do it for a reason. When they give money, it's for a reason. (ShOw6)

A second problem with the SDC related to the sheer length of its territory. It covered 2.3 km of Sherbrooke Ouest, from Grey to Cavendish (much longer than my own focus on the street's multiethnic commercial heartland of about 775m; see map B.6, Appendix B). This seems to be part of an early decision not to exclude any NDG merchants from the potential benefits of the association, but it meant that the SDC's zone was broken up by several stretches of non-commercial activity: one large and one small park, apartment buildings, and the bridge over the Décarie expressway.²⁵ Events like sidewalk sales, therefore, were difficult to run successfully because stalls were not sufficiently concentrated.

Here is not a place to have things, going on. [...] It would have to be something spectacular that doesn't happen anywhere else, for someone to say „okay, let me load up the kids, in the car, or take the metro and come down here.“ So, we tried, when we were in the association they gave us information on it, and they said you could put tables out and put things out. Now it doesn't pay me to put something out there because I have to be in here, and someone would have to be out there. And, to be honest with you, I didn't sell one bottle of water extra because of that. (ShOw6)

Sherbrooke is a major artery, not a "promenade" (ShOw4), "not a walking street" (ShOw6), with "traffic always" (ShOw5); "it's just through, through, it's very fast" (ShOw7). Although this brings advantages for business such as easy access and a well-known name (ShOw7), it does make

²⁵ See also zoning details in Appendix W (Arrondissement Côte-des-Neiges - Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, 2001-2006).

event organization difficult. In short, as the businesswoman quoted above (ShOw6) put it, “Sherbrooke Street is really hard to turn into what they wanted to turn it into.”

Finally, some merchants expressed their resistance to “being planned”. Rather than contesting the relevance of an SDC for Sherbrooke Street in particular, they opposed an SDC on principle. One (very successful) grocery store owner said:

By making community, by making this, that, [you] might hurt some other people, [you] might offend somebody, or inside you make too much trouble. So better stay away, respect each other, that’s it, do what you have to do. If you need help, we help you, but don’t ask us „come together, we do this“. We prefer to not come together. (ShOw9)

There are several ways of interpreting this „preference“. It is certainly closely related to the reason many business people give for going into business: they want to be their own boss, to gain and retain their independence. Why trammel that independence with collective obligations? It could also be seen as disguised self-interest, a reluctance to pay fees or take on work of no immediate benefit to one’s own business. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as it is indeed expressed, as a principle that is not just laissez-faire, nor merely „better the devil you know“, but rather corresponds to „first, do no harm“. Collective mobilization could have unintended consequences that might damage or offend individuals, or cause conflict in relationships.

Since the dissolution of the SDC, the merchants’ association has also gone into decline. Its most active members are disillusioned, and the chair has been focusing his energies on other local urban projects, such as the upgrading of the old Benny Farm veterans’ housing into eco-friendly housing cooperatives and condos, and the proposed renovation of the old Empress Cinema, further east on Sherbrooke Ouest, into a community cultural centre.²⁶ A city official said they would “let the dust settle” for a couple of years and then see whether the merchants would like to mobilize again. In the meantime, they have modified zoning rules to encourage more sidewalk cafés:

Sherbrooke is a thoroughfare that has an interesting commercial dynamic, and it’s also, not necessarily touristic like in Old Montréal, but touristic in the sense that for residents it’s an interesting gathering place where you can go and get a café and a croissant in the morning and it’s still like you’re in the city. So we’d like to open up that dynamic for users, and also reduce the importance and predominance of the automobile, which is one of our main concerns for the whole city. So to ensure that

²⁶ See www.bennyfarm.org, accessed 25 May 2009. Some interviewees also mentioned another pressing local concern, namely the changes that the proposed McGill University Health Centre super-hospital will bring to the neighbourhood’s traffic routes, not to mention its economic and social dynamics.

pedestrians will want to circulate on this street because they feel comfortable, the amenities are at a human scale, and the businesses serve their needs. (T)

Place marketing strategies have thus become decidedly more muted, if not completely silent. Although several merchants are worried about competition from chain stores, shopping malls, big box stores and power centres, they are not currently in a position to collectively exploit what many feel are Sherbrooke Ouest's distinctive features: the mixed population, the broad sidewalks, the green canopy of trees in summer, the unique specialized stores, the friendliness – in sum, the aspects that make up their senses of place of the street. Still, even when there is no SDC to point them out, those charms are not invisible to outsiders: Sherbrooke Ouest and its merchants were featured in a long article on the street's „renaissance“ recently published in *La Presse* (Laurence, 2006).

The story of the rise and fall of the merchants' association of Sherbrooke Ouest demonstrates a clear tension between the strategies of group and institutional actors, and the tactics of individual ones. Some merchants were convinced of the need to collaborate, while others resisted being coerced into it. Many understood the stakes of the strategy perfectly (such as the rules for meetings and the way that membership fees are determined), but others found it hard to grasp them. Some saw only benefits to place marketing, others only costs. And quite aside from any rational calculations, the outcome of any strategies they adopted was always dependent on merchants' personal capacities, and perhaps more importantly, their interpersonal skills. For the time being, unplanned place making predominates on Sherbrooke Ouest.

6.5 Rue St-Viateur: competing narratives of a coveted street

Over the years, the people who engage with rue St-Viateur in one way or another have produced strong senses of the street as a convivial, multiethnic, artistic and recently rather coveted kind of place. The residents, merchants and visitors whom I interviewed described it as ethnically and socially mixed, using words like “colourful”, “lively”, “eclectic” and “hodge-podge”, and they appreciated that it was made up of small businesses rather than chain stores. “I think that as a street it's quite relaxed, very friendly, not too commercial either, a little bit but not too much” (StVw4). Rue St-Viateur seems to have a real personality: It is “gentle”, “relaxed”, “warm” and “unpretentious”. One person said it was a street with an “aura” and another said it “had soul”.

St-Viateur is also a street to which people seem to like to show they belong, by leaving artistic marks on it and by telling stories. The telegraph poles and side walls that give out onto the street are covered in art: there are large murals, but also smaller marks of whimsical graffiti

(clever stencils, funny rabbits, red tulips). The posters plastered layer on layer go beyond mere advertizing of local gigs, book launches, exhibitions and events: there are photocopied sheets of poetry, and hand-painted black-and-white portraits of „ordinary people“ by local artist Frank Garcia (DeWolf, 2006). These portraits include a series that appeared above the French-language bookshop during summer 2006, depicting not famous Québécois authors, as I imagined at first glance, but rather, as I saw on closer examination, the employees of the Café Olimpico just across the street (see Appendix V). This neighbourhood institution is one of the focal points of the tales that people tell to demonstrate that they belong to St-Viateur. I was told countless times about how the café got its nickname, Open Da Night: there used to be a sign over the door saying „Open Day & Night“, but the „Y“ and the „&“ had faded or fallen off, and since „Open Da Night“ sounded somewhat Italian, people started calling it that.

More interesting than the story was the way that people presented it. One interviewee who lives and used to run a business on the street highlighted his own role in promoting the nickname:

[The owners] refused to call it „Open Da night“. There was no way they were gonna call it that. The local patrons started calling it that. Actually, I, I pushed it, a lot, years ago. I was calling it that all the time and, I don't know whether I really started it or not but I kept really pushing it. And um, it caught on, and then eventually it caught on and it became such a hip place that they printed their own shirts and they actually put up a sign for a while that said „Open Da Night“. ²⁷ (StVw3)

Another local resident, interviewed during the street festival, prefaced his version of the tale by saying, “So I really like Open Da Night on the corner here, I wanted to make sure you knew about that story,” and said:

One way you can tell if people have been here for a while is that they call it Open Da Night, because it used to not have a sign, it was just this faded lettering that said “Open Day & Night” but it all faded away so you could only see “Open Da Night”, so that’s what we all called it, but now the johnnies-come-lately, like the last six or eight years, they will call it Olimpico, that’s one way you can tell whether they’ve been here for a while. (StVf3)

Although this man says that using the name Open Da Night distinguishes the old-timers from the new arrivals to the neighbourhood, in actual fact the story is told so often that the “johnnies-come-lately” learn it quite quickly, and can tell it themselves in turn to show that they have put down local roots.

²⁷ Interestingly, the Lovell’s Street Directory of 1996-1997 (Lovell Litho & Publications, 1996) lists the café as the “Olympic Sport Bar”, while a locally-compiled Mile End directory lists it two years later as “Open Da Night” (Soudre, 1998).

Another badge of belonging is to have participated in the St-Jean-Baptiste Day celebrations that used to be held on the street. For about 15 years from the mid-1980s onwards, the Mile End Citizens' Committee (MECC) closed St-Viateur to traffic to hold a street party on Quebec's national holiday on 24 June, featuring music and dancing and food of many countries and run entirely by volunteer residents. Even back then, the St-Jean party was designed to be inclusive and multicultural, welcoming all immigrants and ethnic communities at a time when Quebec nationalism was still highly ethnocentric, particularly as expressed on St-Jean-Baptiste Day. A member of the committee told me, "we were ahead of our time because we made them accept a new way of doing things, [...] for us it was very clear that it was a good way to integrate immigrants into Quebec society" (StVu2, T). The party gained a citywide reputation as „the“ alternative St-Jean-Baptiste celebration, attracting people from far and wide. But it was a victim of its own success: it became too big, rowdy and costly for the volunteers to handle, and besides, they were unwilling to welcome and entertain the whole of Montréal rather than just their own neighbours. By 2001, the City refused to give a street-closure permit and the volunteers were exhausted; consequently, the big St-Jean-Baptiste party faded into local legend.

Smaller festivals, however, continue to nourish the sense of place of St-Viateur. The street is still closed one Sunday every July in honour of San Marziale, patron saint of a Calabrian village which sent many immigrants to Mile End: on this Sunday, mass is said in St Michael's Church in Italian instead of Polish, and Italian Montréalers come from across the city to parade a statue of the saint round the streets. Residents who don't look Italian hang back from the parade, but they do join in to watch the folk dancing and eat the free spaghetti supper.²⁸ Festivals or holy days at the Greek Orthodox church on St-Urbain or nearby synagogues also sometimes cross or pass along St-Viateur, while the MECC nowadays encourages smaller-scale parties on cross-cutting residential streets to celebrate St-Jean-Baptiste Day.

As a grassroots local residents' association, the Mile End Citizens' Committee, formally constituted in 1982, is a key strategic actor in the neighbourhood. It has often led campaigns on matters of urban planning (traffic safety, street furniture, street cleaning and „greening“), and sometimes its action has involved local merchants (Rose, 1995). For instance, in 1986, the MECC successfully resisted the City of Montréal's proposition to rezone St-Viateur as a

²⁸ The „insiders“ of Italian origin are easy to distinguish from the non-Italians at the San Marziale festival, by their smart clothes and jewellery, their multi-generational families, and the many greetings they exchange among themselves, often in Italian. The non-Italians are not as well-dressed, are not so obviously with their families and take the stance of spectators rather than participants.

residential street. At the time, the City's urban planning department was concerned that commercial activity was spread too thinly and too far from main streets, putting them at risk of further decline (thanks in part to competition from suburban malls). But the MECC argued that St-Viateur was "like a village", where they could find not only shops of all sizes, tastes and styles, community services and workplaces, but also a sense of community and warm neighbourly sociability. "Take away our small businesses and our village will crumble" (Comité des citoyens du quartier Mile End, 1986: 3, my translation; see also an editorial, *Gazette*, 1986).²⁹

Wary of the remarkable capacity of local residents to mobilize through the MECC, not to mention media channels (e.g. Courtemanche, 2006), the city officials I interviewed were not currently planning any new interventions on St-Viateur west of St-Laurent, in spite of certain zoning anomalies.³⁰ Specifically, restaurants do not feature in the list of businesses for which the street is zoned, unless they have been in legal operation since before 1994 (*droit acquis*), and those that are permitted must be at least 25m apart (*contingement*). It is therefore obvious that some restaurateurs on St-Viateur are infringing zoning rules, but city officials explained that it was not in anyone's interest to crack down on these businesses unless they had a clear plan laying out the aims and terms of new zoning rules, preferably developed in concert with the merchants. And since the borough's resources were currently directed towards the new projects of the City's *Plan d'urbanisme*,³¹ it was unlikely that the borough would do anything about such infringements in the short term.

Rue St-Viateur's reputation as a good place to be extends far beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood, thanks in part to the neighbourhood's history of good interethnic relations, its legendary bagel shops, cafés and festivals and its strong association with a flourishing artistic and musical scene (Olazabal, 2006; Olazabal and Frigault, 2000; Rose, 1995; Simon, 1999). Like other well-known „bohemian“ old working-class neighbourhoods – Belleville in Paris (Charmes, 2006), the Lower East Side or the East Village in New York (Mele, 1996; Zukin and

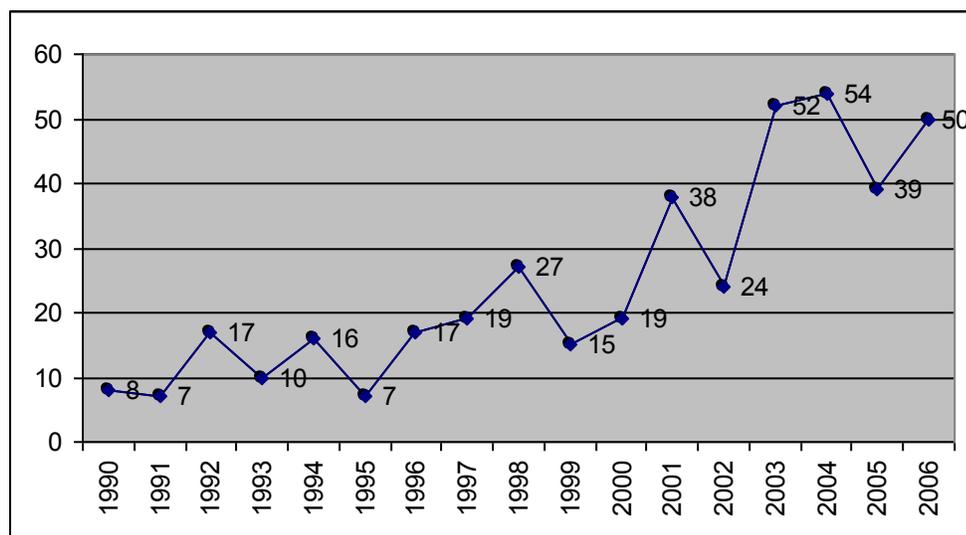
²⁹ The MECC was less successful in its opposition to the reserved bus lane installed on Avenue du Parc in 1992, but the campaign was another rare example of collaboration between a residents' association and the business community (Rose, 1995).

³⁰ See Appendix W for details of zoning (Arrondissement du Plateau Mont-Royal, 2001-2006).

³¹ One of these projects is the redevelopment and „disenclaving“ of St-Viateur Est, the industrial area between boulevard St-Laurent and the railway tracks that form the border with the borough of Rosemont – Petite-Patrie. The MECC has recently been very involved in organizing workshops and attending public consultations about this project. It is particularly focused on the issues of affordable housing for families and studio space for artists.

Kosta, 2004) – it is also undergoing increasing residential and commercial gentrification (see Chapter 3). This is nourished in part by what Zukin calls the “critical infrastructure”, “the men and women who produce and consume, and also evaluate, new market-based cultural products” (Zukin, 1991a: 201), especially through „lifestyle” journalism in newspapers and magazines and, increasingly, digital media. The critical infrastructure facilitates the “reflexive consumption” in which the affluent, educated middle classes engage, helping them find the most „authentic”, original, tasty or perhaps ecologically sustainable products, or the most „authentic” and unique places – quests which are part of their strategies of social differentiation.

Figure 6.1 Number of articles mentioning rue St-Viateur in francophone press, 1990-2006



Source: On-line search using the Biblio branchée (eureka.cc) database, keyword Saint-Viateur or St-Viateur, manual exclusion of references to other St-Viateurs (e.g. Clercs de St-Viateur, Église St-Viateur).

St-Viateur is a regular object of critical infrastructure, to a much greater extent than the three other streets I studied. A press review that I conducted found that it was increasingly featured in the francophone print media from 1990 to 2006 (see Figure 6.1), as St-Viateur’s places, people and events were discovered and written about by journalists. Particularly recurrent themes were the cafés, the restaurants and the bagel shop, the St-Jean-Baptiste celebration, and the association of the street with famous actors, artists, writers and musicians, who often cite places on the street as among their favourite haunts. These celebrities are almost all Quebecers, and mostly Franco-Québécois, although some anglophone or „other” Quebecers are featured (e.g. Inuit singer Elisapie Isaac, author Mordecai Richler, playwright Wajdi Mouawad, members of the band Arcade Fire), as well as the odd international celebrity (e.g. Mick Jagger, who apparently had a night out at a local club, and star chef Anthony Bourdain who tried the bagels). Local residents also promote the street, whether inadvertently, through their

tales of belonging, or intentionally, like those who set up the organization Memories of Mile End to research and give walking tours of the neighbourhood's heritage (its community gardens or places of worship, for example). Of course, journalists and the celebrities they write about may well be local residents too.

St-Viateur has thus acquired such a reputation that it features in Montréal guidebooks and in summer, tourists are not an uncommon sight – even by the busload. Imagining the future of the street, one interviewee said poignantly, and regretfully, “it’s going to become less of a neighbourhood, I think, it will become more of a place”, meaning a place “like SoHo” that was famous far and wide (StVf8). St-Viateur is thus becoming a destination for consumption, not only of products like coffee or bagels or meals or clothes, but also of intangible values such as its „atmosphere” or *ambiance* (Bourdin, 2005). As the artistic tracks and tales of belonging to St-Viateur that I discussed earlier suggest, many local residents have a highly reflexive relationship with the neighbourhood, expressed through art and music and informal or published narratives. Thus, in a craft market in the basement of St Michael’s Church, I bought a t-shirt with a silk-screen print of rue St-Viateur, featuring the distinctive church dome and minaret-like tower. (It strikes me as rare for an anthropologist to be able to wear her own field-site.) And the bookmark that second-hand bookseller S W Welch had designed after moving to the street is an unmistakable picture of St-Viateur (see Appendix V, reproduced with the artists’ permission). On the one hand, these works of art can be understood as products of community-oriented place making. They fulfil a similar if less bellicose function to the sectarian murals adorning the walls of divided Belfast (Jarman, 1993), guiding inhabitants’ attention towards (a certain version of) local identity, revealing the symbols of the organization of their world. This is captured well by a newspaper article about Garcia’s Olimpico portraits:

Reflecting a neighbourhood back at itself, they evoke an intangible and ephemeral sense of community. Somehow, seeing his posters makes an everyday walk to the *depanneur* – or the corner cafe – more romantic. (DeWolf, 2006)

But drawing on Zukin’s (1991a) analysis, we can see the connection with place marketing. Thanks partly to Montréal’s critical infrastructure, Mile End has become a coveted neighbourhood, and within it St-Viateur has become a highly coveted street.

Among the relatively new arrivals to rue St-Viateur is the multinational video game company Ubisoft, which moved in 1997 to an old industrial building at the southeast corner of the intersection with boulevard St-Laurent. The building had previously been occupied for a year or two by Discreet Logic, one of the first digital media successes in Montréal. As Ubisoft grew, it gradually displaced the artists who had been renting studio space there. In fond memory of the

old St-Jean-Baptiste festival, Ubisoft workers had the idea of organizing a street party to celebrate their tenth anniversary at these premises. Partly because an internal consultation showed that employees thought it would be tacky and tactless to plaster the street with Ubisoft slogans, the organizers decided to call it simply “St-Viateur festival de rue”, the St-Viateur street festival (see flyer for the festival, Appendix V) and it was held on June 1, 2007. In the space of four blocks, between St-Urbain and Avenue du Parc, and over ten hours from 2pm to midnight, about 20 000 people came to join in, watch or stroll through the activities on offer. These included body-painting, children’s art and craft and hula hoop workshops, an exhibition of art for sale, and new murals being made. Some of the cafés and food stores were selling things to eat (especially various kinds of sausages – Polish, Italian or fancy French, depending on the store). Community groups and institutions like the YMCA du Parc, Memories of Mile End and the Plateau Mont-Royal history and genealogy society had stands there. And there was the music: the Italian marching band, a Ukrainian choir, a samba band, a klezmer hip-hop artist called So-Called. At the end of the day, Montréal musician Patrick Watson played a live soundtrack to silent films and the street resembled nothing more than a gigantic café-terrace thronged with small groups of mostly youngish people, chatting and flirting late into the night.

Who was the festival really for, and what was it about? Research on festivals has often highlighted the tensions that they incarnate: on the one hand, they can be read as spectacular pageants organized by elites to generate a sense of belonging and integration; on the other, they can be seen as vernacular, grassroots sites of resistance that use carnival to contest the social and political order (Bélanger, 2005; Jackson, 1988; Sabev, 2003; Smith, 1995; Veronis, 2006; Waitt, 2008). St-Viateur festival de rue was no exception, as it crystallized a number of contradictions. When I first interviewed the organizer in chief six weeks before the festival, he said:

The aim is really to celebrate the creativity and culture of Montréal, and more specifically of Mile End, but Ubisoft doesn’t own that culture. I think we animate the neighbourhood, I think we’re the economic motor of the neighbourhood, but it’s still the people that live and work and dwell in a neighbourhood that make it what it is. (StVw6, T)

Ubisoft’s presence has indeed boosted commercial activity on St-Viateur, as is obvious from the hundreds of mostly young, mostly male workers who stream down the street in search of a sandwich or coffee on a weekday lunchtime. But there is an implicit tension here in the relationship between Ubisoft and its immediate surroundings: while it may drive local economic development, it perhaps feeds on local senses of place.

As I analyze it, Ubisoft needed the St-Viateur festival de rue to achieve the contradictory goals of a) increasing awareness of its own brand image through ostentatious philanthropy and b) showing appreciation towards its own staff, while also c) trying to maintaining the support and collaboration of the neighbourhood, as represented by its artists, merchants, residents' association (the MECC) and institutions (schools, the YMCA). As it turned out in practice, there are several reasons to interpret the festival as an appropriation of public space and senses of place for private interests (or place marketing). When the company first decided to organize the festival, it used its direct line to the City. This is in fact how I heard about it: a municipal officer that I interviewed told me about it and put me in touch with the organizers. We can conclude that when Ubisoft comes calling, the City listens. In contrast, the Mile End Citizens' Committee (MECC) was not initially consulted at all.³² Moreover, while the organizers insisted in our interviews and subsequent press releases that it was a community event, they also advertized it citywide (and approximately 25 000 people attended, about a thousand more than the population of all of Mile End).³³

Of course, the various individual and group actors of the neighbourhood differed among themselves in their own goals for and attitudes towards the festival. Many community organizations, artists and musicians willingly joined in organizing shows, stands, workshops and exhibitions, but others refused and withdrew their support. They felt that Ubisoft was exploiting the local community (e.g. there were concerns that artists and musicians would have to work as volunteers rather than be paid), and/or objected to its business of creating video games, including violent ones.³⁴ Residents and festival-goers were well aware that the festival was partly designed to engineer a consensus of goodwill towards the company. One interviewee described it as a "corporate farce," questioning what Ubisoft had really done for the area (StVf1). A questionnaire respondent wrote "Its a bullshit promotion scheme for Ubisoft. If it really for the residents they wouldn't have advertised city wide" (sic) (StVq35). Another wrote of the festival,

³² Indeed, I believe it was me who (inadvertently) made Ubisoft aware of the MECC's existence by asking the organizer if he had talked to them, even though the City has obviously often worked with the MECC and could have made that link.

³³ Figures given at a post-festival debriefing meeting that I attended at Ubisoft, July 27, 2007.

³⁴ These objections were expressed in open letters to the press and on websites. On the day, an anarchist group also handed out leaflets at the festival denouncing Ubisoft USA's role in creating of video games used to recruit young people to the US Army (Rosenfeld, 2007). See: http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/montreal/version_imprimable.asp?nv=/regions/Montreal/2007/05/29/001-festival-st-viateur.xml, consulted June 23, 2007; http://www.neorhino.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=222&Itemid=108, consulted May 29, 2007; <http://www.ainfos.ca/en/ainfos19508.html>, consulted June 23, 2007.

“it’s invasive and non-representative of the neighbourhood” (StVq73, T). An artist wrote in a digital art project, *in absentia*, “our local corporate giant Ubisoft decided that, after slumming in the hood for ten years, it was about time to throw us a bone. I mean a party.”³⁵ Of course, there were also many thousands of festival-goers who were quite happy chewing on this “bone”, and who thought it was a great initiative on Ubisoft’s part:

I think it’s wonderful. I really, really do. They put a lot of work into it though. I watched them setting up, and I watched them, like the lights, putting them up, they’ve done it all, oh Lordy! This is a ton of work. (StVf11).

And then there were also those who didn’t realize that Ubisoft was behind the festival at all, attributing it to other organizations such as Pop Montréal or the YMCA. Ubisoft’s presence on the day was, indeed, rather discreet. One must look quite carefully to see the Ubisoft logo curled up inside the treble-clef „S” of the festival logo (Appendix V).

As well as vacillating between corporate and community objectives, the St-Viateur festival de rue also refashioned some of the identity politics of place. In homage to the multiethnic neighbourhood, and like the old St-Jean-Baptiste party, it deliberately featured ethnic (or ethnicized) communities in its programme. However, the Italian marching band musicians mostly don’t live in the area any more, and the samba band – whose members are not all Brazilian – do *all* the festivals. Ironically, the local Hasidic Jews couldn’t have joined in or come to listen to the klezmer hip-hop even if they had wanted to, because it was played at Sabbath supertime. Thus, the programme of „ethnic” performances seemed to be rather abstract, disconnected from local communities (although that could also be a reflection of the changing neighbourhood as much as of the organizers’ ideas about „culture”). Also, of course, it was not held on St-Jean-Baptiste Day but on 1 June. The organizer told me, “Everyone would have really liked it to be on the 24th June, but we can’t do that, it’s too political for us” (StVw6, T). But as one of the letters of protest pointed out, “the first of June represents nothing at all for me” (T). In other words, the St-Viateur festival de rue profited from a festival tradition that had represented quite a radical stance, while utterly depoliticizing it.

I argue that the two festivals embody two competing, if intersecting, narratives of place. In synopsis, the St-Jean-Baptiste festival used to tell the story of how people from all over the world can create a vibrant neighbourhood where all ethnic and artistic cultures are welcome, and anyone can become Québécois. The St-Viateur festival de rue told – or tried to tell – the story of how a culturally creative multinational company won the heart of a culturally creative – but

³⁵ J R Carpenter and others, <http://luckysoap.com/inabsentia/perdu.html>, consulted November 22, 2008.

previously down-at-heel – community. They are both archetypal rags to riches tales, but the riches are different: in the first, what is valued is local belonging; in the second, it is local economic development. They also represent two different stories of urban citizenship, one led by grassroots activism, in the form of the MECC, the other by an alliance between the state and a private company (the borough of the Plateau Mont-Royal and Ubisoft). Of course, the second story is parasitic on the first: Ubisoft's St-Viateur festival de rue benefited from all the years of effort put into the St-Jean-Baptiste party, and had a budget beyond the MECC's wildest dreams. But paradoxically, it seems that in some ways, the second narrative of place is being reabsorbed back into the first.

Firstly, local merchants, on the whole, are not participating in Ubisoft's vision of local development. In order to obtain a permit to close the street, Ubisoft had to form a merchants' association, and went door-to-door to do so. While all but one of the merchants they met agreed to sign up, it became clear after the festival that this was a temporary, tactical choice – seizing the chance to profit from a one-off event organized by someone else. A couple of merchants I interviewed would like to adopt the strategy of formal association, and Ubisoft and the municipal official I interviewed seemed to have high hopes that they would do so. But after some post-festival attempts at organization, it became clear that the majority are not interested. They are busy people with the independent mindset of most small business owners, but more importantly, why promote a street that's already thriving? Many merchants I interviewed were extremely reluctant to invest any time or money in a formal organization of the street when the informal order of solidarity works perfectly well:

There is an association on Parc Avenue, but, nobody has ever wanted really to start one on St-Viateur. We had the St-Viateur party for the Saint-Jean-Baptiste, ah, which we used to organize, but, it was an unwritten rule. [...] Overall, I can honestly say that I can walk into any business on this street, and really, ask anything of them and nobody would refuse. (StVw5)

Would you want [a formal business association]? No, because then they take control of everything, you know, in the sense that ah, ah, you have to run it this way, you have to open at this time, and you have to close at that time, and ah, no. So, it's gonna kill the little touch of everyone's, ah, specialties maybe, you know, if you have rules to follow and, no. No. I mean we all have rules to respect, and laws to respect, which I totally agree. But, you know, I sell this and he sells that and if he wants to sell it upside down he'll sell it upside down. (StVw4)

Since they are already comfortably „making it“, they don't need to market it.

Secondly, as the various forms of resistance to the St-Viateur festival de rue suggest, the narrative of place marketing does not convince all residents, either. As time went on, people I met during fieldwork seemed to remember the festival of June 1 as just one of the many St-

Jean-Baptiste parties. And a few interviewees expressed the idea that eventually Ubisoft would go away, hypothesizing that the natural turns of the business cycle would one day make it unprofitable for the company to be there:

sooner or later Ubisoft will move and St-Viateur Street will still be here. So [...] Ubisoft will keep it going like towards chocolate shops, but then after it leaves it, hopefully it will keep, back more down-to-earth, that's what I'd like. (StVf15)

In the same vein, although everyone recognized that the street's commercial landscape was changing and that rents were rising, several interviewees – residents and merchants – seemed to feel that gentrification was neither complete nor inevitable:

You don't think that the upscale businesses change the street's character too much? I can't really see it happening yet. It doesn't seem to be. Maybe I'm wrong, but no, not yet I don't think. (StVu2, T)

This was explained by the slow pace of change and partly by the tenacity of independent businesses:

But everybody wants to come and try on the street now, lately. You know, they wanna bring their own store and, you know. But the ones that have been here for 30 years, they'll still be here around for a while. (StVw5)

I think that there'd be a conflict if someone opened up a big place, that took away... [...] because you have a lot of small businesses that are trying to get by here... *[sound trails off]* So as long as it's small and independent, you think it will be all right? Yes, yes, it'll keep the sense of neighbourhood that way. (StVu3, T)

I think that people who have been here a long time, like my mother for instance, who bought before it became trendy, sometimes they're a bit shocked... But still, it developed slowly, it didn't happen overnight, but I think sometimes they find it difficult... At the same time, they're pleased, because the neighbourhood has become more beautiful too, there are more interesting cafés and merchants and stores. You know, it's fun to live in a pleasant neighbourhood. (StVu1, T)

The last quote hints at the ambivalent feelings that people can have about commercial gentrification, which can simultaneously be abhorred for bringing in too many outsiders or for pricing insiders out of the market, and appreciated for making a street more convivial.

In sum, St-Viateur is well-known well beyond Mile End for its festive tradition, independent, quirky businesses and unique cultural mix, although the „culture“ in the mix is changing: while in discourse it is still said to be multiethnic, in practice, the variety of street culture is now more artistic. These traits inspire strong senses of place among those who know and use the street, whether they live locally or beyond. But they also make it attractive to the critical infrastructure that tends to act as a catalyst for further gentrification, not to mention to a company big enough to have a considerable impact on the street's economy and population. It is

perhaps easy for people to make Ubisoft into a scapegoat for the change that St-Viateur is undergoing, but with or without Ubisoft, St-Viateur is gentrifying.

In comparison to the other three streets, St-Viateur is unique in that not only are there conflicts between tactics and strategies, but also between different strategies. Thus, the Mile End Citizens' Committee, focused as it is on the needs and wants of residents (especially artists and families), has quite a different strategic vision for the street than does Ubisoft and, in some ways, the City of Montréal. Moreover, we can see here the potential for a symbiosis between tactics and strategies, as stories of belonging are picked up and broadcast by the critical infrastructure, which informs and influences strategic actors who might not have otherwise known the place. It will be interesting to see how long St-Viateur's diverse users will be able to resist the appropriation of their senses of place for the purposes of place marketing.

6.6 Conclusion: place making or place marketing?

This chapter has discussed the four streets under study as places as a whole, and as places that are produced by planned or unplanned action – the sum of informal tactics or the result of institutional strategies.

The processes of place making in which the diverse actors of these streets engage generate four quite distinct cases (see summary in Table 6.2). Rue de Liège, resolutely traditional, attracts hardly any strategies of intervention; while the tactics of its merchants aim to ensure their own commercial survival and economic independence, with the help of a certain dose of informal interdependence. On Jean-Talon Est, municipal institutional strategies have just about achieved commercial stability, but they aspire to little more, for the time being. The tactics of other users (workers, residents and visitors) place the street as „ordinary“ – and proud of it. On Sherbrooke Ouest, the merchants' association's strategies of place marketing, supported by the public sector, bore fruit for a little while. But the magic recipe of the SDC left a bitter taste among those merchants who were unconvinced of the advantages of this fabricated and imposed „community“. Lastly, St-Viateur, one of the city's most lively, well-known and even coveted streets, could in theory be an ideal site to set up place marketing strategies. Indeed, a multinational company has been using it for its own purposes of promotion. But in fact, its small business owners and, to an even greater extent, its other users neither want nor need such interventions; they prefer to seize opportunities through occasional collaboration such as festivals, or to shape their neighbourhood through place making strategies that are more clearly oriented towards the welfare of local citizens.

Table 6.2 Strategies, tactics and predominant senses of place on the four streets

street	strategies	tactics	predominant senses of place (from the perspective of...)
de Liège	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • municipal, merchants: none directed towards the street as a whole • festivals held in Parc Howard by community associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • users: concern for cleanliness, traffic speed, youth • merchants: business survival • all: „eyes on the street“ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insiders: convenient • (outsiders: invisible)
Jean-Talon Est	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merchants: voluntary association (weak) for sidewalk sales • municipal: commercial stability and continuity (future street furniture?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merchants: working for themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insiders: in-between, ordinary, „hard-working“ humble • outsiders: in-between
Sherbrooke Ouest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merchants“ association → SDC: activities, POC renovation, directories, place marketing • municipal: (had supported merchants“ assn., SDC); encouraging café-terrasses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merchants: resistance to municipal interference/ taxes; resistance to being planned • merchants, users: being different from Monkland & chain stores, personal service, friendliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insiders: friendly, comfortable, diverse, unique • outsiders: friendly, comfortable, diverse
St-Viateur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens“ Committee: past St-Jean-Baptiste; periodic zoning/traffic campaigns; current St-Viateur Est redevelopment (esp. artists“ issues) • Ubisoft: St-V festival de rue; promoting merchants“ association; boosting image of creative place; „giving back“ to neighbourhood • municipal: past attempt at rezoning St-V (currently lying low on zoning); redevelopment of St-V Est • various community assns: San Marziale, other small festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merchants: taking advantage of festivals; staying independent • residents: artistic traces and tales of belonging; some resistance to festival de rue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insiders: convivial, multiethnic, artistic, eclectic • outsiders: convivial, hip, cultural, coveted (multiethnic??)

Several conclusions can be drawn from the variety I found in the cases I studied. Firstly, the varied cases demonstrate that the street is the product of strategic and tactical action initiated at several different scales. Individuals, organized voluntary groups, public institutions, private companies and the state all have a hand in shaping a street; likewise, in line with the sociospatial dialectic, the shape the street takes influences the place making tactics or strategies that they adopt. Different actors can make more or less formal alliances, such as that between the (voluntary) merchants“ association and the (parapublic) CDEC on Sherbrooke Ouest, or

between the borough of the Plateau Mont-Royal and Ubisoft on St-Viateur for the festival de rue. Other actors may support each other without formalizing or even realizing it, such as those artists, merchants and residents who did not appreciate the St-Viateur festival de rue; or the many residents and merchants on Jean-Talon Est who are quite happy for it to remain an ordinary street; or indeed the diverse users of de Liège who together ensure the survival of the street's businesses. Of course, the streets are produced by conflict as well as cooperation, like the ones between the two factions campaigning for and against the SDC on Sherbrooke Ouest, or, less dramatically, between the president of the merchants' association on Jean-Talon Est and the colleagues he approached to sign up for the sidewalk sale. Each planned or unplanned intervention on a street contributes in some way to making it the place it is.

Secondly, the outcomes on the four streets suggest that in spite of the rise of the urban symbolic economy (Zukin, 1995), unplanned place making still plays a significant role in shaping commercial neighbourhood streets. Indeed, although „unplanned“ streets, by their very nature, attract little attention from public or private strategic actors (urban planners, promoters...), they form a unique part of the “urban array” (Bourdin, 2005) of the contemporary metropolis. Just because they are not marketed as such does not mean they are any less of a viable „lifestyle option“ for their users.

Thirdly, the findings show that even where place marketing is deployed, its exact form and duration are subject to much negotiation and can be heavily contested. Most research on place marketing approaches the topic from the top down, exploring cases that were already targeted for interventions, and draws data mainly from policy documents and interviews with those who implement place marketing strategies (e.g. Aguiar, Tomic and Trumper, 2005; Kearns and Philo, 1993; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). My „bottom up“ approach – taking four places and then seeing if they were subject to place making strategies of one kind or another, and interviewing a broad range of actors – shows that place marketing is not always a foregone successful conclusion.

The processes of place making discussed in this chapter are clearly linked to the public sociability and mobilization of ethnicity discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. By definition, senses of place include the kinds of public sociability that people practice in it or associate with it. So on de Liège, people emphasize the street's casual familial warmth and informal exchange of services. On Jean-Talon Est, contact between people seems to be not so close, but civil, such that the street gives an overall impression of one where ordinary people just get on with their lives. The sense of place on Sherbrooke Ouest is constructed in part by its use as both destination and

thoroughfare, as well as by the possibilities for personal service that its independent specialized stores cultivate. Similarly, the many ways in which people bring to life the cafés and terrasses and sidewalks of St-Viateur foster a strong sense of conviviality on the street as a whole. In the latter two cases, public sociability is a key part of the unique image and atmosphere that strategists seek to project in „selling“ the streets (through the Sherbrooke Ouest merchants“ association and the St-Viateur festival de rue).

Ethnicity is mobilized in a less straightforward way in processes of place making on these streets. Each is certainly perceived by users as a multiethnic place (which is hardly surprising, since that is why I chose to study them). Some people put that quality ahead of others when describing the streets, but there are variations in how they present it. The multiethnicity of rue de Liège and Jean-Talon Est seems to be expressed as a matter of fact, a simple result of local demographics. Sherbrooke Ouest“s multiethnicity seems to be associated with grocery stores and restaurants and access to specific kinds of customer, but interestingly, it does not seem to have been brought to the fore by the merchants“ association or the SDC. In contrast, St-Viateur“s image as a multiethnic street is still strong and on the tips of everyone“s tongues, even though the population of the neighbourhood and commercial streetscape do not appear to be as multiethnic as they were in the early 1990s (Rose, 1995, and see Chapter 5). The „culture“ in the cultural mix is less ethnic than artistic. But as the conflict around the festival de rue shows, many users of the street are still resistant to its culture being recycled as a brand image.

Looking at the internal dynamics of each streets, I found that the ethnic background of merchants is not a factor in the negotiations over place marketing. The chair of the Jean-Talon Est merchants“ association criticized the “Arabs“ attitudes, but in fact, some merchants who share his Italian origins were just as reluctant to participate. The conflict over the SDC on Sherbrooke Ouest did not play out along ethnic lines: there were merchants of various backgrounds both for and against it (white, visible minority, Anglo- or French Canadian, minority ethnic, recent immigrant, long-established immigrant, second generation, etc.). Canadian-born or long-established immigrant merchants do perhaps seem somewhat readier to adopt and invest in place marketing strategies than recent immigrant merchants. Yet only three of the twelve merchants I interviewed on St-Viateur were recent immigrants, which goes to show that both Canadian-born and long-established immigrant merchants can oppose formal association. If any cultural factor is relevant here, it is not an „ethnic“ culture but the organizational or „work“ culture of the small business owner, independent-minded and reluctant to be organized by others.

This lack of ethnicized place marketing is an interesting finding in light of recent trends towards the branding of “ethnic quarters” (Bell, 2002) in cities like Toronto and London. The specificities of Montréal’s multiethnicity may well be at play here. A few place-based merchants’ associations in Montréal have adopted ethnic place marketing strategies. These are the Quartier chinois and the Petite Italie merchants’ association in the past and, more recently, the Hellenic Village on avenue du Parc (DeWolf, 2008a, b; La Presse canadienne, 2008; Magder, 2008; Sutherland, 2008) and the „Petit Maghreb” further east on Jean-Talon Est (Gaudreau, 2007; Saint-Pierre, 2007). But the ethnicized place marketing of commercial streets now seems to be the exception rather than the rule. On the one hand, Montréal’s demographics show that immigrant and minority ethnic groups are not strongly segregated (Apparicio, Leloup and Rivet, 2007), so it is hard to recognize one particular ethnic group as having dominion over a particular street rather than any others. On the other hand, the particular dynamics of majority-minority relations in Quebec (see Chapter 1) mean that the inscription of ethnocultural diversity in public space is a delicate matter. While some minority ethnic communities want recognition, one faction of the ethnic majority would rather public space incarnate strictly secular and supposedly „universal” cultural values, *à la* France. Caught between competing requests, municipal managers have tended recently to want to banish traces of any „organic” ethnic and cultural references from public space, which has been dubbed the “pasteurization” of urban space (Germain et al., 2008).

In conclusion, I would argue that although strategies and tactics have intersected to produce these streets in many ways, as a group these four commercial streets demonstrate the strengths of unplanned place making. They constitute a range of places in the “urban array” (Bourdin, 2005) that seem closer to an organic product than to the magic recipes so often promoted by the agents of place marketing in the urban symbolic economy. Moving on from the production of the streets as places, the following chapter revisits our four streets as sites of urban cosmopolitanism.

CHAPTER 7 REVISITING URBAN COSMOPOLITANISM

It may be worth looking more closely for the small signs of banal, or quotidian, or vernacular, or low-intensity cosmopolitanism. (Hannerz, 2006: 27)

Urban cosmopolitanism, where it exists, is unlikely to match up to the political cosmopolitan ideals of Immanuel Kant, Ulrich Beck or Nigel Rapport, who advocate new forms of citizenship of the world to overcome global problems. But nor is it likely to be hopelessly corrupted, only taking the form of an appropriation of cultural difference for private gain. Instead, it is likely to be “banal” and “low-intensity”, as Ulf Hannerz says above. The concept of cosmopolitanism, as I set out in Chapter 1, is not just a synonym for multiethnicity, and it stands apart from multiculturalism or transnationalism because it commends openness to and interaction with „Others“. I sort theories of cosmopolitanism into four clusters of meaning – the political philosophical project, the politics of identity, the personal attitude, and the commodification – and the latter two are the most relevant in the search for everyday, street-level cosmopolitanisms. This chapter aims to sift through what we have learnt so far about the four streets under study – their forms of sociability, mobilization of ethnicity and planned and unplanned place making – in order to look for those “small signs” – and particular uses – of openness to the „Other“.

This chapter has four parts. Firstly, I develop an argument in defence of geographically local cosmopolitans, to demonstrate in more depth that cosmopolitanism is not the preserve of the jet-setting global elite. Drawing on the sociology of Simmel as interpreted by Truc (2005), I show that cosmopolitans do exist at street-level – and even among people who have never lived outside of Montréal. Secondly, I present how cosmopolitanism (and its opposite) can be embodied by different sociological „figures“, types of people whose experiences and outlooks – as shaped by their encounters – make them identifiably cosmopolitan (or not cosmopolitan). The third section investigates whether and how we can conceive of particular places as cosmopolitan. I suggest that the cosmopolitanism of places is made up of several different „layers“ in which relations of openness and otherness can be expressed, and I discuss the contextual cosmopolitanism of each of the four streets in this study. I conclude with a reflection on the conditions for cosmopolitanism in multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets.

I draw on my empirical material differently here than in previous chapters. In the first and second sections, I make ample use of extracts from two in-depth interviews. These extended case studies illustrate some of the forms cosmopolitanism takes in everyday urban spaces. Elsewhere in the chapter, I synthesize material that has been presented under other headings

earlier in this thesis, refracting what we have already seen of the four streets in a different light, through the prism of cosmopolitanism.

7.1 Cosmopolitanism at street-level

The variety of cosmopolitanism that is most relevant to everyday interactions in public space is the one that I have called personal cosmopolitanism: an individual attitude of openness to or “willingness to engage with the Other” (Hannerz, 1990: 239) (see Chapter 1). Under what conditions can one acquire such openness or willingness in the city? In this section I want to return to and reinforce my argument that it is indeed appropriate to investigate cosmopolitanism at street-level, in banal urban spaces of the city. This means taking issue with two quite common presuppositions about cosmopolitanism: that it is necessarily acquired through travel; and that it is a kind of „free-floating“ identity with no sense of belonging to a given locality. Taken together, these would imply that cosmopolitans are rare, if not non-existent, on the kinds of streets that I have studied. Obviously, I would disagree. This first section therefore further establishes that cosmopolitanism at street-level *exists*, illustrated by an in-depth case of one „cosmopolitan“ I interviewed, and thus sets the scene for subsequent explanations of the forms that it can take.

For many scholars, including Hannerz (1990) himself, travel is the main vector for cosmopolitanism, since it is the main arena in which contact with cultural „Others“ and other cultures occurs. But travel in itself is not sufficient: cosmopolitanism entails a certain attitude, an “orientation” (ibid.), which not everybody carries in their baggage. As Hannerz puts it, the kind of tourists who seek “home plus sunshine” or “home plus servants” (ibid.: 241) are not cosmopolitan, because they are not interested in the possibility of changing their structures of meaning (i.e. their culture) upon contact with other cultures. Likewise, exiles would not necessarily be cosmopolitan, since their travel is imposed, not chosen, and they remain more preoccupied by their home culture than entranced by the one now thrust upon them. The cosmopolitan is thus presented as a certain kind of traveller, one who in some measure engages with, learns from and is transformed by other cultures, perhaps embracing another culture entirely, perhaps collecting fragments of many. She therefore has a distinctly reflexive relationship with her own original culture. The opposite of the cosmopolitan is the local, who lives and thinks through the cultural and social structure of his or her locality, taking it for granted, and treating “the minor rituals of everyday life as natural, obvious necessary” (Hannerz, 1990: 248).

The conflation of cosmopolitanism and mobility has had, in my view, a pernicious effect on the theorization of cosmopolitanism. Firstly, it implies those who do not travel cannot possibly

be open to the Other, since they are spatially and socially entrapped in their own culture (which in any case they must represent for the travelling cosmopolitan). Nevertheless, if it stands to reason – as Hannerz acknowledges – that not all travellers are cosmopolitans, then it equally holds that not all stay-at-homes are locals. Secondly, if cosmopolitanism is persistently associated with a certain kind of travel, then it becomes the preserve of a globe-trotting élite. So if one pushes some of Hannerz's arguments to their logical conclusion, the cosmopolitan emerges as the confident being who can master and improvise from a range of cultural repertoires and who – unlike the local (or the exile) – “do[es] not stand to lose a treasured but threatened, uprooted sense of self” (Hannerz, 1990: 243) when travelling. Indeed, the anthropologist Jonathan Friedman equates cosmopolitans with the class that controls and benefits from globalization, “enjoy[ing] the variety of the world by consuming its differences in the form of objects, recipes and menus” (2002: 34).¹ Likewise, the geographer Jan Nijman (2007) labels as cosmopolitans those who arrive in Miami by choice to work or play, but do not make any lasting contribution to or connection with the city. While I agree that openness to the Other can be put to certain ends (i.e. that personal cosmopolitanism is linked to commodified cosmopolitanism), this restrictive, class-bound idea of cosmopolitanism cancels out its analytical usefulness, which is to focus attention on relations to alterity. (Nijman's cosmopolitans are, in fact, not willing to engage with the Other at all.)

The concept of cosmopolitanism does more useful analytical work if we separate it out from that of mobility. I suspect that the root of the problem is Merton's (1957) original choice of name for the opposite of cosmopolitan; „local“ is an unavoidably spatial word, whereas cosmopolitanism concerns a social relation.² If we maintain its principal focus on the relationship to the Other, then we can see that there are mobile cosmopolitans who are not members of the élite, and stay-at-homes who are cosmopolitan. Several such examples emerge from empirical work on cosmopolitanism. There are people who travel the world from a relatively powerless, subaltern position, as racialized migrant workers or immigrants, yet still acquire cosmopolitan knowledge and competence (Werbner, 1999). And there are those who have never or barely travelled at all, yet engage with Others in their immediate surroundings, such as the café-owners

¹ This association is nothing new; right-wing French politicians used „cosmopolitan“ to insult the international capitalist class in the 19th century, a pejorative use with distinctly anti-Semitic overtones (Paquot, 2003; Rey, 1998; Winock, 1997).

² A suitable alternative could be the word parochial – “1. of or concerning a parish. 2 (of affairs, views, etc.) merely local, narrow or restricted in scope” (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2004), although it has a rather derogatory connotation, as well as an ethnocentric one (in the sense that not everyone has a „parish“). Kothari (2008) and Datta (2009) use „parochial“ instead of „local“.

in Yunnan province, China, who “produce cosmopolitanism” (in the form of Western-style food and easier intercultural exchange) rather than locality for adventurous Western world travellers (Notar, 2008).³ Closer to home, in multiethnic Vancouver, geographer Dan Hiebert (2002) distinguishes not between mobile cosmopolitans and stay-at-homes, but between cosmopolitans who regularly engage with people from different cultural backgrounds, and non-cosmopolitans who work, live and socialize in mainly mono-ethnic circles. The former may be stay-at-homes; the latter may be mobile, in which case their mobility makes them transnationals, not cosmopolitans. Last but not least, the globalized media have the power to sensitize the most sedentary to the plight or pleasure of people who live halfway round the world (Çağlar, 2002; Chouliaraki, 2008; Szerszynski and Urry, 2002). Therefore, “[c]osmopolitanism is about mobilities of ideas, objects and images just as much as it is about mobilities of people. Cosmopolitanism is not only embodied, but also felt, imagined, consumed and fantasized” (Skrbis, Kendall and Woodward, 2004: 121). Mobility is not a necessary precondition of openness to the Other; one can, as it were, be spatially local but socially cosmopolitan.

A related theoretical debate concerns the extent to which cosmopolitanism precludes attachment to one’s own culture. In the theoretical and usually normative literature on political cosmopolitanism, the question is whether being a citizen of the world is more important than being a citizen of one’s nation or locality. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum’s (1994) affirmative answer to this has been vigorously debated since (Appiah, 1997; see also many contributions to Cheah and Robbins, 1998). The literature on personal cosmopolitanism phrases the question differently. Is it possible to retain one’s own culture, one’s own way of structuring and managing meaning, while opening oneself to Others? Hannerz (1990: 247-249) imagines a variety of relationships that the well-travelled cosmopolitan could entertain with her „home” culture: alienation, if it were no longer taken for granted; detachment, because it might start to seem arbitrary; nostalgia, in that it could represent a pre-cosmopolitan period; commonsense comfort, if the relationship were unaltered; or relativism, were it to be seen as just another culture to embrace or master. However, the problem I see here is that Hannerz still assumes that there is an essential difference between cosmopolitans and locals as kinds of people (a difference bred by travel, in his view).⁴ The cosmopolitan is reflexive and chooses his or her social and cultural

³ The classic figure of the anthropologist’s „key informant”, a person „native” to the field who is capable of translating local culture to a complete stranger, is surely as cosmopolitan as the anthropologist who had to travel to get to the field.

⁴ In a recent paper, Hannerz (2006) revises his position considerably, acknowledging the possibility of non-travelling and non-elite cosmopolitanisms. He also reminds us of the historical context of his original

ties; the local, unreflexive, is bound by them. This position seems both condescending and essentialist, and I would argue instead, following Appiah, that local and cosmopolitan belonging are not mutually exclusive: we “can entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan” (1997: 618; Hall, 2002 takes a similar position). Rather than seeing cosmopolitans and locals as fundamentally different types, we could suppose that any person can be both open to those whom she sees as „other“, and attached to those whom she identifies as the „same“ as herself. Cosmopolitanism – whether openness to the Other, or allegiance to a polity beyond one’s immediate social circles – and rootedness within one’s immediate society are not mutually exclusive.

This position on the possibility of rooted cosmopolitanism can be theorized with the aid of Simmel’s sociology, centred as it is on the individual, as a little-known article by G r me Truc (2005) explains.⁵ “Man [sic] is a differentiating creature,” says Simmel (1950 [1903]: 410; cited by Truc, 2005: 53): human beings are creatures who categorize things and each other. At the same time, we are reflexive: we are able to take a distance from the categories (roles, statuses, ethnicities...) that we adopt for ourselves or ascribe to others. This means that we are able to imagine ourselves as occupying other categories, but also as being not solely determined by categories. This space of reflexivity, between our own social positions and other people’s, gives us room to think beyond our immediate social group. This is why the figure of the stranger fascinates Simmel: the stranger is positioned both within and outside the group, as someone who is a member of it but not from the beginning, embodying a “synthesis of nearness and proximity” (Simmel, 1950 [1908]: 404), of wandering and being fixed in place which incites reflexivity. “Cosmopolitanism resides in the capacity to accept, and even appreciate, this difference between what a person is, by virtue of their status and social role, and who they reveal themselves to be as an actor” (Truc, 2005: 56, my translation).

The dynamics of urbanization arguably amplify this capacity for cosmopolitanism (Truc, 2005). Life in the modern metropolis means that the city-dweller engages with other people in a segmented manner, drawing on only a part of her personality or identity and skills at any one time as she moves in many differentiated social circles for various purposes – work, leisure activities, family ties, and so on (Simmel, 1950 [1903], 2007). As Louis Wirth (1996 [1938]: 193)

article, first presented in 1987 at a conference in Korea, at a time when Cold War borders were still fairly impenetrable.

⁵ In calling Simmel a “sociologist of cosmopolitanism”, as his title puts it, Truc (2005) is taking issue with Ulrich Beck’s assertion that classical sociology is helplessly hidebound in the nation-state and of no use in theorizing cosmopolitanism.

put it, in a big city, “No single group has the undivided allegiance of the individual”. Belonging to so many social circles heightens the city-dweller’s awareness of both her own singular individuality (since no one else has quite the same social network) and the arbitrariness of social boundaries. It does not abolish the significance of social boundaries – they are a necessary framework for defining the individual’s situation – but it does mean that it is easier to shift or surpass them. Perhaps counter-intuitively, Truc argues that big-city individualism can therefore foster global solidarity, in that the individual can make a link beyond her own social group(s) towards more inclusive group(s), and ultimately towards humanity as a whole. A situated individual, socialized into a given culture and aware of her singularity, can thus become aware of the singularity and the cultures of others by transcending some of the boundaries that socialize her as such. The strength of this argument is that it allows us to conceive of the rooted cosmopolitan who is not disengaged from her original social milieu, and of a cosmopolitanism that consists of observable interactions between situated individuals. “Cosmopolitanism could not have a real and concrete form amenable to sociological study if it did not consist in identifiable, assignable social beings” (Truc, 2005: 60, my translation).

What I have called personal cosmopolitanism, therefore, is restricted neither to the elite nor to world travellers, nor does it necessarily imply a lack of attachment to one’s original or immediate culture. I want to illustrate this with an example from my fieldwork. I met „Peter⁶ in one of the parks on rue de Liège on the day of the Canada Day festival of 2006, and he agreed to be interviewed there and then. We spent an hour and a half on the interview and attended the festival in Parc Howard together. Peter was in his late 30s, and had grown up in the neighbourhood of Parc-Extension, where his parents had settled when they immigrated to Canada from Greece. They had since left this „founding neighbourhood” (Remy, 1998 [1990]) for Montréalers of Greek origin to move to NDG, since they “wanted a change” but still wanted to live fairly centrally. However, Peter is still attached to the neighbourhood where he went to school and where he played hockey as a teenager for the Parc-Extension Youth Organization at the Howie-Morenz skating rink in Parc Howard. He comes back to buy Greek products like pastries, olive oil, cheese and coffee that he can’t find in NDG, to see his aunts and uncles and to socialize in one of the street’s cafés, which is (or rather was until summer 2007) owned by friends of his father (and of his father’s age). A product of Parc-Extension, he still cultivates his local roots.

⁶ Since I am developing his story in some detail, I give him a pseudonym rather than the usual interviewee code.

At the same time, it is partly *because* Peter has local roots that he can be seen as cosmopolitan. He tells me that the café where he hangs out, although Greek in name and ownership, has a mixed clientele who go there to relax and gamble and “add some spice in their life”:

At that café for example, you have various backgrounds, there’s Indian people that go there, and Pakistani, and Italian, and French and Greek, and somehow, so everybody speaks, it’s English is the language that they’re speaking. And of course some speak it better than others, but nevertheless, they’re able to communicate and understand each other. And what’s funny is, the other ethnic backgrounds, they’ll, like if they get angry, they want to swear, they’ll swear another ethnic word, foul word, and vice-versa, you know! *[both laugh]* Yeah...I spot that regularly! *What, so like, someone Indian will use a French swear-word, or even a Greek, or a Greek one, and someone Greek will use I don’t know, a... yeah, yeah, or an Italian swear-word.*

Peter’s favourite café seems to be an example of the interstitial micro-places in which Remy (1998 [1990]) sets great stock as a place for intercultural contact (see Chapter 1) – as exemplified above by the trading of swear-words, although the exchange can also involve more than that!

I go to the café, and we talk about politics, about sports, you know, we think we can solve the world’s problems *[he laughs]*... Over a coffee, and watching the television, you know, like satellite now, we see the news around the world and, we discuss, you know, stuff like, things like that, around the world.

The café seems to foster not only openness to each other (around a shared interest in gambling as leisure) but also to the world: the men (it is an almost exclusively male space) watch satellite TV and “solve the world’s problems”, apparently forging “banal cosmopolitanism” (Szerszynski and Urry, 2002) at two levels, local and global. Indeed, when I was undertaking participant observation, in casual conversation with whoever was present at the site of fieldwork, I often found that participants oriented our talk towards general subjects such as national or international politics, in spite of my efforts to keep it focused on the street. This recalls Simmel’s (1950[1911]) idea of pure sociability as revolving around topics in which the participants do not have a significant personal stake (see Chapter 3). However, Peter’s curiosity about world history and politics seemed to run deeper than generalities. He worked as a painter-decorator, but presented himself as every inch the autodidact and professed an openness that some of his older Greek friends reportedly lacked. He drew on his knowledge, for instance, to dispute his friends’ complaints about „separatist“ francophones:

Do you know the politics of this province, the history of the politics with the French? *[I nod]* Okay so, the politics too have changed, separatists, it’s dying, it’s not as popular as it was back then, and the francophone community had risen to [scream

and shout]... [...] the francophones, because once upon a time they were considered the white niggers of North America. So now, I even argue with the old Greeks you know, when they say, „these fucking French today,“ I remind them, things aren't how it was back in the 70s, when there was Bill 101 and all this separatism happened, things have changed. But they don't want to believe that. Or they don't want to see it. So that's another argument I'll have with them.

What struck me here was that Peter set French “separatism” in context, borrowing Pierre Vallières’ expression to describe French-Canadian Québécois (“white niggers of America” (1994 [1968])⁷) which in effect validates the francophone social movement of the era, while also reasoning that the independence movement is no longer as strong as it was. This is significant because it comes from a member of a social and ethnic group (Greek immigrants) that usually takes the anglophone and pro-Canada side of a very sensitive subject. It is therefore an example of Truc’s (2005) conceptualization of the cosmopolitan as a socially-situated reflexive individual who is capable of transcending some of the boundaries that socialize him. Peter’s personal openness to the Other is also apparent in how he talks about the immigrant experience. Like many other old-timers in the neighbourhood, he told me how “the demographics have changed”, from European (Irish, Italian, Greek) to “a lot of individuals from Africa, Asia, India, Pakistan”:

So they are too, here for the, the American Dream, the Canadian Dream, a better life, you know. I can't blame them, where they come from they're running away from political violence and religious violence, and, so, but you see it, you know, especially because they're visible minorities, so because of that they stand out more, even though we were immigrants, but we blended in, because of the colour of our skin. So they stand out more, you know. But it's nice because I've tried some of their food, you know, I've gone into an Indian bakery and tried some of their goodies and it's nice... yeah. So that's the neat part about it, you try different food, you see the clothing too, the dress. Sometimes I don't understand their religion, when they put you know, the little, [*he makes a dot on his forehead*] Yeah, like the powder on the forehead, yeah, I haven't gotten that yet, and um... but they're nice people, you know.

This passage seems to show the *process* of opening up to the Other: recognizing a similarity (pursuit of the Canadian Dream), acknowledging a difference (the colour of skin), finding a way in (through food) and coming up against a barrier (incomprehension of religious symbols). The subject of skin colour – “we blended in [...] they stand out more” – seems to recognize the different experience of visible minority immigrants rather than establish a hierarchy

⁷ Pierre Vallières (1938-1998) was a journalist and a leading ideologue of the militant Front de libération du Québec. After the FLQ kidnapped and murdered Pierre Laporte in 1970, Vallières renounced the use of violence as a tactic to achieve independence. *Nègres blancs d'Amérique* (Vallières, 1994 [1968]) is his autobiography and political analysis of French Canadians’ situation in Quebec.

between “us” and “them”. As I noted in Chapter 4, the phrase “they’re nice people” is often coupled with a denunciation of some supposedly cultural practice, typically on the theme of aesthetics or dirt and cleanliness. Peter, however, seemed to be more thoughtful not only about the recent immigrants’ supposed „bad behaviour”, but also about his own:

I see sometimes um... there’s still a lot, they’re still adjusting to um, North American life, and the driving, sometimes, even I, I try not be, racist, sometimes I’ll slur.. „fucking Paki you don’t know how to fucking drive,” you know, even though I don’t, I’m not like that, you know, I have a bad day, and uh, I’ll be on my rag and then... So, I guess they’re adapting to the way sometimes we drive, you know? I guess they’re scared of driving slow, or... so that’s one, of the bad points [*about the street*]... ... I have to admit, sometimes uh, the clothing, eh? I too am suspicious when I just see only the eyes, eh? And I guess I blame the media for that, bombarding us, you know, so even though that individual woman is innocent, just because they’re hiding everything but the eyes, I become suspicious.

Peter recognizes that on a “bad day” he can be racist too, but again he brings other factors to bear on the contentious behaviour: different driving habits and media stereotypes.⁸ At another point in the interview, when I asked what he would change about the street, he mused that a local community association would have its uses:

This is like, to a degree, it is like a ghetto. And all ghettos, they’re vulnerable to you know, gambling, alcohol, drugs, domestic abuse. Stuff like that, so, you’ve got a reason, you know. *To kind of like, get together, and combat those things?* Yeah, yeah, cause I’m sure, it doesn’t only happen here, it happens in the suburbia, but definitely, all these people, [...] I’m sure it’s a shock for them to come, and they’re adapting and changing. And the kids they’re born and raised here, like the way I was, I’m sure they’re caught between two cultures, you know, caught between their parents and the Canadian way of life.

Peter’s empathy for the people he sees around him, who come from other cultures and sometimes do things he finds hard to understand, stems from his own experience as a child of immigrants.

I consider myself Canadian. I mean, well, my parents are from Greece, you know, so I was born here... I can’t read in Greek, I’m not that good at it, or writing it. And yeah, I’d consider myself pretty Canadian, I have multiple identities, you know.

He told me about the “cultural confusion” that he grew up with, feeling peer pressure on the one hand and sensing his parents’ fears for their children in an unfamiliar country on the other. He also thought things would be easier for the next generation, his nieces and nephews.

⁸ The interview took place during the media-fuelled escalation of the „reasonable accommodation” controversy, which I discuss at the end of Chapter 1.

I have delved into Peter's interview at length because it demonstrates the existence of the „street-level cosmopolitan“. He is neither a world traveller nor a member of the elite, but a working-class⁹ Montréaler whose discourse nonetheless reflects a “willingness to engage with the Other” (as Hannerz puts it). As he returns to old haunts on de Liège like the café, the stores and the park where he used to skate, he shows himself to be simultaneously attached to his former neighbourhood and open to the culturally different Others who now inhabit it. Indeed, in part, his openness can be explained by his „rootedness“, since he recognizes his own experience in theirs while also being able to imagine the differences. In that sense, he is cosmopolitan *because* he is local.

7.2 The figures of the cosmopolitan... and the parochial

Peter acknowledges that sometimes, in spite of himself, he too can be closed to cultural Others: “I try not be, racist, sometimes I'll slur”. This illustrates the point that cosmopolitanism is not something that can be learnt and acquired for good, a kind of certificate of openness, but is instead emergent, a constant work-in-progress. This is not yet recognized by much of the literature on cosmopolitanism, even when it is supposedly anchored in a concrete empirical setting. In his review of the book *Cosmopolitan Urbanism* (Binnie et al., 2006a), urban planning scholar Bob Beauregard points out that almost all the cases of actually-existing cosmopolitanism studied “fall short of the author's ideal” (2007: 691):

Lurking beneath the surface of this collection is an insensitivity to the ambiguity and contradictions that characterise contemporary life. An untarnished cosmopolitanism, one that enjoys widespread scholarly support, can be theorised but it can never exist in practice. Not to acknowledge this leaves us no closer to understanding how people actually live with „others“. (ibid.: 629-693)

Cosmopolitanism as it actually exists is „tarnished“: it is imperfect, ambiguous and above all emergent, a product of social interactions between ordinary, flawed human beings who sometimes manage to „be cosmopolitan“ and sometimes do not. Therefore, “[c]osmopolitanism is a quality of a social encounter and not of an individual or a group” (ibid.: 692). Strictly speaking, „cosmopolitans“ as people do not exist any more than do „locals“; instead, there are people who engage in encounters that may or may not turn out to be cosmopolitan. But conversely, these encounters are always enacted by people, whose previous experiences, social positions and overall attitudes will influence the form of the encounter – and who will carry its outcome into

⁹ I do not know if Peter would have called himself working-class, but I would categorize his occupation as such.

future encounters. Thus, the only way one can analyze cosmopolitan encounters is by setting them within the broader context of people's life experiences. Observing isolated encounters in an ethological or behavioural fashion doesn't tell us enough about engaging, and especially about being willing to engage, with the Other. Providing that one does not expect to find the perfect incarnation of cosmopolitanism, it is reasonable to try to identify types of individuals whose experiences, outlook and interactions mean that they typify certain kinds of cosmopolitanism.

Peter is thus one of several possible „figures“ of the cosmopolitan.¹⁰ In empirical research, social scientists use „figures“ to characterize the kinds of research participants that emerge from data analysis: in qualitative research, they may sort participants into types based on what they say about certain themes, then compare each type's views on other themes to see whether the types still hold.¹¹ For example, Rose (2004) identifies four figures among gentrifiers in Montréal with regard to their views on local social diversity: the „ignorant/indifferents“, the „Nimbies“, the „tolerants“ and the „egalitarians“. Both Merton's (1957) and Hannerz's (1990) influential essays on cosmopolitanism are based on the sociological figures of the cosmopolitan and the local. Four distinct cosmopolitan figures emerge from my fieldwork: the „open-minded inhabitant“, the „host“, the „connoisseur“ and the „broker“. Each is cosmopolitan in a different way, since they occupy different starting positions, have a different disposition and engage in different processes in the way they „do“ cosmopolitanism. In addition, three figures of the parochial can be identified from my study.¹²

7.2.1 The open-minded inhabitant

The figure of the „open-minded inhabitant“ of the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street is exemplified by Peter, whom we met above. The open-minded inhabitant's position in the multiethnic street is that of someone who is rooted in his own culture, but surrounded by and attentive to other cultures; he *inhabits* the street as a *multiethnic* place. His cosmopolitanism

¹⁰ A sociological figure is a kind of typical person or character, an anthropomorphic variation on the more common concept of the ideal-type. Its use can be traced back to Simmel, Weber and the Chicago School, and it reminds us that societies do not only create social positions or social groups, but also “psychological personalities (the joyous extravert), moral figures (the swindler) and relational figures (the stranger)” (Bourdieu, 2005: 21, my translation).

¹¹ Quantitative data analysis can also result in the identification of „figures“ where highly significant correlations are found between certain variables.

¹² For simplicity's sake, I use just one gender to write about each figure, but they are not necessarily gendered; all could be either a man or a woman.

involves opening up to and learning about the Other, transcending the boundaries that socialize him (to use Truc's terminology) in a way that has the potential to transform the Self. It is a kind of long-term, low-intensity apprenticeship of other cultures, with the teachers being neighbours and familiar strangers in the neighbourhood. The open-minded inhabitant's disposition incorporates curiosity, empathy and, crucially, reflexivity, which allows him to relativize and make links between aspects of the cultures he engages with (his own and others'). Several other interviewees besides Peter, workers and residents would fit this figure. One of the older Italian immigrants I met on Jean-Talon Est, for instance, saw the commonalities among the ethnically diverse people of the area:

It's a seriously cosmopolitan street, to the maximum. And... there are all kinds of people. All kinds of races. All kinds of religions. And the people, most of them are... workers, they work pretty hard to get on in life and get a better position later on. Like when the Italians arrived in the '50s, '60s, they stayed here and then they bought all the houses and then they sold up and moved to Laval [*suburb north of Montréal*], or to other places.... Because in life, it's normal everywhere, look at the Jews, they started on [boulevard] St-Laurent, then they were in Décarie [west end of the city], in [inaudible]. Everyone is looking for monetary and material progression, comfort, comfortably. More comfortable, more space. That's how it is. (JTEb2, T)

I also think of the French-Canadian artist I interviewed on St-Viateur as an open-minded inhabitant. She liked the diversity of people in Montréal and in Mile End in particular, which she saw as relatively free of tensions. She reflected on what it might mean for young people growing up in the mix of cultures:

I think you can wish for things if you know about them. If you don't know them, they stay vague, too vague to dream of [*sound trails off*]. If you have a certain openness there are lots of possibilities. There are lots of ways of living your life, and each one is accepted. I think it's because of this mix of cultures that grow up together. I used to watch the Montréal school groups on the boats [*working as a guide on tourist cruises of the old port*]. It's crazy how many second generation kids there are who go to school together, a whole range of different ethnic backgrounds. At home they are... they are maybe more anchored in their culture... but when they go to school they are in a big pot of all sorts of cultures, and I'm sure there are certain cliques, but at the same time the cliques can mix. I wonder what it will be like when those kids grow up. (StVu3, T)

It was while working on the tourist cruises that she saw another side of the Hasidic Jews; she found them to be as curious and friendly as any other group, outside of the neighbourhood. Thus, open-minded inhabitants learn from and empathize with the Others with whom they share the urban space of their everyday lives.

7.2.2 The host

Another figure I discern from fieldwork material is that of the „host“ or the welcomer – actually, most often the hostess or welcoming woman – who opens herself to Others by offering them hospitality and making room for them in her own social space. Her starting point for being cosmopolitan is that, whether an immigrant or not, she has created a home on the multiethnic street, whether a physical site such as a store or residence, or more of a social network. The atmosphere of this „home“ is strongly shaped by her own culture, but is receptive to others, and can give them shelter. The host actively makes connections between people from different cultural backgrounds, getting involved in their narratives and networks and ferrying „information“ (tales, resources) across those connections. These hosts resemble the “transversal enablers” identified by Wise, “individuals who typically go out of their way to create connections between culturally different residents in their local area, workplace or other such micro-public” (Wise, 2009: 24.). Their disposition is benevolent and welcoming, their social space a kind of haven for those who enter into it. The figure of the host is no stranger to theories of cosmopolitanism, since the duty of hospitality is one of the foundations of the political variety (Derrida, 1997; Dikeç, 2002).

People who fit the figure of the host include the founder member of the Mile End Citizens’ Committee who had organized the St-Jean-Baptiste celebrations for so many years (see Chapter 6), and also the sports store owner on Sherbrooke Ouest who held Friday night socials for long-distance runners (see Chapter 4). The person I met who best incarnates the cosmopolitan host is Lila, in whose clothing boutique¹³ I passed many hours, watching, listening and joining in conversations as she welcomed friends, regulars, „familiar strangers“ and strangers into the store, to warm up from the cold or rest from the heat, to use the phone or the bathroom, or to leave a heavy bag while they went on other errands (see Chapter 4). She has been working there for 25 years and is one of the street’s “characters” (Jacobs, 1961), a benevolent and maternal figure who could tell me the stories of many customers’ lives: the ages of their children, the failings or strengths of their husbands, the ups and downs of their careers, the places they come from and move to. Her warmth makes her store a kind of haven from the rigours of metropolitan life (not to mention the widespread indifference of chain store sales assistants). She gives advice to all, and credit to the trustworthy. One Saturday afternoon, a middle-aged Latina customer did not quite have enough money for a new blouse and said she would come back for it on Sunday afternoon, but Lila insisted she take it with her that day and

¹³ I do not disclose the street here in order to preserve anonymity.

just come back to pay the next: “I know you want to wear it to church tomorrow morning.” Although she is sensitive to the ways they live, Lila and her „home“ are nonetheless not transformed by the guests she receives; she stays steady, reliably „there“.

7.2.3 The connoisseur

I also posit the figure of the cosmopolitan „connoisseur“, whose openness to Others is based on exploration or discovery of their „cultural“ products – their food or music, perhaps literature or clothes or customs (see section 5.3). This is someone who starts from a position of liberty to roam the city; she is not attached to one multiethnic commercial street in particular. Her engagement with the Other is mediated by the Other’s „things“, products or discrete items of knowledge; she shares her own things rarely (but then, she carries few of them with her). As a visitor to rather than inhabitant of the street,¹⁴ the connoisseur’s cosmopolitanism is bounded, or episodic. In this, it resembles Simmel’s (1997b) concept of the adventure, which is special because it takes place in its own bubble, as it were, distinct from the run-of-the-mill flow of life. However, the similarity should not be pushed too far, since intercultural connoisseurship is increasingly a part of everyday life in the “hypermarket of lifestyles” that is the metropolis (Ascher, 1995). For the cosmopolitan connoisseur, “[t]he „Other“ is the bearer of diverse use-values among which [she] may pick and choose, since they are not of the order of necessity” (Bourdin, 2005: 207, my translation). The connoisseur is thus transformed to some degree by her cosmopolitanism, since she uses it to construct her Self – or at least her lifestyle.

This cosmopolitan figure emerges less strongly in my work than in others’ research (e.g. Binnie and Skeggs, 2004; Germann Molz, 2007; Hage, 1997; Tanaka, 2008), mainly because the interviews I conducted with residents of or visitors to the streets (as opposed to workers) focused less on practices of consumption *per se* than on broader uses of the space. However, the figure of the connoisseur fit one person I interviewed like a glove. Florence, an Anglo-Canadian writer-translator in her early 30s whom I interviewed in a restaurant on St-Viateur, had first come to Montréal from Toronto in 1992 to study at university. Back then, she said, “the greatest lure of the city was discovering streets on my own and at the time with my boyfriend, and that’s what we had fun doing.” She remembered “discovering” the Café Olimpico with her boyfriend, one “cold cold winter day with bright bright bright sun”. This was a good five to ten

¹⁴ In principle, a worker on a street could be a connoisseur, but in practice the workers whom I interviewed had little time to engage with other cultures through consumption – on their own street at least. They may switch to connoisseur mode elsewhere in the city.

years before the critical infrastructure started drawing citywide attention to the street (see Chapter 6):

There were no young faces or thirty-something year-old bohemians hanging out there. And we felt we were being so rebellious by bringing a slice of pizza from the bakery, into there, and very quickly we caught on that it's nothing, you're allowed to do that, we weren't breaking any kind of laws. But I wanna believe that I was still part of something that was just about to start.

She recalled pushing open the door into a strange and unwelcoming atmosphere:

What a thrill to walk into that place, and it was at a time when it was still governed by old men. So, to be a youngster of 19 or 20 walking with her boyfriend into that place, we felt like foreigners, we felt like intruders, we felt like those old men were spitting on the young blood walking into that, that place. But that was part of the high of discovering these places. [...] I think the lure for me is discovery. Once something has been discovered, I disappear and I'm not that interested.

Although St-Viateur has long since been discovered, and she is no longer a "youngster" with so much time on her hands, Florence still roams over uncharted territory when she can. One of her recent adventures had even taken her to rue de Liège:

I had walked by it, just by walking around the Parc-Extension, but never really paid attention to the street. I just rediscovered it recently when I had the excuse to discover the Syrian bakery, the patisserie. And I was so happy to discover it because I had convinced myself that I had done my rounds of Montréal in discovering things. But that's never the case, there's always something new.

Florence does not share much of herself in return as she explores. After the discovery, she "disappears" to seek the next "thrill". In this sense, the cosmopolitanism of the connoisseur is certainly of the commodified variety, but I do not think that this commodification entirely excludes the possibility for contact that *produces* openness rather than merely *consuming* otherness. Florence's explorations may well be brief and serve to excite her taste-buds rather than challenge her cultural assumptions, but they nevertheless give her a sense of the lives she flits through as she constructs her lifestyle. I asked her whether she had seen the rest of de Liège, besides the pastry-shop and Armenian pizza place. Qualifying her impression by saying that she had seen it on a beautiful day, rather than, say, late at night with garbage blowing round, she said she felt that:

it had a very idyllic sense to it. Idyllic is probably not the right word, but, community, quiet, orderly, and yet vibrant and alive and, and roots that had implanted themselves. So, I don't know if vibrant's the right word, but just, roots. Uh, and that it was a small street still. That people were making their businesses work on that street, and people were coming to them.

This is an impressionistic appraisal, but it rings true to my more in-depth fieldwork, particularly with respect to the matters of putting down roots and making businesses work. In that sense,

even the cosmopolitanism of the connoisseur can put her in touch with the multiethnic city. Casual contact with the „Other“ in spaces of consumption can potentially contribute to some level of awareness of ethnic and cultural diversity, or a more thorough exchange over time.

7.2.4 The broker

The cosmopolitan figure that stands out most strongly in my research is in fact the „intercultural broker“, whose openness to the Other comes from his position as an intermediary, facilitating exchanges between people from different cultures, including his own. I like the term „broker“ because it evokes negotiation, exchange and transaction – activities to which there are (at least) two sides.¹⁵ The broker’s cosmopolitanism consists in facilitating exchanges of cultural products – material and/or symbolic, from their own or other cultures – between people from different backgrounds. This involves not only knowing and performing his own culture, but also knowing that of his interlocutors, especially their tastes and lifestyles, in order for the transaction to „take“ or operate successfully. Most of the brokers I met were immigrant merchants who ran the type of business that has been labelled „ethnic“ but is more likely interethnic, selling products and services – some of which are ethnically marked – to a diverse clientele.¹⁶ Simmel sees commerce as one of the characteristics of the stranger: “Throughout the history of economics the stranger everywhere appears as the trader, or the trader as stranger” (Simmel, 1950 [1908]: 403), and recent work by anthropologists Pécoud (2002, 2004a) and Notar (2008) has analyzed merchants as cosmopolitan figures, in the case of German-Turkish entrepreneurs in Berlin and Chinese entrepreneurs catering to tourists in southwest China, respectively. However, not all immigrant merchants I met were intercultural brokers; some fit one of the other figures better.¹⁷ Conversely, not all brokers are necessarily either merchants or immigrants: one can imagine a Montréal-born resident of a street facilitating exchanges of the same kind, but in a social, political or community sphere rather than a commercial context. As another example, the anthropological figure of the „key informant“ could be seen as a cosmopolitan broker.

¹⁵ The French equivalent might be *passieur*, although this has connotations of clandestine or illicit activity (smuggling) which do not seem apposite here, although they deserve further thought (is there something „underground“ about intercultural exchange at street-level?).

¹⁶ This spotlight on the immigrant merchant is largely a result of choices I made during fieldwork. Had I conducted a greater number of in-depth interviews with non-working „users“ of the street, the strength of each figure would have been projected in different proportions, as it were.

¹⁷ A young recently immigrated Vietnamese chef whom I interviewed on Jean-Talon Est fit the figure of the individualist (see below), since his concerns revolved around the family business and the Vietnamese community, while a cashier on de Liège fit the figure of broker although she herself was born in Canada to immigrant parents. Lila, whom we met above, is an immigrant merchant who is not a broker but a host.

The broker is characterized by curiosity, a personal appetite for intercultural exchange, as well as a kind of „objectivity“ towards the cultures he deals in. The objectivity is two-fold: firstly, he is able to see the „objective“ value of the cultural products exchanged (if a merchant, he has to put a price on them); secondly, as a go-between, he is in a position of objectivity similar to that of Simmel’s figures of the stranger (see above) and the impartial third party (1950: 145-153).

Objectivity is by no means non-participation (which is altogether outside both subjective and objective interaction), but a positive and specific kind of participation. [...] Objectivity may also be defined as a kind of freedom: the objective individual is bound by no commitments which could prejudice his perception, understanding, and evaluation of the given [...] which allows the stranger to experience and treat even his close relationships as though from a bird’s-eye view. (Simmel, 1950 [1908]: 405)

I will give an extended illustration of the figure of the broker shortly, but first a little more on the differences between these cosmopolitan figures of the open-minded inhabitant, the host, the connoisseur and the broker. They differ in the ways in which they „engage with the Other“, as well as in their orientation towards their own and others’ cultures. The host, in opening up to Others by offering them hospitality, changes less in herself; her cosmopolitanism is oriented outwards rather than inwards, as it were. In contrast, the open-minded inhabitant may be less active in his cosmopolitanism, but more transformed by it: his openness leads to observation, reflection and potential modification of his own ways of thinking or doing things. The connoisseur, as a kind of roving cosmopolitan, is less attached to the cultures she comes to know or dabble in, and also mobilizes her own culture much less in the process. Meanwhile, the broker’s cosmopolitanism is definitely bidirectional: he simultaneously adapts to and produces otherness (as we shall see in more detail). I have schematically represented these positions in Figure 7.1.

7.2.5 Figures of the parochial: the individualist, the insular, the indifferent

There are also figures of the multiethnic commercial neighbourhood street who are decidedly *not* cosmopolitan, but parochial: the individualist, the insular and the indifferent. The first two emerged quite strongly in my fieldwork, while the latter is more of a hypothetical case.

The individualist is someone too busily focused on his own affairs to engage much with Others, whether or not he is in regular contact with them. Self-absorbed or preoccupied, he may have too little time to engage with the „Other“ and/or no real need to do so. The individualist’s relationship to his own culture is not a distinguishing feature of this figure; it may be an important part of his life, or he may be oriented towards other spheres of life. In a sense, he is the opposite

number of both the broker and the host. Several workers, especially business owners, whom I met could be classed as individualists. They were busily focused on their own business and showed little interest in people from other cultural backgrounds, even if they were selling ethnically marked goods or services. In the latter case, they were more parochial than cosmopolitan because they relied less on the interactions of „rolling sociability“ (see Chapter 4) than on business strategies to make their businesses work, especially if the business occupied a fairly stable and successful market niche. (That said, even when “business is business”, the relationship to their diverse clientele and environment is to some extent part of their economic strategy (Pécoud, 2004a: 12).)

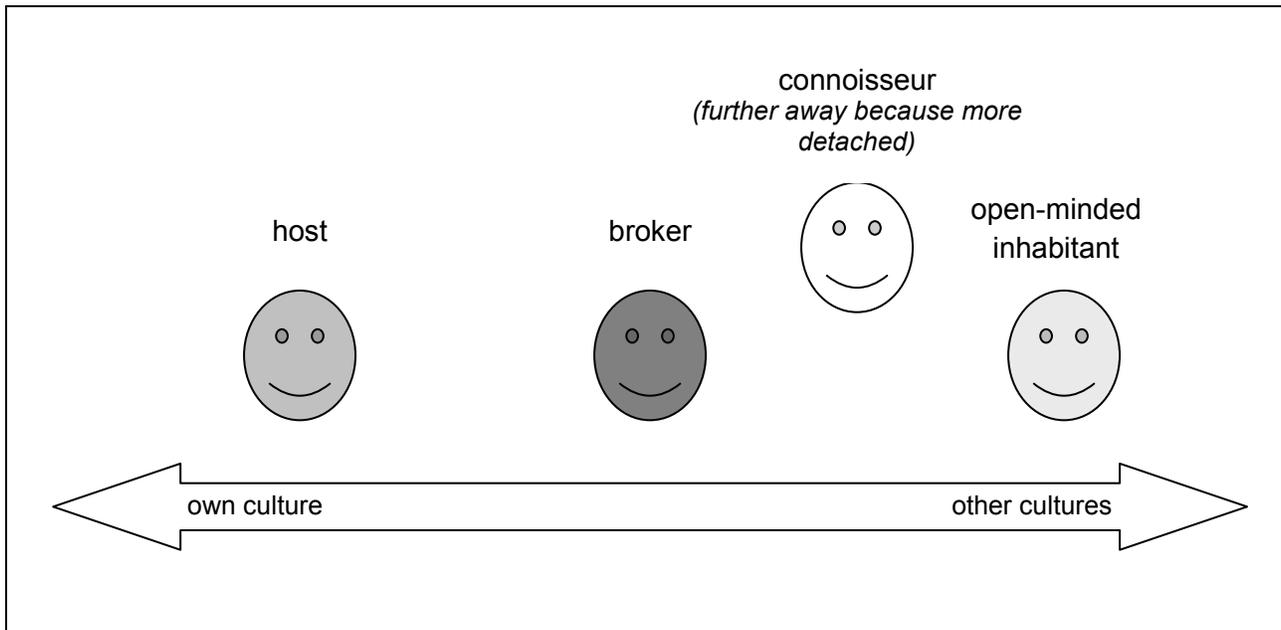


Figure 7.1 Cosmopolitan figures in relation to their own and other cultures

Another parochial figure on the multiethnic commercial neighbourhood street is that of the „insular“ inhabitant, who is closed or hostile to the „Other“. I choose the word „insular“ because it implies narrow-mindedness, and is therefore the opposite of the open-minded inhabitant, and also because it evokes a certain protectionism that does not necessarily entail physical distance from the Other (in spite of its first meaning related to islands).¹⁸ Thus, even if she is surrounded by people from other backgrounds, the insular does not wish to engage with

¹⁸ Insular: “1 of or like an island. b separated or remote, like an island. c inhabiting or situated on an island. 2 ignorant of or indifferent to cultures, peoples, etc., outside one’s own experience; narrow-minded” (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2004).

them; she shuts herself off from them, as if she were on an island. Indeed, she may perceive her own ethnic group as forming an island in a sea of strangers. The insular inhabitant can be any type of user of a street, business owner, employee, resident or visitor. Interviewees whose discourses led me to imagine this parochial figure include the old Islamophobe Italian on Jean-Talon, and the two young workers of Greek origin on de Liège (see section 5.4). The insularity of the latter two is apparent in their conversation about local festivals:

9a: The Greek ones are down that way, on St-Roch.

9b: Although sometimes they look Indian too, there are more Indians than Greeks there!

9a: But at the Indian festivals, you won't see one Greek. I mean, when I see an Indian at a Greek festival, I'm happy that he likes my culture and that he's interested in my culture, but I'm going there for my own culture, not to see him there.

9b: We're not going to tell them not to come, they can come, but really we're there to be with our own people. (deLbw9a, 9b, from notes)

These interviewees are not interested in engaging with the ethnic Others around them, and would rather the latter left them alone too. Both lived in Parc-Extension, and the young man expressed his desire to leave the neighbourhood. When I asked him what he would do to make it better, he said "Kick all the Pakis out". An example more insular or parochial is hard to find.

These two types, the individualist and the insular, do not necessarily exhaust the possibilities for parochial figures in multiethnic neighbourhood streets, but no others emerge from my fieldwork. Another could be hypothesized: a figure who is indifferent or uninterested: not particularly open or closed to other cultures, but disengaged from them; not recognizing difference but looking straight past it (Tonkiss, 2003). Her *unwillingness* to engage with the Other comes from detachment and lack of interest rather than hostility. She could also be seen as the opposite number to the connoisseur, since rather than being thrilled by discovering difference, she is uninterested, perhaps even bored by it. In this sense, she is rather like the figure of the urban blasé who makes regular appearances in Simmel's sociology. However, this is a hypothetical figure rather than one constructed from empirical material.¹⁹

These figures, if they fit, are not intended to be immutable. Cosmopolitanism, as Beauregard points out (2007), is a process, and the ways in which someone engages with the Other could change over time. A connoisseur could get bored and become indifferent. An open-minded inhabitant could go back to his roots and become more of a host, or a host could start exploring rather than receiving and become an open-minded inhabitant, or a connoisseur. An

¹⁹ There are precedents: Rose (2004) identified the „ignorant/indifferent“ as one of four figures in her research on gentrifiers' viewpoints to social class diversity in their neighbourhoods.

open-minded inhabitant could for some reason become insular. An insular might make a friend who turned her into a connoisseur. A merchant who is a broker could perhaps turn into a host: once he is fortunate enough to stabilize his business and customer base, he would perhaps need to adapt less and could therefore „welcome“ more. (I interviewed some second-generation Italian merchants who fit the „host“ figure, having taken over their parents“ businesses; perhaps their parents had more resembled brokers.) Although some changes might be more likely than others, any transmutation from one cosmopolitan or parochial figure to another is possible, given the incredible variety of interactions and experiences on offer in the multiethnic commercial neighbourhood street.

7.2.6 Portrait of an intercultural broker

Since the broker is the cosmopolitan figure who emerges most strongly from my analysis, I now illustrate it in more detail. I draw on my long interview with „Khaled“, a grocer on Jean-Talon Est, originally from Morocco, who exemplifies this kind of cosmopolitan.

What makes the broker cosmopolitan? Firstly, he is structurally positioned to be open to „the Other“, as a go-between who must deal with people from at least two if not many different cultural worlds. In Khaled’s case, he is an intercultural merchant who procures or produces culturally marked goods and services to sell them to a generally diverse clientele. Like Simmel’s figure of the stranger, he is at once part of and not part of the group(s) he does business with. He puts his position as go-between to good use, in order to turn a profit. In theory, an intercultural merchant would draw on knowledge of two cultures even if he was only selling to fellow immigrants, in that he would still have to know about the „host“ culture to some degree (in order to deal with suppliers, or obtain a business permit). But we can suppose that openness to the Other increases as the clientele diversifies, as is usually the case in the multiethnic streets I studied.

When they originally set up shop, Khaled, who is from Morocco, and his Tunisian business partner thought they were opening a halal butcher’s for the local Maghrebi community (see Chapter 4). This in itself required some intercultural skills, in terms of negotiating with the Italian landlords, who were also the previous occupants of the business premises (formerly a clothing and linen store), and the City bureaucrats (most of whom are Franco-Québécois) to obtain the right permits. Then, to their astonishment, the first customers turned out to be the curious Québécois:

After that it was the Italians. I’m not Italian, but because I offer products from Italy and all, they appreciate it, they like that, they bought them. But after that came the

Arabs, like that, and the others.²⁰ So really we opened it to serve the Muslim community because they're the ones who'd be interested in halal meat, but in the end it wasn't that, it was really something else. (T)

For someone who knows the street, it is not that surprising that all kinds of people came to the store as soon as it opened, since it was located right by a metro station in a sector that was sorely lacking in general grocery provision. As a consequence, Khaled changed the whole mission of the store, since he is convinced that the only way a small business can survive is to listen to the customers. "Really, the customers orient you... Yes, that's business, really, if you want to make your business a success, you have to listen to your clientele" (T). Thus, the broker is structurally positioned to be open to others, not only because his cultural origins may be different from those of the people with whom he negotiates, but also because a small business depends heavily on communication with customers, not just on attention to figures, inventories and the bottom line.

Quite aside from this structural positioning, however, the figure of the broker also undertakes to do the „work“ of opening up to the Other. As Pécoud writes, such entrepreneurs must acquire:

[the] ability to use in-group resources while simultaneously achieving a distance towards [sic] their group, which then enables them to consciously shape the cultural dimension of their business and to target a non-ethnic clientele. As argued, this is both a matter of mental dispositions (one needs to be aware of one's cultural specificity) and of practical skills (one needs the right competencies to handle such situations). (2004a: 13)

At one level, in Khaled's case, this meant „staging“ the cultural products that he knew – halal meat, merguez, brik and other North African specialities – for consumption by others. As Semi (2005) has shown, this takes a good deal of work and resourcefulness, since customers may expect an „exotic experience“ from products that are banal as far as the merchant is concerned, or even unknown (being beyond his own immediate experience). This means that transactions have the potential to be rife with misunderstanding. Khaled grasped that what I called exploration in Chapter 5 was important to the customers:

We changed straight away, because we were surprised that people were really interested in things like that, in products that came from abroad... that they either ate at someone else's house, or had a chance to taste somewhere, now they start to seek it out themselves. (T)

²⁰ He mentions „Latinos“ arriving after the „Arabs“ at another point in the interview (quoted in Chapter 4).

On another level, this meant getting to know the tastes and habits of the non-Maghrebi clientele. For instance, Khaled brought in more fresh fruit and vegetables and got to know which groups liked which kinds. During our interview, a black man with a Haitian accent came in asking if they still had the mangoes that had been on special the previous week. “They’ll be good because they’ll remind you of home,” (T) said Khaled as he rang up the purchase. Khaled also put up a clipboard at the checkout, inviting customers to write down lines of stock they would like the store to carry. “And it was super because we went to get the products we knew the customers had asked for” (T).

Since the business is so small, Khaled takes customer service very seriously. He built a wooden ramp at the request of a customer who used a wheelchair. He explained his ruses for getting customers to talk to him, from moving popular products to different shelves to putting up photos of old Montréal and old Tunis. Khaled is nothing if not resourceful – *débrouillard* in French. But beyond getting to know their culinary tastes or grocery needs, he also got to know and accept their ways of life. Some of the older customers would come in several times a day, ostensibly so they wouldn’t have to carry everything at once, but really so they could also pass the time of day with him, spreading out their purchases and their social exchanges. After a Franco-Québécois had come in to buy a basket of provisions, he told me:

That one’s a gay, he lives with another man and comes to shop here with no problem. Really, it’s normal. I don’t see any difference, he likes the store here, they’re normal, it’s not like we’ll look at him or I don’t know – really there’s nothing different. They’re normal, they come here, they talk and everything, they’re happy. It’s like that, respect for everyone. That’s the best way. (T)

Khaled’s insistence on how normal his gay customers are might be a sign of his own discomfort with the idea, or perhaps of his desire to prove his openness to me. But it does also seem to signal his willingness to engage with the Other. Indeed, Khaled came to see his store as a place where many different people could engage with each other. He said that customers asked questions about his background, his culture and the hijab, which his business partner’s wife, who worked part-time in the store, wore:

Because on the television they speak badly of Muslims and everything, it has happened that people ask me here, how about the hijab, this kind of thing. Yes, information, they even want to talk with the women [*wearing hijab*], like that, because perhaps it’s the chance they get, perhaps in the street they can’t talk to each other, but here, they can, it’s possible, yes. To talk, ask why do you do this, why do you do that, to have first-hand explanations. (T)

Khaled’s almost missionary vision of his store as a space for intercultural relations may seem idealistic, but it was echoed enthusiastically by another interviewee, a white Franco-

Québécoise woman in her 40s. She loved the store, trying “everything”, buying halal meat and “marvellous merguez”, taking products to share with her coworkers at the office. She cited the store as an example of the street’s cosmopolitan solidarity, its “clash of cultures but with respect for difference” (JTEb4). This is a clear example of the connection between commodified and personal cosmopolitanism. Of course, as Amin (2002) points out, the problem with relying on „optional“ public spaces such as multiethnic commercial streets to habituate people to intercultural differences is that not everybody frequents them. Khaled reflected on this matter too:

I’m sure that people who come to shop here, they really have – a kind of acceptance. But certainly people who don’t like that will never step inside here, that’s for sure. If they see someone with a hijab they’ll go somewhere else. Yes, well, there are people who really don’t want to understand anything, there are even people who hate immigrants, who don’t like immigrants, but I think it’s just because they don’t have the explanation [...] ...they feel as if they are crushed down among the immigrants. But we always hear that it’s immigrants who make the economy go round, so if you stay on your own like that all the time – but now since there are people who accept to come and live here, it’s a good thing. Of course not everyone is a good person, that’s true, but at least here there’s the law to manage everybody. Yes. And respect, because if they [*i.e. immigrants*] accept to come and live here then it’s certain that they respect people too. (T)

Khaled sees his grocery store as a place of authentic, specific intercultural contact, although he recognizes that not everyone will participate in it. At the same time, he sets the store – established by immigrants who “accept to come and live here” – in the context of universal respect and equality before the law. Khaled thus „brokers“ a link between political and personal cosmopolitanism, perhaps drawing on his qualities of objectivity (see above). Like Peter, Khaled’s own openness to the Other seems to have roots in his own experience – in this case, of mobility. He has lived in France, and acquired a taste for travel, even within his own city:

I picked up the habit of travelling, of seeing other places and everything. Even here I’m in Montréal, I don’t always stay in the same neighbourhood, OK, I go out, to see things that change, [*that way*] you have good memories of each week, that’s what I do, OK. Because when you get stuck in a routine it’s no good. [...] I go to a place where I really feel like I’m living, like there are things I’ve done this week... Imagine, if you always stay in the same neighbourhood, you go up and down, up and down, after a week you ask yourself what have I been doing? Nothing. (T)

Khaled exemplifies the cosmopolitan figure of the intercultural broker, but although I have focused on his particularly rich interview, he was by no means the only such figure I met. There was the Sri Lankan immigrant who had learnt Creole while working in textile factories, before she and her husband bought their grocery store on de Liège, where she was able to develop trust with her elderly Haitian customers. Another woman ran a store on Sherbrooke that sold a

mix of mainstream and Caribbean products. She had immigrated in 1964, and had spent most of her working life in an office for a large company, but since retirement, she had been learning the whole new business of the small grocery store. Like Khaled, she had been surprised that people who were not from the Caribbean wanted to try their speciality food:

Because of the internet today and because people travel more than they did, 30 years ago, people go to different places and they see things or they taste things, and when they come back, even if we don't have it they ask questions about certain products. Or they might not know the name and they describe it to you so you know the name and you show it to them so they are willing to try, certain things. So therefore you have, all kinds of people trying different things, and ah, people are more open. To um, to variety than they did, 30 years ago. Because even the supermarkets now, you can do a very nice mix of a grocery because there's so many things to choose from, you know, and try. So it's, it's a very nice, I enjoy that part of the business, I really really enjoy that. Ah, because you see how people are also grateful, for little things, and you build up a conversation and you get to understand different culture, and they get to understand your culture, and ah, it's it's nice! It's nicer than being, think[ing] „okay, I'm not going to carry it because I don't want to deal with it," you know what I mean? And you realize that people are people! People are just people. (ShOw6)

These brokers are cosmopolitan in several ways. Not only are they resourceful, acquiring and mobilizing knowledge of aspects of other cultures – namely, tastes and habits of food consumption – in order to make their businesses a success, they are also open to learning about the Other for what seem to be less instrumental, more altruistic purposes of intercultural exchange. And this seems often to be fed by a personal appetite for different experiences, for making new discoveries, if they can spare the time. In a sense, the intercultural merchant's cosmopolitanism is almost the reverse of the commodified cosmopolitanism – consuming the Other – that is presented in much of the literature. Whereas this literature highlights members of the dominant majority strategically appropriating ethnic or cultural difference in order to make economic or cultural capital, we have uncovered a different cosmopolitanism: members of minorities adapting to the ethnic differences among clientele, learning from customers in order to serve them better – certainly with a profit-oriented strategy in mind, but not at all in the same power relation. Moreover, although this cosmopolitanism may be based in commercial transactions, it can have the cumulative effect of opening out into the world at large, and even to a humanistic quasi-political cosmopolitanism. As my interviewee quoted above put it, “you realize that people are people! People are just people.”

7.3 Cosmopolitan places

Cosmopolitanism at street-level is thus produced through encounters between people who may or may not develop cosmopolitan outlooks or become cosmopolitan figures. But these encounters are also situated at specific times and in particular places. Having elaborated on the cosmopolitanism incarnated in people, I now turn to whether and how places can be said to be cosmopolitan. Beauregard raises this question too, arguing that no place can be inherently or permanently cosmopolitan:

The assumption is that interaction, the essential element for cosmopolitanism to be activated, occurs only in specific places. Scholars such as Sandercock then argue that this interaction across differences heightens the potential for collective action, thereby merging tolerance and solidarity, an argument on which she bases her love of „mongrel cities.“ Clearly, a socio-spatial dialectic operates such that a place – much less an individual or a group – cannot be intrinsically cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitanisms exist when people use and experience particular types of places. Through their actions, they make the place cosmopolitan. And because this occurs to varying degrees, places are cosmopolitan at different intensities and are unevenly so through time. (2007: 692)

I agree with Beauregard that a place can only be cosmopolitan thanks to the encounters between people that occur there – and therefore temporarily and unevenly so. However, the obvious question that follows is, how does this happen? What are the parameters of this uneven, temporary inscription of cosmopolitanism on places? What kind of cosmopolitanism „sticks“ to places? What role does cosmopolitanism play in a given place? As I mentioned above, Beauregard points out that many scholars interpret the kinds of cosmopolitanism they see in places as flawed, falling short of an ideal. This is largely because, as I noted in Chapter 1, much of the „urban cosmopolitanism“ that they study is strongly associated with place marketing, and therefore with the commodification of difference. Not only markers of ethnic or cultural difference, but also the word „cosmopolitan“ itself help „sell“ places, be they branded condominiums, commercial streets, „villages“ or „quarters“, or whole cities (Binnie and Skeggs, 2004; Young, Diep and Drabble, 2006). However, it is extremely difficult to separate out instrumental from altruistic intentions with regard to social interactions in urban space, as Beauregard would no doubt agree. For example, as I discussed in Chapter 4, the work of „rolling sociability“ that restaurant or café staff perform is both pleasurable and profitable. Similarly, the kind of conversations between customers and storekeepers that I discussed in Chapter 5, about ethnically marked products like cakes made for Ramadan may well be used by customers to perform distinction, to show how knowledgeable they are about „other cultures“ when they share the cakes with friends like themselves (see e.g. Heldke, 2001). But they also contribute to their knowledge of how other kinds of people live in the city, however incomplete, and potentially to

building empathy for them, however partial. Personal cosmopolitanism and commodified cosmopolitanism, as enacted in actual places, are thus intricately interlinked.

How, then, do places become cosmopolitan? The sociologist Elijah Anderson develops the idea of “cosmopolitan canopies” that stretch over particular public spaces in Philadelphia such as Rittenhouse Park, Reading Terminal Market and even hospital waiting rooms:

Essentially, cosmopolitan canopies allow people of different backgrounds the chance to slow down and indulge themselves, observing, pondering, and in effect, doing their own folk ethnography, testing or substantiating stereotypes and prejudices or, rarely, acknowledging something fundamentally new about the other. Those observed may well become representatives of social types in the observers’ minds and can be described afterward outside the setting as “this black guy,” “this Jewish man,” “this WASPy white guy,” “this white dude”; a white person might say, “this black lady,” or a black person might say to other black people, “this sister.” An accretion of such shared observations made under the cosmopolitan canopies of the city becomes part of what people “know” about each other, a way they “make sense” of the more public world. (Anderson, 2004: 25)

Anderson’s premise is that the default setting of interethnic urban interactions is defensive, because people from different backgrounds do not trust each other, which may well hold true for a rather ethnically and racially segregated city such as Philadelphia. The cosmopolitan canopy is therefore a kind of imaginary umbrella that provides people with a haven or respite from intemperate interethnic tensions. The default setting for Montréal, a city in which immigrants and minority ethnic and religious groups are not strongly segregated (Apparicio, Leloup and Rivet, 2007), is certainly quite different, favouring distant but peaceful co-presence (Germain et al., 1995), but the principle of the link between interactions and public space is the same. Just as cosmopolitan encounters can accumulate in an individual, perhaps giving her a cosmopolitan outlook or even turning her into a figure of cosmopolitanism, so can they „accrete” to places, since people will associate cosmopolitan encounters with the places in which they experience them.

I propose that any urban place, at a particular historical moment, has its own unique degree and quality of cosmopolitanism – or parochialism – which is composed of a number of different „layers” or loci of sociospatial relations. Conceiving of layers, rather than a simple canopy, seems necessary in order to take account of different scales of place and different kinds of relations, both practical and discursive. In the case of a commercial neighbourhood street, these would be: the micro-places contained within the place; the codes of sociability in public space as a whole; the perceived population and relations between groups; and the sense of place that is more widely broadcast through the “critical infrastructure” (Zukin, 1991a). The first pair of layers are more concerned with the immediate everyday experience of places (practice);

the second pair with places as represented or imagined (discourse). I have discussed each of these layers at various points in this thesis, but here I want to assemble them in order to discuss the cosmopolitanism of each street, bearing in mind our primary definition of the concept as “a willingness to engage with the Other” (Hannerz, 1990: 239).

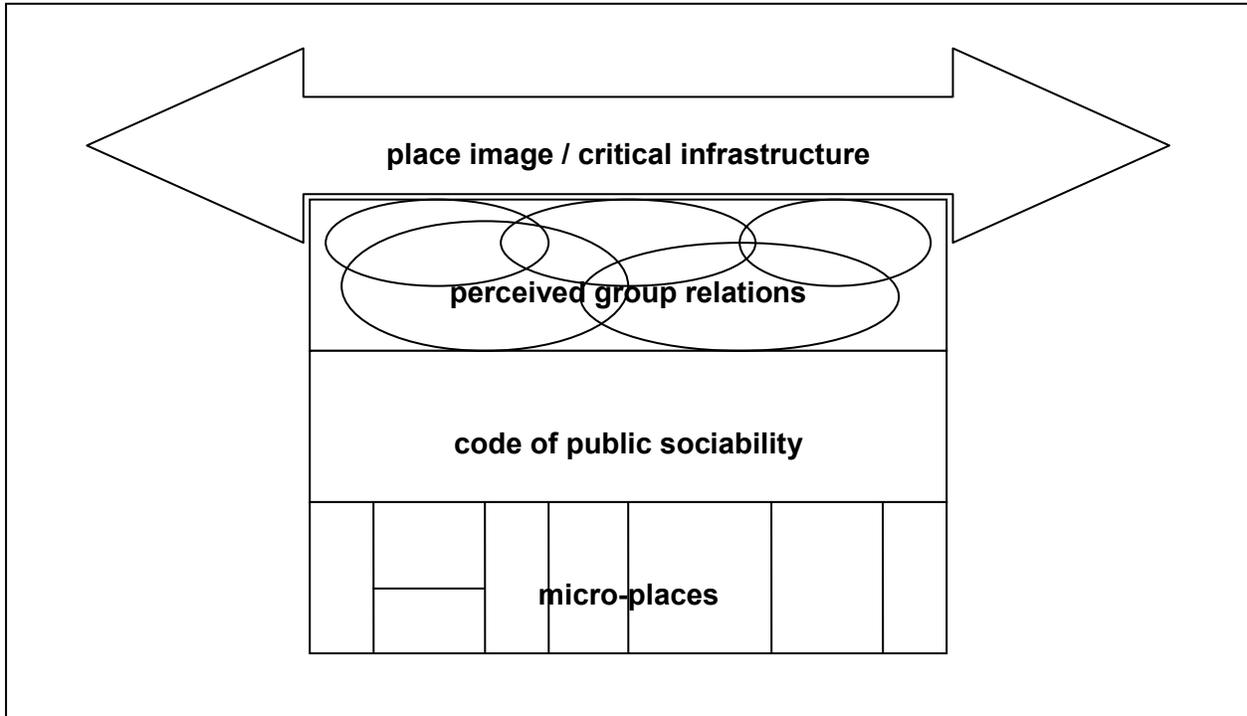
I will begin by explaining the role of each layer in more detail. First, the micro-places of a street include its constituent stores, cafés, restaurants, buildings, green spaces, street furniture and so on (see Chapter 2). They will vary in many ways, but the relevant factors for cosmopolitanism are the extent to which they are marked as „other“, as affiliated to a single or several ethnic or cultural group(s), and the extent to which they are open or accessible to people using the street.²¹ The second layer is in a sense the space that binds the micro-places together. This is the public space of the whole street, conceived as a resource for social interaction, or the codes of sociability that govern the street as a whole. Here, the relevant factors are those of co-presence and exchange: the extent to which different individuals or groups overlap, segregate or interact in their use of space; the ways in which the configuration of public space allows or constrains interactions. Thus, the ways in which two different scales of space, micro-places and public space as a whole, are marked and are used help compose a street’s cosmopolitanism.

The other layers of cosmopolitanism emerge more from discourse than practice (although all layers are shaped by the others). The third layer is made up of how the population of a street is imagined by its users: which groups are (in)visible and whether they are represented positively or negatively, whether they are seen as similar or are „othered“. The fourth layer of cosmopolitanism is the critical infrastructure, the apparatus that serves to produce, consume and evaluate the cultural products that are put on offer in the market of urban symbols (Zukin, 1991a: 201), whether these are tangible, like restaurant meals, or not, like „heritage“. The critical infrastructure feeds into the reputation and readability of a street’s cosmopolitanism. It projects an image of the street – celebration or stigma – beyond its boundaries, potentially opening it up to new users, who might be different from existing ones, while also feeding back an image of the street to its original users, who might in turn embrace or reject it. In these ways, therefore, the layers of micro-places, public space, representations of the social mix and critical infrastructure help compose the cosmopolitanism of a commercial street. It should be noted that planned place making strategies, such as zoning, place-marketing strategies or even housing

²¹ See Chapter 4 for ethnic marking of the streetscape, and Chapter 3 for the accessibility of microplaces.

policy, can have an influence on any of these four layers. Let's now look at each of the four streets in turn, to try to characterize the degree and quality of their cosmopolitanism as places.

Figure 7.2 Components of cosmopolitanism in place – four „layers“



7.3.1 Rue St-Viateur: self-conscious cosmopolitanism

It was suggested in the early 1990s that rue St-Viateur, or more exactly its neighbourhood of Mile End, was perhaps a model of cosmopolitanism, in the sense that its residents and community activists seemed to value Mile End's multiethnicity highly, enjoying the local culture of sociability in stores and streets and sporadic or regular exchange on matters of common interest that "favour[ed] a familiarization with the other, and thus the „domestication“ (*apprivoisement*) of difference" (Rose, 1995: 89).²² Nevertheless, Rose also warned against the idealization of Mile End's multiethnicity, given that rapid deindustrialization and encroaching gentrification might reduce opportunities for interethnic contact and diminish the neighbourhood's cosmopolitan character (*ibid.*: 90).

²² Drawing on Rose's analysis, Germain and I have argued that Mile End was a model of "cosmopolitanism by default", since it was not instated or guided by a formal cosmopolitan project (Germain and Radice, 2006). However, that argument works best if the cosmopolitanism that one has in mind (as we did) is of the political variety, as opposed to the personal, identity or commodified versions.

My own analysis of social relations on St-Viateur, 13 to 14 years later,²³ generally confirms the perspicacity of Rose's conclusion, as can be seen if we look at each layer of cosmopolitanism. The micro-places on St-Viateur – restaurants, cafés and stores – are generally open and accessible to all, notwithstanding the (perhaps bygone) appropriation of one of the cafés by regulars (see Chapter 3) and the frosty reception sometimes given to non-Orthodox customers in the kosher butcher's and fishmonger's. However, they appear to be less ethnically marked than they were, particularly in terms of the presence of people: as one person put it, "we know it's an Italian café here, but it's Italian symbols more than anything else" (StV fieldnotes 2007-06, T). There are also several stores that are ethnically indeterminate but generally „exotic“ and/or cater to a „bohemian“, artistic crowd (for instance, the „Eastern“ style jewellery and accessories shop, the crêpe restaurant, the martial arts centre, the boutique selling local designer fashion). According to my observations, the overall code of sociability in the public space of St-Viateur fosters relatively easy exchanges between strangers, particularly, it seems, between older and younger strangers, since advanced age seems to operate as a license to strike up conversation with anyone. However, it is also easy to identify quite demarcated groups in the street, mainly among the younger and trendier users who already seem to know each other. For instance, one interviewee and her friends call the fenced-off terrasse of one of the cafés the "chicken run" (*le poulailler*), since there are always certain kinds of people there chattering "like hens, and there are always the „cocks“ putting on their show!" (StVu1, T). These meeting-places appear to be cosmopolitan, but if you look at who is meeting, the crowds appear rather homogenous. Hence, although most interviewees said that groups of St-Viateur's users mixed freely with each other, the following „outlier“ opinion – from someone who has seen the street evolve since 1995 – is no less valid an interpretation:

Do people mix or do they keep themselves to themselves? No, they keep themselves to themselves. The Jews stick with each other, the Greeks stick with each other, the Mile-Enders, the young professionals stick with each other, the ones that are from Bernard Street and that, they stick with each other. It's full of kind of categories of people together. (StVf4, T)

There is a fine line between an open street sociability and an exclusive one, if the flâneurs or people „hanging out“ on the street turn inwards towards their own, known groups.

Interviewees' representations of social groups on St-Viateur are somewhat ambiguous with regards to openness to the Other. The most visible groups are artists, various European

²³ Fieldwork for Rose's (1995) study was conducted in 1993; my own work on St-Viateur was mostly carried out in 2006-2007.

ethnic groups such as the Italians and Portuguese, and Hasidic or ultra-Orthodox Jews (see Chapter 5). While my interviewees (who did not include any Hasidic Jews) related easily to the first two social categories, they maintained an often uneasy distance from the third. As for the sense of place, a solid critical infrastructure has promoted St-Viateur far and wide. The street is reputed to be harmoniously multiethnic: newspaper articles, guidebooks, blogs and even academic publications (Olazabal, 2006; Simon, 1999) make much of the eclectic ethnic symbols in the street such as the Italian cafés, the bagel shop, the Hasidic Jews, the Byzantine-style Polish Catholic church and so on (see Chapter 5). The multiethnicity of St-Viateur can thus be easily „read“ by visitors to the street. Reflected back to its inhabitants, the supposed cosmopolitanism of St-Viateur has been made into an explicit virtue, woven into a local narrative, a founding “myth” (Simon, 1995, 1997a) of the area that is recounted by old-timers and newcomers alike. However, as gentrification continues apace, the actual multiethnicity of the local population and the street’s businesses is in decline. Moreover, although the presence of the Hasidic and ultra-Orthodox communities is taken by others to be a sign if not proof of harmonious interethnic relations, they themselves do not quite comply with this scenario, remaining relatively refractory and keeping staunch boundaries between themselves and others. This complicates the street’s cosmopolitanism, which has also been occasionally appropriated by local cultural industries (i.e. Ubisoft, see Chapter 5).

Cosmopolitanism on St-Viateur is therefore somewhat paradoxical. It is „self-conscious“ (and perhaps even a little self-congratulatory?), in that users of the street are aware of and consciously talk about their collective reputation for openness to ethnic and cultural Others. But it functions above all as a shared *image* that guides users’ attention towards certain reassuring dimensions of social relations in the street, while glossing over the unsettling ones. St-Viateur’s cosmopolitanism appears to be more of a discourse than a daily accomplishment.

7.3.2 Rue de Liège: pragmatic cosmopolitanism

In some ways, rue de Liège’s kind of cosmopolitanism is diametrically opposed to St-Viateur’s. Many of the street’s places of business are strongly ethnically marked, often by one predominant affiliation (Greek, Italian, Syrian, Armenian, Punjabi, Sri Lankan, Indian, Bangladeshi, Guyanese, Ghanaian), although sometimes with mixed ones (e.g. the supermarket that is run by a Chinese couple who employ workers of various other origins and sell a wide range of products). Some stores on the street, such as the aforementioned supermarket and one of the butchers, diversify their products to adapt to their multiethnic clientele. As for openness, many of the micro-places are open to all, particularly grocery and retail stores. But some of the micro-places on the street

appear fairly inaccessible to certain kinds of people. As is typical on many streets (not just our four), the clienteles of hair salons are specified by gender and often, though not always, by broad area of origin (European or South Asian). De Liège's cafés are largely the preserve of older Southern European (and sometimes Middle Eastern) men:

it's just unfortunate there's not really anywhere for us to hang out. [...] I have to meet people all the time and they'll be like, where do you want to meet, and I'm like, well... there's the café Vesuvio right across from the Parc metro and that's the only one I can think of, all the other bars are like really intimidating, it's a lot of scary white guys or old Greek guys. (DeLu1, white Anglo-Canadian woman in her 20s)

Certain points in public space are also strongly associated with particular groups, like the South Asian, mostly Sikh men who play cards under one of the trees in the park or the thirty- and forty-something white men who gather on the only restaurant patio. However, more generally, the local codes seem to allow considerable quantities of social interaction in public space, including exchanges from street to balcony, sidewalk to café-terrace, sidewalk to park bench, storefront steps to sidewalk, which may be a function of the density of buildings. Also in the realm of general public sociability, the highly multiethnic makeup of the local population means that people cannot help but share space and interact with the Other, whether that interaction consists of smooth, rolling or spiky sociability.

Interviewees' representations of social groups on de Liège show considerable evidence of „othering“, that is, of categorization of certain groups as „different from us“. More recent arrivals' compartmentalization is usually descriptive, although occasionally judgmental (recall the Bangladeshi Muslim men who complained about rowdiness outside bars, Chapter 6). But long-established residents often set up a hierarchy between their own wave of settlement and the new arrivals who „bring down the tone“ of the street (as in neighbourhoods everywhere, cf. Elias and Scotson, 1965). As for the wider place image, the critical infrastructure of rue de Liège is almost non-existent. This means that visitors are unlikely to be attracted to the street, and even if they are, they have few written references to help them decode its mixture of people and micro-places. As I noted in Chapter 6, rue de Liège in Parc-Extension does not feature on the mental maps of many Montréalers (including even some of those who work for the City).²⁴

²⁴ Two documentary films have been recently made in Parc-Extension: *Un coin du ciel* (Goma, 2007), about the neighbourhood health and social services clinic; and *La classe de Madame Lise* (Groulx, 2005), about a primary school class. Both seem to be directed at explaining unfamiliar circumstances of immigration and multiethnicity to a Franco-Québécois audience, rather than co-producing a representation of the neighbourhood that is shared by its inhabitants.

De Liège therefore has its own sort of paradoxical cosmopolitanism. At first glance, the strong ethnic affiliations of the businesses, as well as the apparent demarcation between the European old-timers and South Asian newcomers, might seem to close off opportunities for contact with the Other. The appropriation of certain places by small groups can also be intimidating. It would probably be seen by outsiders – the few outsiders who visit it – as a multiethnic street, but not necessarily a cosmopolitan one. As Bodaar notes in her study of the Bijlmermeer, a multiethnic, impoverished housing estate in Amsterdam, “within cities it is only certain places that become associated with cosmopolitanism, and these are generally not the spaces of immigrant residence” (Bodaar, 2006: 174). But on closer and longer-term examination, at the level of everyday *public* sociability, rue de Liège is in fact extremely cosmopolitan. The public space of the street and the parks and the routes to the school or the skating arena are shared by people from all kinds of backgrounds, as is the semi-public space of a number of the stores. Cosmopolitanism is a necessary product of the co-presence of members of diverse ethnic groups and the interactions between them. This is not so much in spite as *because* of the cultural differences that people construct between their own and other ethnic groups. If they did not construct each other as „other“, their openness would not be cosmopolitan, since it would be directed towards people who were the „same“.

Rue de Liège is in the heart of an immigrant neighbourhood, and its users have limited economic and linguistic resources at their disposal to oil the wheels of their daily urban lives. And yet one resource they do have is their cosmopolitanism, which enables them to get on with each other and to get on in life. Cosmopolitan encounters on de Liège are not explicitly formulated as such, nor are they (yet) woven into a shared local narrative. The cosmopolitanism of de Liège may not be legible to other city-dwellers, but it is put into practice every day: it is a pragmatic cosmopolitanism.

7.3.3 Rue Jean-Talon Est: a cosmopolitanism of habituation

Jean-Talon Est could be said to have a similar kind of cosmopolitanism as rue de Liège, but it is less intense or striking. There are some micro-places that are strongly ethnically marked but accessible to anyone, and others, marked or not, that are appropriated by particular groups for longer or shorter periods. For example, the bakery that is definitely Maghrebi (as signalled by the posters for Algerian elections, employees’ language of work, Ramadan specialities and so on) is popular among all groups (as the range of customers demonstrates); the ostentatiously „Italian“ grocery store – filmed by a TV crew (see Chapter 5) – appears not to attract many visible minority customers; and the Italian church creates sporadic ethnically-specific appropriations of

space around its entrance. There are also the usual gender- and culture-specific barbershops and hair salons, as well as micro-places such as pharmacies and *depanneurs* that pass as unmarked or mainstream, accessible to all. Perhaps what is distinctive about the stretch of Jean-Talon Est that I studied is its discontinuity: unlike de Liège or St-Viateur, where space is densely occupied, there are patches that are neither ethnically marked, nor particularly closed or open, but simply empty. I am thinking for example of the park that faces the bland façade of the Caisse populaire Desjardins, a credit union that is distinctively Québécois but so omnipresent as to serve everyone (in francophone areas of the city, at least). Jean-Talon Est has an image as an ordinary street for ordinary people, in part because of its status as a main thoroughfare. This certainly affects overall public sociability, which seems more detached and less engaging than on the other three streets. While nothing prohibits more involved interactions (and they are easily sparked off, by World Cup matches or car accidents for example), the general rule of public sociability, as people go about their daily business on Jean-Talon, seems to be that of civil inattention.

Ethnic boundaries feature fairly prominently in interviewees' representations of social groups on Jean-Talon, although some groups like the „Arabs“/ „Lebanese“ (i.e. North Africans) are misrepresented and others are simply invisible (see Chapter 5). Openness to the Other within these discourses varies considerably from person to person. Some evoke almost impenetrable barriers between certain groups: in particular, some people of Catholic background see a barrier of religion around the Muslim Maghrebi inhabitants. Others tell of opportunities for intercultural contact and exchange, especially within certain micro-places that are locally known to be mixed, like Khaled's store. Meanwhile, the critical infrastructure of Jean-Talon Est is largely absent; no special stories are told about it, although certain businesses or products – especially the ones associated with Italian cuisine – are featured from time to time.²⁵

Overall, the openness to the Other to be found on Jean-Talon Est feels somewhat incomplete. The street is not a particularly attractive place to socialize, and taken together its stores and businesses do not offer an exciting range of goods or an animated atmosphere. The

²⁵ I was surprised to recognize some Jean-Talon Est stores featured in a recent weekly column by a journalist from Newfoundland who is spending a year in Montréal (Winter, 2009). However, since the column did not mention the street by name and is only published in the St John's Telegram, it will hardly make visitors flock to the street! Interestingly, one of the points Winter makes is that in these stores, where she does her everyday shopping, the people behind the counter always understand her inexpert French, “unlike the fashionable baristas of Rue Mont Royal. [...] Even on a bad day, when I feel stupid and incoherent, everyone here can understand me, and being understood in this way feels like a kind of home.”

cosmopolitan encounters that take place are therefore tucked into the folds of the quotidian routines of picking up a few groceries, getting a haircut, stopping for a coffee or walking to the metro station. But one could argue that this near invisibility of cosmopolitan encounters gives them greater potential. If one goes out for a Senegalese meal on rue St-Viateur, one expects to also see Italian senior citizens arguing over their card games and Hasidic Jews hurrying to synagogue, yet this expectation turns the street's cosmopolitanism into a spectacle – finite and easy to leave. In contrast, if the only decent place to pick up groceries is run by a Moroccan who is keen to know what stock to carry, there is a chance for more regular and interactive contact.²⁶ In that sense, if the cosmopolitanism of Jean-Talon seems incomplete, it is because it is a work in progress, a matter of getting to know each other.

Moreover, it should be noted that the more prominent ethnic groups on Jean-Talon Est include those from the Maghreb, who together constitute a visible minority, as well as being Arabic-speakers, relatively recent immigrants and mostly Muslims. In the light of world geopolitics since the end of the Cold War, and especially since September 11, 2001, this group currently bears the brunt of misunderstandings and anxieties that periodically arise over immigration and integration in Quebec, as well as racialized discrimination (Lenoir-Achdjian et al., 2009). The cosmopolitan encounters that occur between members of this group and Others are therefore watched and remarked upon by all; their significance is heightened, even when they are in content unremarkable.

For these reasons, cosmopolitanism on Jean-Talon Est fulfils the function of „habitation“.²⁷ Like the street as a whole, it is a work in progress; like the street as a whole, it involves ordinary people in exchanges that are really nothing special. But these exchanges are crucial in the process of becoming accustomed to the proximity of the Other.

²⁶ Of course, immigrant-run grocery stores exist on St-Viateur, too, but the choice of stores on the street is wider, and as I have explained it has a more overtly and self-consciously convivial atmosphere than Jean-Talon Est.

²⁷ Habituation is my slightly inadequate English translation of the French *apprivoisement*, which means taming or domestication (as of a wild animal). It also has a reciprocal connotation: two people starting to date each other might be said to be in a phase where they *s'apprivoisent*. Neither taming nor domestication work here, because they imply „power over“ and pacification or exclusion of „wild“ elements (cf. Atkinson, 2003, „Domestication by cappuccino“). Habituation seems better: “habituate: make or become accustomed or used to something, esp. to living in close contact with humans” (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2004).

7.3.4 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest: collaborative cosmopolitanism

The micro-places of Sherbrooke Ouest are wide-ranging in both their functions and symbolic affiliations. From pistachios to pianos, from disposable dollar-store made-in-China bric-a-brac to eco-friendly fairly-traded one-of-a-kind gewgaws, there are goods and services on offer for all kinds of budgets, backgrounds and lifestyles. The mix of ethnic markings is unexpected, not found elsewhere in the city – Caribbean, Korean, Iranian, Indian, Italian... Most micro-places, perhaps because the focus is on diverse retail and restaurants, also seem relatively open, except for the usual hairstylists and a couple of regularly appropriated points (like the bench outside the barbershop and the terrasse of Dunkin' Donuts). The general code of sociability seems very flexible: users can either pay civil inattention or rollingly sociable attention to each other; they can isolate themselves singly or in small groups and watch others go by, or interact in the flow of people using the street. In part, this flexibility is enabled by the breadth of the sidewalks, which have plenty of room for restaurant and café terrasses, benches, bus stops and refreshing summer shade. There is also perhaps an increasing attention to and encouragement for amenities, such as sidewalk terrasses and cafés, from both entrepreneurs and municipal civil servants.

According to what people say about interethnic relations on Sherbrooke Ouest, no particular group predominates, and nor does any single group have special „resonance“ in that particular context. The groups that are the most visible do not seem to make territorial claims to the street (as do the Greeks on de Liège) or remind people of broader societal tensions (as do the Maghrebis on Jean-Talon Est). Iranians or Koreans may well have their own strong community institutions (like newspapers or places of worship), but these voices are directed internally, within the communities, rather than heard externally. Anglophone Afro-Caribbeans have a strong presence on Sherbrooke Ouest, but their more vocal political and community institutions have historically been based elsewhere in the city, in Côte-des-Neiges and Little Burgundy (Germain and Rose, 2000). There may be Indian, Lebanese or Italian restaurants on the street, but the Indian, Lebanese or Italian populations are most strongly concentrated in other parts of Montréal. So since the „exodus“ of white Anglo-Canadians (see Chapter 5), no single ethnic group seems to stake a claim for Sherbrooke Ouest.

Interestingly, ethnic diversity does not seem to have been highlighted as a particular advantage in the creation of the merchants' association and Société de développement commercial, but neither was it an obstacle, nor was it ever mentioned as a factor in the SDC's

failure. The rather cumbersome “vision” of the SDC seems to „naturalize” ethnic diversity as just one among several distinguishing features:

A lively and pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood main street, serving the population of NDG and adjacent areas. A street with a distinctive family-oriented vocation, unique products and services, a multicultural character, and an urban landscape that reflects the quality of the surrounding residential district. (Société de développement commercial de la rue Sherbrooke Ouest, 2005: back cover)

Since the SDC’s dissolution, the critical infrastructure that would broadcast an image of the street is sparse, but regular restaurant reviews and the odd feature on the whole street (Laurence, 2006; Polak, 2003) suggest that the foundations have been laid, as do the signs of commercial gentrification. The appearance of „lifestyle” oriented boutiques alongside the „ethnic” restaurants indicates that Sherbrooke Street could be a „talked about” place in years to come.

The cosmopolitanism of Sherbrooke Street West could be characterized as „collaborative”. It is as if openness to the Other was the result of an unspoken consensus, almost a shared local culture, from which it would be bad form to derogate. The diverse users of the street generally seem to feel at ease with one another, perhaps partly because there is literally the room along this broad street to be feel comfortable: they are able to control their physical proximity to culturally distant others. Collaboration is not to be confused with coercion; as we saw in Chapter 6, not everyone wants to „be planned” into the merchants’ association or other efforts to promote the street. Rather, it is a question of „working with”, or alongside, the Other in a way that allows all to thrive as best they can.

*

Each of the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets in this study fosters its own kind of cosmopolitanism. Many (though not all) of the users of each street accept and support the cultural mix that can be found there, and so are open to the Other in a basic way. But in addition, the characteristics and history of each street and its surroundings construct a cosmopolitanism *sui generis* that fulfils a certain social function. The self-conscious cosmopolitanism of St-Viateur is something of an idealization, a story told about the street that orients its inhabitants to the intercultural dimensions of the street. The pragmatic cosmopolitanism on de Liège is born of necessity, but constitutes a veritable resource for getting on and getting by in multiethnic Parc-Extension. Jean-Talon Est’s variety of cosmopolitanism enables gradual habituation to the Other. And Sherbrooke Ouest has a collaborative cosmopolitanism in which openness to the Other means giving each other room to „work” as they wish. Each multiethnic commercial street’s configuration of form, function and instrumental and

symbolic uses results in its own variety of willingness to engage with the Other, which is imagined, put into practice and utilized in a distinct way.

7.4 Conclusion: on the conditions for street-level cosmopolitanism

This chapter can be read as a response to Hannerz's suggestion to seek out "quotidian, or vernacular, or low-intensity cosmopolitanism" (2006: 27), as well as Beauregard's (2007) call to attend to the actually-existing cosmopolitanism of encounters between people in places. I began by arguing for the existence of street-level cosmopolitanism that is not premised on international travel. I supported this argument with excerpts from an interview with one such locally-rooted cosmopolitan, whom I met on de Liège. I then introduced the four sociological figures of cosmopolitanism that emerge from my fieldwork: the open-minded inhabitant, a long-term apprentice of the Others around him; the host, welcoming of Others if changing little herself; the connoisseur, seeking particles of Others' cultures for her own urban thrills; and the broker, negotiator of intercultural exchanges of one kind and another. I also identified three figures of parochialism: the individualist, too self-absorbed to be open to the Other; the insular, rather closed to the Other; and the indifferent, on whom otherness makes little impression. I then painted a more detailed portrait of the broker, the cosmopolitan figure I met most often in my fieldwork. Lastly, I proposed that we might think of cosmopolitanism as accreting to places – albeit "at different intensities and [...] unevenly so through time" (Beauregard, 2007: 692) – by means of different „layers" of sociospatial relations. These are its constituent micro-places, its overall code of public sociability, the perceived population and relations between groups, and the sense of place broadcast (or not) through critical infrastructure. Each of the four streets thus fosters its own kind of cosmopolitanism: self-conscious on St-Viateur, pragmatic on de Liège, habituating on Jean-Talon Est and collaborative on Sherbrooke Ouest.

In light of this analysis, I want to conclude with a reflection on the conditions for urban cosmopolitanism. I do this by returning to the themes of the previous three chapters of this thesis – public sociability, the mobilization of ethnicity, and planned and unplanned place making. Of course, I am not thinking about urban cosmopolitanism at the city-wide scale – like the vague declarations of cosmopolitanism made by the City of Montréal (Ville de Montréal, 2005c, see Chapter 1) – so much as concrete, everyday cosmopolitanism at street-level. What „makes" this kind of urban cosmopolitanism?

Public sociability provides the raw materials for cosmopolitanism, as it were, since social exchanges with strangers are the very stuff with which one engages with the Other. Given that

neighbourhood commercial streets are both integrated into everyday routines and offer certain destinations for sociability, they are populated by a mix of total strangers, familiar strangers, acquaintances and friends. Within this mix, and perhaps particularly among the strangers, are some people perceived to be „other“, different from oneself. One condition of cosmopolitanism is that entering into social exchanges (verbal, non-verbal, commercial, inconsequential...) with these „Others“ be both possible and acceptable according to the local code of public sociability.

What kinds of exchange? „Smooth“ sociability alone is insufficient for encounters to be considered cosmopolitan, because it does not involve sufficient contact with the Other. Smooth sociability is the civil inattention of a busy downtown street or a shopping mall; it amounts to a simultaneous recognition and avoidance of the Other. Cosmopolitanism requires at least the possibility of engaging in more remarkable forms of public sociability. These are the forms that make a lasting (and disproportionate) impression on participants, because they change the smooth contours of ordinary social interactions. But in order for this to involve the „Other“ who is also a stranger, one must accept that the remarkable social interactions involved could be either „rolling“ or „spiky“. This is because the strange Other is, by definition, unknown, and therefore unpredictable: one cannot be quite sure that exchanges with this stranger will be benevolent. Being willing to engage with the Other means accepting that the resulting exchange could be conflictual.

That said, entering into interactions of rolling sociability still needs to be optional, not obligatory. In public space, one needs to be able to open up to the Other at one’s own pace. One „way in“ to rolling public sociability with the Other that is perhaps particularly unthreatening is to participate in the exchanges that are initiated or facilitated by certain workers in commercial micro-places. Depending on their own inclinations and objectives, some storekeepers, managers, cashiers, waiters or bar staff mediate exchanges between strangers in their places of business. Thus, whether or not they represent a commodification of either sociability or difference, these exchanges can help foster a certain kind of cosmopolitanism.

The mobilization of ethnicity on commercial neighbourhood streets, in that it inscribes Otherness on the streetscape and in social relations, is equally essential for street-level cosmopolitanism. The symbols that mark certain businesses as having „ethnic“ affiliation(s) mean that at least some groups of „Others“ are visible in the street. This sense of the presence of „Others“ is accentuated when a street has both micro-places that seem inclusive – signalling openness – and those that seem exclusive – signalling otherness. A combination of people’s interpretations of signs of ethnicity and accessibility, their prior knowledge (of social groups, of

cultures, of the local area) and their actual exchanges with others in the street allows people to recognize certain groups on the street. It positions those groups as viable „Others“ with whom to engage. Granted, some less visible groups go unrecognized, while more visible ones may have a disproportionate place in people’s perceptions. In any case, the mere recognition of ethnic markers is not a sufficient condition for cosmopolitanism, which also implies at least a low-key engagement with Others. That said, ethnicity is not always a vector of „otherness“, and not the only one. Differences can be marked by non-ethnic strands of identity, by social class, material circumstances or social trajectory – even if that difference is then conflated with ethnic origin and „ethnicized“. Conversely, the juxtaposition of markers of ethnicity in commercial space can sometimes have the effect of underlining similarities, rather than difference. If fragments of „ethnicity“ are equally available to buy or to mix with, then there is something the same about them. Street-level cosmopolitanism thus involves a varied and ambiguous interplay of similarity and alterity.

This being the case, it is difficult to deliberately produce space as cosmopolitan in the multiethnic neighbourhood commercial street with any degree of success. Some kinds of planned intervention or amenities can help foster encounters with the Other in some settings: allowing cafés and restaurants to erect sidewalk terrasses; positioning public benches to give a view onto the street or respite from hot sun; providing decent public transit services; or keeping a watchful eye on the relative proportions of stores selling different „orders“ of goods or services (high-order, low-order, entertainment, etc.). But none of these interventions in themselves ensure that people will engage with the Other. For example, café-terrasses sometimes act as micro-enclaves that hinder certain kinds of people’s access to a street more than they help it. And if cosmopolitanism cannot be created by small-scale interventions like that, then larger-scale interventions like the wholesale redesign, branding and marketing of a street are even less reliable incubators of street-level cosmopolitanism. Openness to or engagement with the Other seems to be accomplished less by strategies of place making – i.e., calculated actions projected from a territorial power base – than by tactics of place making – i.e., calculated actions taken at opportune moments, such as those that produce convivial public sociability. There are no magic recipes for cosmopolitanism at street-level. The conditions for cosmopolitanism cannot be planned, because actually-existing cosmopolitanism is, as Beauregard (2007) reminds us, itself conditional. Urban cosmopolitanism – openness to the Other – is a product of our imperfect and variable combinations of „being open to“ and „othering“ the people with whom we share the multiethnic city’s streets.

CONCLUSION: EVERYDAY COSMOPOLITAN PLACE MAKING

Montréal in summer has many charms that compete for one's attention, but if the day is fine and I have a few free hours ahead, I still like to cycle off to one or two of „my“ four streets. Three years after I first got to know them all well, some things have changed. To the chagrin of nearby customers, Khaled's store on Jean-Talon Est has closed down – his partner decided he wasn't cut out for the unforgiving hours of the small business owner. Peter's favourite café on de Liège has changed hands at least once and changed names twice, but still seems to rely on the same kind of customers. One of St-Viateur's two new art galleries closed, as did the Senegalese restaurant, to be replaced by a store whose speciality seems to be „healthy“ food. But its bagel shop and, of course, its cafés are still going strong, and the co-owner of one will greet me if he's working that day behind the newly renovated wooden bar: “Martha, how you doing, it's been a while!” If I visit Lila, I know I will stay for hours, sharing lunch and small stories of the street in between her many different customers. If it is warm, by evening people will be filling the terrasses of the restaurants on Sherbrooke Ouest, going back to family favourites or trying the latest culinary venture. The barbers and their friends will be out chatting on „their“ bench, and, in the recently-expanded Sri-Lankan-owned grocery store, the cashier will still be ringing up purchases under the benevolent gaze of the gods on the shelf. The „patchwork“ form of the commercial neighbourhood street means that they change in small increments. Ten years from now, I might find these streets unrecognizable, but as yet they are all more or less the same as they were during my fieldwork: everyday cosmopolitan places in the making.

This conclusion seeks to summarize how I came to this interpretation of the four streets, and to underline the contribution my research makes to the field of urban studies. I will begin by using the key words of the thesis title to sum up my main themes and findings. I then reconsider some of the strengths and limits of the overall research design and suggest a few directions for future research. I also place the results of my research in the context of the multiethnic city and highlight its theoretical contribution to studies of cosmopolitanism.

Everyday cosmopolitan place making

The multiethnic commercial neighbourhood streets that I studied are *everyday* in that they are integrated into the routine activities and social interactions of everyday life. They are apparently unremarkable, inconsequential, the spaces in between the great stakes of urban economy or society. At the same time, they are embedded in the city, and they also embody it, since being on a commercial city street is one of the main ways we experience the city as a city.

Neighbourhood commercial streets are a source of livelihood for many small business people and employees, a source of provisions for local residents, a source of interest and enjoyment for visitors from near and far. Their array of stores and services both symbolizes and shapes the range of people who use them during their daily rounds.

Within that everydayness, the neighbourhood commercial street serves as a stage on which users can enact social relations, from the first-person-singular experience of social interactions to the third-person-plural experience of longer-term social dynamics. People who do or do not know each other can interact with each other in a familiar or distant manner. Interactions can be „smooth“ and unremarkable, or remarkably „rolling“ or „spiky“ – and to have the chance of a convivial, rolling encounter, one must take the risk of coming up against spiky ones. Public sociability on these streets is also, intrinsically and inseparably, both an end in itself and a means to the end of commercial exchange. Each of the streets I studied constitutes a rich and diverse „ecosystem“ of social relations, in which connections are made – however ephemeral – between a wide range of people, each of whom has a different story of where they have come from, how they got here, who they are now and what they hold dear.

Neighbourhood commercial streets can be considered *cosmopolitan* when they host certain ways of relating to „the Other“ – providing, of course, that some of the people there see some of the others as „other“. In a multiethnic city like Montréal, this is highly likely, especially since small retail businesspeople are disproportionately immigrants or of minority ethnic background. Multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets thus provide a context in which people come into contact with those they perceive as ethnically other. At the same time, they also host solidarities that cross ethnic boundaries or are nothing to do with them (e.g. groups such as artists or „ordinary families“). Given that this context is often relatively unthreatening and inconsequential, it produces cosmopolitan encounters, as people open up to or engage with „Others“ to varying degrees.

Ethnic „otherness“ is mobilized in the ways people use the streets I studied, both within businesses and in the broader prevailing social dynamics. On the one hand, ethnicity can be a social lubricant, especially in „doing ethnic business“, since perceived fragments or symbols of ethnic cultures (meals, foodstuffs, ways of socializing) are used to facilitate social and commercial exchanges between people from both the same and different ethnic backgrounds. The form of public sociability that I called inconsequential intimacy, for instance, can enable strange and familiar people, products and topics to mix in an unthreatening context. In a sense, the commercial array of the street has a levelling or at least normalizing effect on ethnic

differences, such that the latter no longer convey much about more profound cultural differences. It is as if in the marketplace all protagonists are on an equal footing.

On the other hand, ethnicity can be a social irritant, in that individuals can associate undesirable features of the social and physical environment of the street – ways of interacting, changes in social status, and so on – with perceived ethnic groups. Thus, differences that are not strictly attributable to ethnicity, but are due to contrasting material circumstances, social trajectories and the like can be ethnicized in perceptions of intergroup relations. To a certain extent, some people are conscious of the ambivalence of their categorization of others (or „othering“). For instance, they may recognize that they themselves or their parents were once in the same boat as the newcomers pursuing the Canadian dream, and yet they still ethnicize those newcomers and use them as scapegoats for what they do not like about a street.

Cosmopolitanism and parochialism are thus held in tension on these streets, and even within one person’s experience of them. What Barth (1969: 15) calls the “cultural stuff” of ethnicity seems to be relatively less important than the ethnic boundaries that trace a line of difference between one individual’s identity and another’s. Even when people are selling or buying fragments of ethnic difference (food, clothes, etc.), what counts – at the moment of exchange in the street, at least – is the degree of similarity or difference rather than the fuller cultural context of ethnic identity and belonging. In that sense, it may be more appropriate to think about a mobilization of alterity than a mobilization of ethnicity as such on multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets. There is an interplay of similarity and difference, proximity and distance, as users both „other“ the people around them and find commonalities with them (and I will say more about this in my discussion of cosmopolitanism below). They engage in these processes to various ends including „pure“ sociability, curiosity and personal gain or distinction.

Similarly, the street as a whole will likely be experienced in terms of its distinctive „otherness“ – or indeed its comforting „sameness“ – compared to other streets in the city. Multiethnic neighbourhood commercial streets are *made as places* by a great variety of practices and discourses: from myriad social and commercial exchanges, ephemeral or longer-lasting, to the images that are generated as one street is compared to another; from zoning interventions and infringements to place marketing and its contestation. Each street I studied is a product of „unplanned“ as much as „planned“ place making, and of tactics as much as strategy. Interestingly, while each street is recognized and appreciated for its multiethnicity, ethnicity did not structure the conflicts over place making. This is a point in history when scholars, policy-

makers, planners and promoters alike are recognizing the neighbourhood commercial street as a distinctive and crucial component of the city's public space and symbolic economy. Always a place of everyday consumption and sociability, the neighbourhood commercial street is now also a place on which policymakers take action. And yet, there is something to be said for the virtues of the „organic“, unplanned neighbourhood commercial street: its very ordinariness and rich public sociability arguably make it a vital part of the grand array of streets in the city.

The research design revisited

Each of the four streets I studied is, in my view, intrinsically interesting. In spite of the similarities and surprising connections between them, each is, in a sense, its own small world and as such required a distinct approach during fieldwork. St-Viateur is what you might call a *rue bavarde* (chattering street), flowing with spoken and written words that a researcher can almost bend down and scoop up. De Liège and Jean-Talon are less verbose and can only be grasped through patient, long-term physical presence and observation, and Sherbrooke Ouest is somewhere in between the two extremes. Such variation is common in qualitative fieldwork. (In my previous professional experience conducting evaluation research in the UK, each school or police force I entered felt like a different planet, with a unique atmosphere and social organization.) When one is studying four separate case study sites, it can be hard to do justice to each. Moreover, the sense of breadth rather than depth was augmented by one of the unusual dimensions – and one of the challenges – of my research: I investigated multiethnic contexts, rather than adopting the “ethnic lens” common to much research on urban diversity. This made it hard to capture the depth of ethnic identity and belonging within groups, and the impact of cultural differences between them. For instance, I could not devote enough time to Jean-Talon Est to properly elucidate differences between the different North African communities (principally Moroccans and Algerians), who tend to be seen from the outside as one Maghrebi group. My comparative approach therefore sometimes came at the expense of more in-depth investigation of each street.

However, the advantage of the comparative case study approach is that common themes link the field sites, and the opportunity to compare one site with another increased the robustness of the research findings. I could see, for example, that the cosmopolitan figure of the host was not exclusive to the atmosphere of „friendly“ public sociability in Sherbrooke Ouest. Interviewing people of many different ethnic backgrounds and immigrant statuses had a similar effect, and also helped fill a gap in the literature, since ethnic minority perspectives have often been neglected in research on socially mixed or gentrifying neighbourhoods and their

commercial streets. Lastly, public sociability operates, by its very nature, at the surface of things. My fieldwork was therefore situated at an appropriate „register“ of social relations. Had I decided to explore particular communities in greater depth, I would no longer have been investigating the realm of public sociability as such.

I designed my research such that the multiethnic commercial streets studied would vary by urban form (interstitial / in the heart of the neighbourhood) and socioeconomic circumstances („traditional“ / gentrifying). This strategy was inspired by the literature on the multiethnic city and socially mixed neighbourhoods. I expected to find, for instance, that sociability would be more intimate and interethnic relations more „loaded“ in streets in the heart of a neighbourhood than in interstitial streets, which would have more casual relations. This is because the former are more likely to be appropriated and considered part of a group’s territory, while the latter belong to no group in particular. I also expected to find that on the gentrifying streets, cosmopolitanism would be more of a discourse than a practice, since the literature suggests that middle-class residents appreciate the aesthetics of multiethnicity without necessarily engaging in interethnic exchanges. In contrast, the „traditional“ streets might produce a cosmopolitanism more active than discursive. These expectations were borne out to some degree, but not entirely.

With respect to the variable of urban form, it seems that the interstitiality of Sherbrooke Ouest does make public sociability and interethnic relations at once warmer and more casual; no one has any ground to lose by being open to strangers. The interstitiality of Jean-Talon Est, however, does not have the same impact: it contributes to the street’s „ordinary“ sense of place, but it is also bound up in the symbolic attachment to place of certain ethnic communities. Rue de Liège, at the heart of a neighbourhood, does seem to generate a more tightly-knit public sociability and more highly-charged interethnic relations, as a „territory“ subject to appropriation and contestation by different local groups. Rue St-Viateur has a richly textured public sociability, but the place image of conviviality and cool broadcast widely by the street’s critical infrastructure means that the tension regarding appropriation is not played out so much between local groups as between insiders (locals) and outsiders (tourists, new gentrifiers). And while insiders sometimes contest outsiders’ use of the street, their insistence on their own local belonging can also become something of a spectacle performed for outsiders as well as insiders, by means of tales and traces of belonging. Turning to the variable of socioeconomic circumstances, we saw that on one of the gentrifying streets, St-Viateur, people do seem more given to talking about cosmopolitanism than engaging in it. But on the other, Sherbrooke Ouest, there is a certain „collaborative“ cosmopolitanism that is not much discussed but is rather an accepted,

appreciated and practiced feature of the street. On de Liège, cosmopolitanism is indeed a pragmatic, habitual mode of exchange in the street, but on Jean-Talon Est it is still something of a work-in-progress. These variations demonstrate the value of going „into the field“ to see which factors or circumstances specific to each street – historical, demographic and cultural as well as formal or socioeconomic – shape its social relations.

In light of my argument that the commercial neighbourhood street is a key figure of the city, it would be useful to continue comparative work on this object of study. One way to do this would be to change the criteria for selecting the field sites. Varying streets by their (multi)ethnic composition would allow us to further explore the relative „weight“ of ethnic and other kinds of difference in social relations. In particular, one could choose field sites that are more monoethnic than multiethnic – because they are predominantly marked and used either by the ethnic majority, or by a single ethnic minority. Equally relevant candidates would be streets in smaller cities that have a lower overall degree of ethnic diversity. In order to continue exploring the tension between strategies and tactics of place making, it would be useful to conduct fieldwork in streets that are constituted as business improvement areas. Conversely, one could explore how „street-level“ cosmopolitanism is enacted in other kinds of multiethnic public spaces, such as parks, shopping malls or festival sites.

Another organizing principle of this research was Lefebvre’s (1991) triadic conceptualization of the production of space. I approached the commercial street as a space produced at once by the spatial practice of public sociability (perceived space), the representational spaces of symbols of ethnicity (lived space), and the spaces of representation of planned place making (conceived space). This was more of a heuristic device than a theoretical framework as such: I did not aim to strictly apply Lefebvre’s conceptualization nor, indeed, to extend it. It is clear that the three different fields of sociospatial relations as defined by Lefebvre do not quite map on to those that I covered in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. For instance, my discussion of planned and unplanned place making in Chapter 6 included discussions of certain aspects of symbolic identity (lived space) and routine spatialized activities (perceived space). Rather than saying anything new about Lefebvre’s all-encompassing conceptualization, it confirms the interdependence of the three fields of sociospatial relations. The triad was useful in that it helped shift the focus to different facets of spatialized social relations in turn, and thus helped us grasp the street as a kind of “total social phenomenon” (Mauss, 1996 [1924]).

The multiethnic city

This thesis began by „problematizing the multiethnic city“, so what might it tell us about the multiethnic city, both in general and in its particular incarnation in Montréal? Although it is a case study, so does not aim to generate findings that are strictly replicable elsewhere or representative of all multiethnic cities, it is important to situate the implications of the results for the broader discipline.

At a basic level, my research focused on a particular urban form that is much more common in some regions than others. Great swathes of immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada, the USA and Australia (and even sizeable chunks of some European countries) consist of suburbs in which everyday consumption takes place at purpose-built shopping centres and strip malls; neighbourhood commercial streets barely exist beyond the bounds of the oldest cities. It is legitimate to question whether my findings are relevant to these contexts. To what extent are the kinds of public sociability or cosmopolitanism that I found determined by the morphology of the commercial street? It has been argued – most forcefully by Jane Jacobs (1961) – that features of the street such as its „patchwork“ evolution, integration into a network of pathways and destinations, accessibility on foot and by public transit, and diversity of land use and urban form generate unique kinds of social relations. I would agree with this to a certain degree, for instance as regards the opportunities for public sociability that commercial street morphology provides (see section 4.2.1).

Nevertheless, while some of my findings are very specific to commercial streets, others are less so: markers of (multi)ethnicity can be inscribed and interpreted in malls, too; and since cosmopolitan figures are mobile, they might well be involved in cosmopolitan encounters in all kinds of urban places. Thus, several of the concepts and themes of this thesis could be usefully applied or developed in investigations of public and semi-public spaces other than commercial streets. Recent research emphasizing intra-urban mobility points towards the „heterolocalism“ of ethnic communities, and hence the experience of ethnic differences in many of the activities and spaces of everyday life in the city. It therefore seems safe to assume that even those multiethnic cities that lack old-style commercial streets have certain other kinds of places that generate inconsequential interethnic relations and, perhaps, cosmopolitan encounters. Whether they are old-style or not, though, we should be aware of how such places evolve:

The multiplication or disappearance of these collective places has an impact on our capacity to „translate“, and therefore on the potential for socialization to multiethnicity. Their decline probably constitutes one of the problems of contemporary urban life,

since spaces are often structured by functional specialization, without the development of any associated sociability. (Remy, 1998 [1990]: 183, my translation)

One distinctive feature of my findings is that on none of the streets does any strong opposition emerge between the (dominant) ethnic majority and (marginalized or oppressed) ethnic minorities. This contrasts sharply with research in ethnically mixed urban neighbourhoods in France, Britain and the USA, and it deserves further reflection. It can be partly explained by the research design: I expressly chose multiethnic streets to study, but had I instead or also looked at monoethnic, „bi-ethnic“ or even less markedly multiethnic streets in Montréal, clearer boundaries might have been drawn between French- and/or Anglo-Canadian users on the one hand, and minority ethnic users on the other. Another explanation relates to the social context of the research. Small businesspeople are by definition their own bosses, and minority ethnic entrepreneurs often go into business to escape discrimination in the labour market. Many of the members of ethnic minorities whom I interviewed as workers thus found themselves in a setting where they have greater control over their success than in salaried employment. It therefore seems plausible that power relations between the majority and minorities did not emerge strongly because I met many of my minority ethnic interviewees in, and talked to them about, a situation in which they were in a position of relative power.

However, the particular context of Montréal also comes into play here. Firstly, the diversity among minority ethnic groups and, especially, recent immigrants is such that there is currently no „critical mass“ of any single minority group at the scale of the city – and this means that the majority has no single group against whom to rail. Very localized contexts may have a predominant minority group (such as the Italian and Greek communities on Jean-Talon Est and de Liège respectively), but it does not necessarily constitute a majority and in any case is subject to change (as those streets“ social dynamics prove). Secondly, various models of management of diversity pull in slightly different directions in Montréal. The quasi-official provincial model of interculturalism, the municipal tradition of adhocism, and the relatively widespread admiration for French-style republicanism contrast in different ways with Canada“s official multiculturalism. This means that there are diverse reference points and models for imagining and perceiving, and therefore experiencing, interethnic relations in Montréal.

These could be among the reasons why, back in the case study sites, people do not express a sense of a clear divide between a powerful (white) ethnic majority and marginalized ethnic (visible) minorities, at least within the social microcosm of relations in and of those streets. A similar investigation of multiethnic commercial neighbourhood streets in another city – in the UK, the USA or France, for example, or even elsewhere in Canada – could well have thrown up

a starker divide. Both the scale and degree of diversity of the immigrant or ethnic minority population in a city can have a significant impact on how interethnic relations are experienced in spaces of everyday urban life. Considerable ethnic heterogeneity seems to facilitate harmonious interethnic relations; openness to the „Other“, on the part of both minorities and majorities, is perhaps easiest to put into practice when there are many different kinds of Others to rub shoulders with. Of course, heterogeneity does not equate to density: in densely populated settings such as the central neighbourhoods of many European cities, the lack of physical space may exacerbate interethnic tensions (as Clerval, 2004, found in Paris). This thesis perhaps most reliably indicates how social relations might operate in urban contexts approaching “super-diversity” (Vertovec, 2007); however, I think it also presents a range of useful conceptual tools for thinking about contexts of mere diversity, too. The social policy models used to manage ethnic and cultural diversity likewise affect how it is lived day to day. Although I do not think it can be instated from above, street-level cosmopolitanism may be a more plausible local outcome in states that implement relatively inclusive diversity management policies.

One of the strengths of this thesis is that it draws on urban scholarship from several disciplines in both the English-speaking (Canada, the USA, Britain, Australia) and French-speaking worlds (France, Belgium, Quebec). Each research tradition has its own approaches to some of my key concepts, particularly the role of public space and what one might call the „uses“ of ethnicity. In the francophone republican tradition, public space is typically seen as a neutral public good where private particularities and conflicts can be negotiated and overcome; in contrast, the Anglo-American tradition tends to favour the private domain and therefore sees public space as a place where private interests can be legitimately expressed (Remy, 2001). Drawing on both – as well as on Simmel’s oeuvre, in which most if not all social forms are seen to be generated by two opposing but complementary tendencies – enabled me to temper any inclination towards one model or the other. It led me to analyse my material more rigorously in order to work out what role public space served in these four streets in particular.

As for ethnicity, my research presents a case of the multiethnic city situated somewhere in between the banalization of ethnicity that we often see in both commonsense attitudes and scholarly research in North America and the demonization of ethnicity more typical of those in France. In the former tendency, the relevance of ethnic identity in everyday life is taken as read; as a result, ethnicity (or „race“) is assumed to be an ubiquitous and even banal factor structuring social relations. In the latter tendency, ethnic identity is never automatically presumed to be salient, since this would imply a dangerous reification of ethnic difference, leading potentially to

discrimination; alternative explanations of, say, class or social trajectory are preferred. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses, but as Bourdin writes, “Between republican integration [...] and multiculturalism [...], we have a singular lack of space to think about metropolises that are made up of a diversity of cultures and their confrontation/fusion” (2005: 41-42, my translation). I would argue that this thesis deals with a figure of the multiethnic city in which a „third way“ is in operation. The multiethnic commercial neighbourhood street constitutes a site in which ethnic identity can be accentuated and/or suspended in social relations – not necessarily at will, since one person may wish to minimize her ethnicity in an interaction while her interlocutor only highlights it, or vice versa, but at least in variable doses. The commercial street in multiethnic neighbourhoods seems indeed to be one of those places in which city-dwellers from sometimes very different backgrounds “rub along” (Watson, 2006, 2009) in the multiethnic city.

On cosmopolitanism and its limits

Moving beyond the framework of the multiethnic city, the principal theoretical contribution of this thesis is to enrich empirical research into „actually-existing“ cosmopolitanism. It does this in two ways: firstly, by identifying a set of sociological figures of cosmopolitanism and parochialism, and secondly, by proposing a tool to gauge the cosmopolitanism of places and applying it to the streets under study. These contributions, which emerge from my empirical research, are supported by a theoretical argument (*contra* Friedman, 2002 and Nijman, 2007, among others) for the existence of street-level cosmopolitans and street-level parochialism. The cosmopolitan figures that I described are the host, the broker, the connoisseur and the open-minded inhabitant, and the parochial figures are the individualist, the insular inhabitant and the indifferent. I outlined how a combination of „layers“ – namely, the range of micro-places contained within a place, the overall codes of public sociability, the perceived relations between groups, and the sense of place broadcast through the critical infrastructure – can generate a place’s own variety of cosmopolitanism or parochialism. The caveat is that cosmopolitanism must be seen as a process: emergent, imperfect, incomplete and ultimately „unprogrammable“. Neither people nor places can be classed as absolutely or indefinitely cosmopolitan, and planned or compulsory cosmopolitanism seems unlikely to work, probably because it implies a

contradiction in terms. To say to someone „you must be cosmopolitan“ implies being closed to the „other“ who is on the receiving end of this injunction.¹

The idea of cosmopolitanism – understood as openness to or willingness to engage with the Other – raises a number of questions. How do people become cosmopolitan? What kinds of experiences or acquisition of skills does cosmopolitanism entail? Can or should everyone be cosmopolitan? What would a city composed entirely of cosmopolitans look like? In the paper that re-launched the cosmopolitan/local debate within anthropology, Hannerz suggests that “there can be no cosmopolitans without locals” (1990: 250), since the former need the latter to be representatives of the „other“ cultures to which they are opening up. And yet, if one has street-level, “rooted cosmopolitans” (Appiah, 1997), Hannerz’s assertion perhaps no longer holds. That said, if we agree that cosmopolitanism is always emergent and incomplete, then the scenario of a city made up of cosmopolitans only seems rather unlikely.

Much more interesting in my view is the question of *how* to capture cosmopolitanism as “a quality of a social encounter” (Beauregard, 2007: 692). If cosmopolitanism is „openness to the Other“, then it is composed of two key dimensions: the degree of „openness“ of an encounter, and its degree of „otherness“, i.e. the degree to which the participants see each other as „other“. To the extent that they are observable at all, these two dimensions do not exist on the same register. The quality of openness can be gauged by observing an actual encounter: it can be inferred from particular words or actions in this encounter, like voluntary sharing of information, gestures of welcome, amicable curiosity or „rolling“ public sociability. (Such inferences might, of course, be culturally biased, since people from different cultural backgrounds can have quite different expectations of what constitutes friendliness, respect or civility even in banal commercial transactions.) In contrast, the degree of „otherness“ is not something that can be accessed by observation, because one cannot usually tell just by looking and listening whether the people involved consider each other to be „Others“ or not. For example, if I see a white man of „mainstream“ or „unmarked“ appearance and a Muslim man (identified by beard and skull-cap) chatting together, they might be interacting first and foremost as fathers of children in the same class at school; if I hear two women of similar Middle-Eastern appearance speaking Arabic, they might be treating each other as distinctly Egyptian and Lebanese. Observable differences might

¹ An example is the Quebec government’s recent proposition to make immigrants sign a declaration of values. “Integrating into Quebec society means being ready to get to know and respect its shared values” (Ministère de l’immigration et des Communautés culturelles, 2008: 8, my translation). Immigrants are thus deemed as having to adapt to a society which “offers services” but does not have to adapt in return; they are expected to „share“ Quebec’s values without necessarily getting a chance to share their own.

not be regarded as salient by the participants, while salient differences might not be observable (at least to an outsider).

In most everyday kinds of encounters in multiethnic streets (as distinct from staged performances at public meetings or festivals, for example), processes of „othering“ stay inside the participants“ heads, as it were. They can be accessed using interview methods, but then, of course, actual encounters are recounted second-hand; one loses details of content and context and hears only one side of the story. Thus, while representations of otherness are accessible in the classifier“s discourse, practices of openness are less so, since they are divorced from the encounters in which they took place.² A person might retell a remarkable encounter as more „open“ than it was at the time, or conversely might not recall the details of less noticeable encounters that make up her experience of cosmopolitanism. This raises the age-old problem for social scientists of the potential gap between discourse and practice, ideals and actions. It suggests the need for continued research involving the operationalization of cosmopolitanism, not only through survey, focus group and interview methods, but also through ethnographic methods including observation in the field. This thesis, which used a range of methods, is one such contribution, but further investigation is needed into how „othering“ and „opening up“ are linked.

Related to this question of „capturing“ cosmopolitanism is that of the *impact* of cosmopolitanism. On what level does openness to the Other take effect? My own and other people“s research has shown that it is quite feasible for city-dwellers to hold ambivalent or contradictory views of different „Others“, and indeed to say one thing and do another. For example, one may hold racist views while treating people perceived to be of a different „race“ with perfect courtesy. More commonly, there may be limits to the elements of „other“ cultures with which one is willing to engage. One person might like „their“ fashion, but not the smell of their food; another might like „their“ food too, but not the way „they“ seem to treat their children... The question is, do these limits matter? The geographer Valentine thinks they do. In her research on majority white prejudice in the UK, she found that:

for some of my informants, behaving in a civil or decent way in public, regardless of your privately held views and values, is what Britishness is all about. As such, this urban etiquette does not equate with an ethics of care and mutual respect for difference. (Valentine, 2008: 329)

² Interviews with workers in stores often allow access to both discourse and practice, however, since they are frequently interrupted to serve customers, as I and others have found (Lee, 2002, 2006; Semi, 2005).

In Valentine's view, mere "urban etiquette" – which other scholars, such as Remy (1998[1990]), call civility – is not enough, because it does not address the question of power and the redistribution of resources (e.g. state benefits, community facilities, jobs, citizenship). Those who have power can still withhold resources from the powerless – such as those who are constructed as Other – even if they are perfectly civil to them in public space. Cosmopolitan public sociability is thus inadequate because it does not necessarily "translate into respect for difference" (ibid.: 325).

I am not persuaded, however, that cosmopolitan public sociability, or "urban etiquette", can be made to coincide either with a thoroughgoing respect for difference or with an eventual redistribution of resources. Valentine is right to be sceptical about the tendency to romanticize the cosmopolitan encounter, but I think she errs too far the other way in her call "to find ways in which everyday practices of civility might transform prejudiced values and facilitate liberal values to be [sic] put into practice" (ibid.: 330). This seems to me to confuse two separate registers of social relations: the ephemeral contacts of urban public sociability versus the consequential stakes of urban politics. The pertinent question is not whether the cosmopolitan urban encounter is evidence of a deeper acceptance and recognition of the Other. Rather, it is to find out whether (and if so, how) these two distinct realms are related. In what ways is openness to the Other in the public space of the street related to the public realm of politics? In other words, how might street-level personal cosmopolitanism be bound up with political cosmopolitanism? I suspect that the relationship is just as murky and ambivalent – but also just as fascinating and worthy of study – as that between commodified and personal cosmopolitanisms. That said, I remain convinced that the inconsequential public spaces of the multiethnic city, like neighbourhood commercial streets, are worth studying in their own right. Thinking back to the exchange between the elderly black male customer and the brown woman cashier at the checkout of the Sri-Lankan grocery store, it is with just such small gestures that everyday cosmopolitan places are made.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Origins of immigrants to Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver

Table A.1 Top ten countries of birth of immigrants to Canada

All immigrants		Immigrants who arrived 1996-2006	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
United Kingdom	9.4	China	13.5
China	7.5	India	11.2
India	7.2	Philippines	6.6
Philippines	4.9	Pakistan	5.1
Italy	4.8	United States	3.2
United States	4.0	South Korea	3.0
Hong Kong	3.5	Iran	2.7
Germany	2.8	Sri Lanka	2.3
Poland	2.8	Romania	2.3
Vietnam	2.6	United Kingdom	2.2
Total top 10 as % of total no. of immigrants	49.4	Total top 10 as % of total no. of 1996-2006 immigrants	52.1
Total top ten (absolute nos.)	3 058 325	Total top ten (absolute nos.)	1 019 100
Total immigrants as % of total population	19.8	Total immigrants 1996-2006 as % of total population	6.3
Total no. immigrants	6 186 950	Total no. immigrants 1996-2006	1 954 605
Total population	31 241 030	Total population	31 241 030
<i>20% sample data, 2006 Census</i>		<i>20% sample data, 2001 and 2006 Censuses</i>	

Thanks to Nicolas Bastien (demography student, INRS-UCS) for compiling the statistics in Appendix A.

Table A.2 Top ten countries of birth of all immigrants, Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver Census Metropolitan Areas

Montréal		Toronto		Vancouver	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
Italy	8.5	India	9.6	China	16.5
Haiti	7.3	China	8.2	India	10.8
France	5.6	Italy	5.6	Hong Kong	9.1
China	4.7	Philippines	5.6	United Kingdom	7.7
Lebanon	4.3	United Kingdom	5.4	Philippines	7.6
Morocco	4.1	Hong Kong	4.4	Taiwan	4.9
Algeria	3.6	Jamaica	4.0	South Korea	3.7
Romania	3.3	Pakistan	3.7	United States	3.0
Vietnam	3.1	Sri Lanka	3.6	Vietnam	2.8
Greece	2.9	Portugal	3.3	Iran	2.6
Total top 10 as % of total no. immigrants	47.4	Total top 10 as % of total no. immigrants	53.6	Total top 10 as % of total no. immigrants	68.7
Total top ten (absolute nos.)	350 970	Total top ten (absolute nos.)	1 243 125	Total top ten (absolute nos.)	571 145
Total immigrants as % of total population	20.6	Total immigrants as % of total population	45.7	Total immigrants as % of total population	39.6
Total immigrants	740 360	Total immigrants	2 320 165	Total immigrants	831 265
Total population	3 588 520	Total population	5 072 075	Total population	2 097 965

20% sample data, 2006 Census

Table A.3 Top ten countries of birth of recent immigrants who arrived 1996-2006, Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver Census Metropolitan Areas

Montréal		Toronto		Vancouver	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
China	9.0	India	15.6	China	23.3
Algeria	8.5	China	13.8	India	11.9
Morocco	6.7	Pakistan	8.1	Philippines	9.8
France	6.2	Philippines	6.7	Taiwan	8.1
Romania	6.1	Sri Lanka	4.5	South Korea	6.6
Haiti	5.6	Iran	3.3	Hong Kong	5.7
Lebanon	3.2	Russian Federation	2.7	Iran	4.3
Pakistan	2.5	South Korea	2.7	United States	2.5
Philippines	2.4	Hong Kong	2.3	United Kingdom	2.1
India	2.4	Jamaica	2.0	Pakistan	1.5
Total top 10 as % of total no. recent immigrants	52.6	Total top 10 as % of total no. recent immigrants	61.6	Total top 10 as % of total no. recent immigrants	76.0
Total top ten recent immigs. (nos.)	136 000	Total top ten recent immigs.(nos.)	498 785	Total top ten recent immigs.(nos.)	228 215
Total recent immigrants as % of total immigrants	34.9	Total recent immigrants as % of total immigrants	34.9	Total recent immigrants as % of total immigrants	36.1
Total recent immigrants	258 400	Total recent immigrants	810 250	Total recent immigrants	300 390
Total immigrants	740 360	Total immigrants	2 320 165	Total immigrants	831 265
Total population	3 588 520	Total population	5 072 075	Total population	2 097 965
<i>20% sample data, 2001 and 2006 Censuses</i>					

Figure A.1 Percentage of immigrants from each region of origin, Canada and Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver CMAs

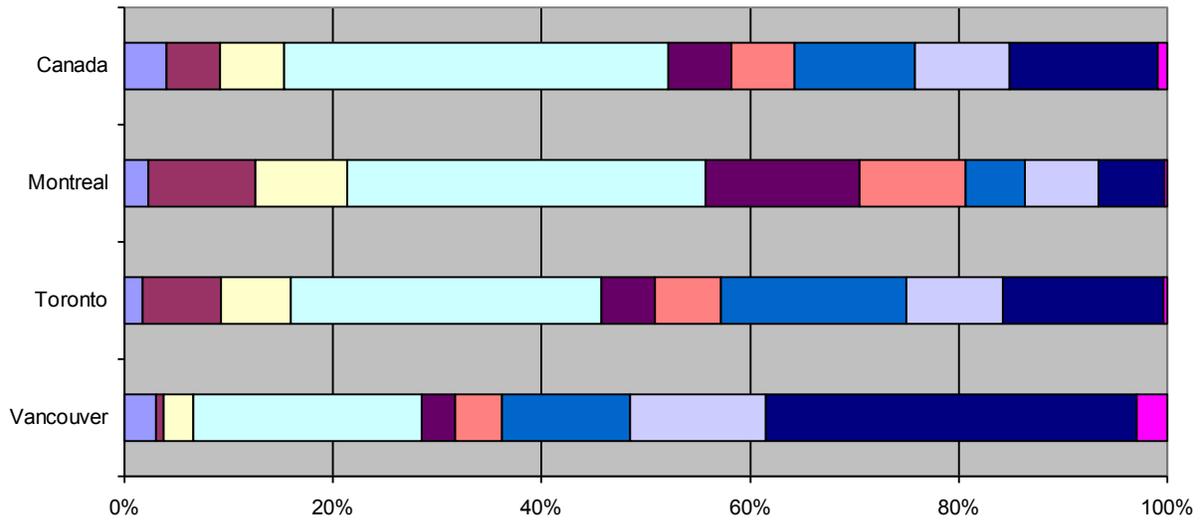
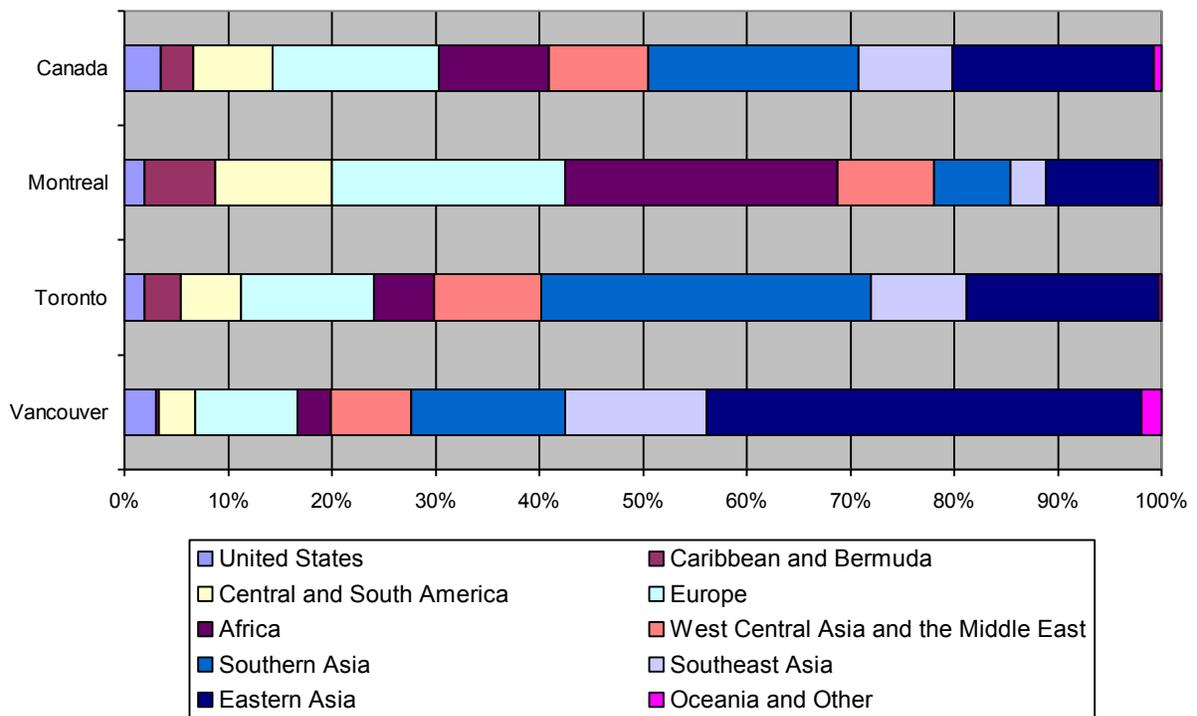


Figure A.2 Percentage of recent immigrants 2001-2006 from each region of origin, Canada and Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver CMAs



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.

Appendix B Maps of the street sections studied

1. Rue de Liège Ouest
2. Rue de Liège showing borders of Parc-Extension neighbourhood
3. Rue St-Viateur Ouest
4. Rue Jean-Talon Est
5. Rue Sherbrooke Ouest
6. Rue Sherbrooke Ouest showing scope of the merchants' association

Thanks to Josefina Ades, urban studies student, LASER, INRS-UCS, for creating all the maps to my specifications.



Figure B.1 Rue de Liège Ouest



Figure B.2 Rue de Liège Ouest, Rue de Liège showing borders of Parc-Extension neighbourhood



Figure B.3 Rue St-Viateur Ouest



Figure B.4 Rue Jean-Talon Est



Figure B.6 Rue Sherbrooke Ouest showing scope of the merchants' association

Appendix C Photographs

Rue de Liège



Figures C.1 and C.2 Views of rue de Liège





Figures C.3 and C.4 Views of Rue de Liège



Rue St-Viateur



Figure C.5 Folk dancing outside Café Olimpico, St-Viateur, San Marziale festival, 1 July 2007



Figure C.6 Hasidic men and young non-Hasidic man and women on St-Viateur



Figure C7 Club social italien, St-Viateur

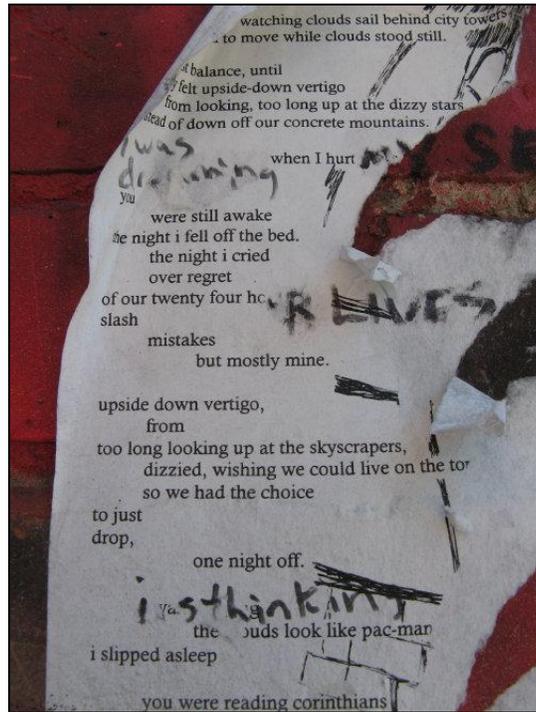


Figure C.8 Poetry poster, St-Viateur



Figure C.9 View of St-Viateur, from the bagel shop (left) to St-Michael the Archangel church (right)

Rue Jean-Talon Est



C.10 Restaurant



C.11 Celebrating an Italian win in the soccer World Cup, 2006

C.12 View of Jean-Talon Est



C.13 and C.14 Views of Jean-Talon Est



Figure C.15 Corner of Jean-Talon Est and Papineau. Fabre metro station left, Notre Dame de la Consolata right.

Rue Sherbrooke Ouest



Figures C.16 above, in summer looking east, C.17 below, in winter looking west



Figure C.18 Photo montage of businesses marked as African (basement), Korean, Trinidadian and Irish from left to right

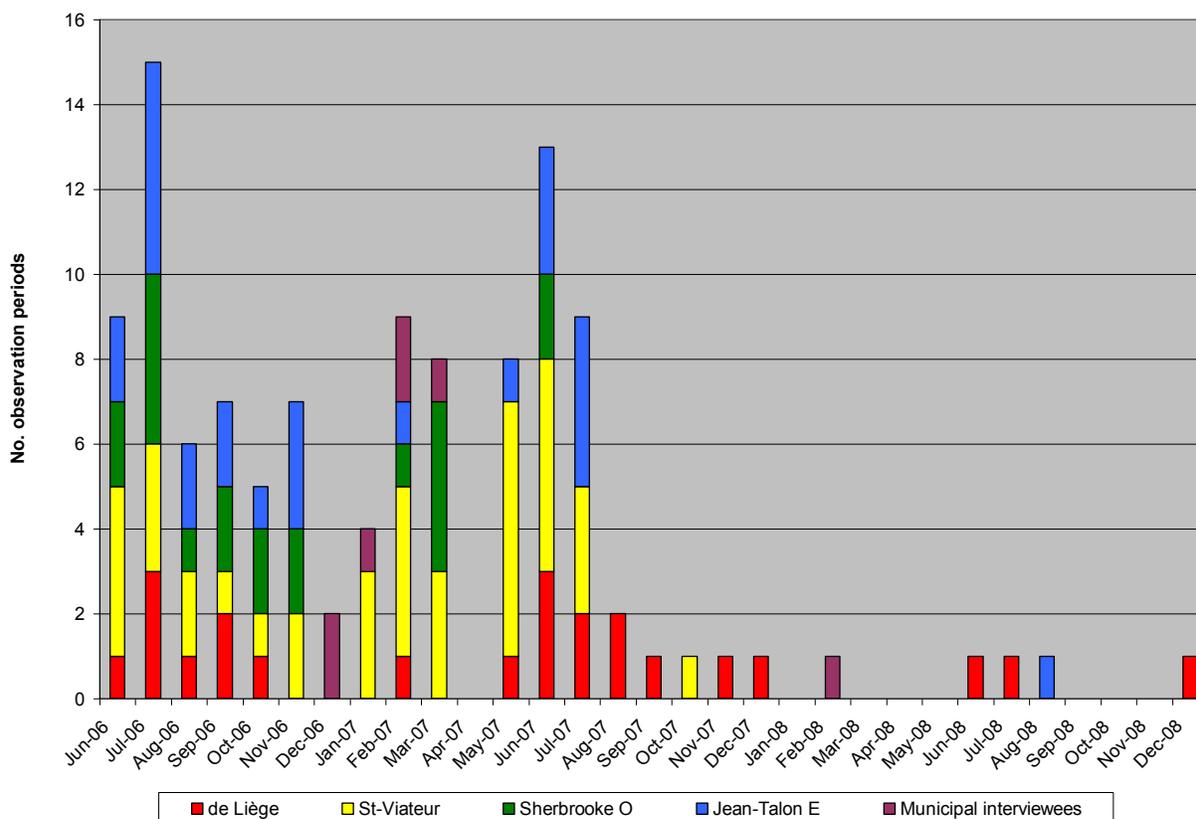


Figures C.19 and C.20 Views of Sherbrooke Ouest



Appendix D Fieldwork timeline

The chart and table below sums up the timeline of observation work in the field. Each „count“ represents an observation session undertaken on a particular day and written up (July 2006 included 15 observation sessions, May 2007 involved 8). Length and type(s) of observation varies. I include the interviews with municipal civil servants to show when they took place relative to other fieldwork. It should be noted that since St-Viateur is nearest to my place of residence, observation was typically more frequent but for shorter periods.



Total number of observation periods per street

de Liège	St-Viateur	Sherbrooke O	Jean-Talon E	Total
23	38	20	25	90

Appendix E In-depth interview schedule for merchants or workers

English version

General experience of the street

How long has your shop been here?

What **changes** have you seen since you've been here?

Why did you set up shop on this street?

What are the **advantages** of having your business in this street? Are there any **disadvantages**?

When you think of X street, where does it **begin** and where does it **end**? Do you think of it in different sections? Which ones?

What are the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of the street, from your point of view?

Does this street have something special if you compare it to other commercial streets in the neighbourhood?

Does the street **add** something to the neighbourhood? To Montréal?

Do you think it is a typical Montréal street? In what way?

What **kind of street** would you say this was? Would you say it's a lively street? A nice or an unpleasant street?

What do you think about the way the street **looks**, its **appearance**?

Aside from working here, do you use the street for any other (**personal**) activities? Which ones? (shop, go out with friends...)

Where on the street do you feel most **comfortable**? (shops or outside) Are there any places where you feel less comfortable?

Do you know the **other shopkeepers or employees** on this street? Do you **help** each other out? Is there an association of shopkeepers or businesspeople for this street? What does it do? What do you think of it? [if not] Would you like there to be one?

Do you have contact, as a business-person, with the local **borough or CDEC**?

People and sociability on the street

What kind of **people** use this street, in your view?

How **old** are they? Are they mainly **men, women, families**? How about different **ethnic groups**?

Where do you think they **come from** (from the neighbourhood, from other neighbourhoods or other cities)?

Do **different groups** of people **use** the street in **different ways**? Do they use different shops or do different things?

Do you think that **men and women** use the street in different ways? **Old and young** people? How about **different ethnic groups**?

Is there a good atmosphere, in general? Are there ever any incidents?

Do people **mix** or do they **keep themselves to themselves**? (probe for examples) Is it the same for all the groups?

Would you say that there are **one or many communities** on this street?

Is this street important to your **community**?

Would you say this street is its **own social world**?

Own business

To come back to your own business, tell me about the **goods/services** you sell.

Who are your customers? Where do they come from (the neighbourhood or further afield)? How to they get here?

Do you have “regulars”? Do you have some that you know better than others?

Do you have some customers who, for one reason or another, are **harder** to satisfy?

Do customers ever start talking with each other while they're in your store? Generally speaking, how do the customers behave with each other?

Do you have a story about something special that happened in your store?

Has your business ever been written about in the **newspapers** or in a **guidebook**? (If yes) Did it have an **effect** on business? Did **customers** ever mention it to you?

Do you think of some shops or businesses as “**ethnic business**”? What makes a business an ethnic business?

Would you say that your shop/restaurant is an “**ethnic business**”?

Memories and changes

What **changes** have you seen since you've been here?

Have you got any memorable **stories** about the street?

Has anything **memorable** happened to you in this street?

What **single place** best sums up the street, for you?

How do you see the **future** of this street?

If you could change something about it, what would you **change**?

How would you describe XXX street, in **one word**? **Why** that word?

Wrapping up

Would you like to **add** anything?

Can you think of any **other people** I should talk to, or **other issues** I should explore?

Sociodemographic data

- What neighbourhood do you live in?
- What mode of transport do you usually use to get here and where do you usually come from?
- Do you live alone or with other people? [if not alone] Who lives with you?
- How would you describe your occupation?
- Aside from yourself, how many people work in this business?
- How would you describe your ethnic or cultural origin?

Thank the participant.

Reiterate steps taken to protect the confidentiality of data.

Version française

Expérience de la rue en général

Depuis **combien de temps** avez-vous pignon sur rue ici ?

Quels **changements** avez-vous vus dans la rue pendant ce temps ?

Pourquoi vous êtes-vous établi dans cette rue ?

Quels sont les **avantages** d'avoir votre commerce dans cette rue? Y a-t-il des **inconconvénients**?

Pour vous, la rue X s'étend **de quel coin à quel coin**? La divisez-vous en différentes parties? Lesquelles?

Quels sont ses points **forts** et ses points **faibles** ?

A-t-elle quelque chose de particulier par rapport aux autres rues commerçantes du quartier?

Apporte-t-elle quelque chose de particulier au quartier? à Montréal?

Est-ce une rue typiquement montréalaise?

Comment trouvez-vous cette rue? Trouvez-vous que c'est une rue **animée**? une rue **agréable** ou **désagréable**?

Que pensez-vous de l'**aspect visuel**, de l'**allure** de la rue?

Fréquentez-vous cette rue sur le plan personnel, c'est-à-dire à part pour le travail (comme magasiner ou sortir avec des amis par exemple)?

Dans quels endroits vous sentez-vous le plus **à l'aise**? Y a-t-il des endroits où vous vous sentez-moins à l'aise?

Connaissez-vous les **autres commerçants ou employés** dans la rue ? Y a-t-il une **association** de commerçants ou de développement de la rue ? Que fait-elle? Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez? [sinon] Aimerez-vous qu'il y ait une association de commerçants?

En tant que commerçant, êtes-vous en contact avec l'**arrondissement** local ou le **CDEC**?

Sociabilité dans la rue

Quel genre de monde fréquente cette rue selon vous ?

Quel est la **tranche d'âge** typique ? S'agit-il d'hommes, de femmes, de familles ? Et les différents **groupes ethniques** ?

D'où viennent-elles (du quartier, d'autres quartiers, d'autres villes) ?

Est-ce que les **différents groupes** utilisent la rue de **différentes façons**? Utilisent-ils des magasins spécifiques, participent-ils à des activités spécifiques?

Les **hommes** et les **femmes** utilisent-ils la rue de différentes façons? Les **jeunes** et les personnes plus **âgées**? Et les différents groupes **ethniques**?

L'ambiance est-elle bonne en général? Y a-t-il eu des incidents?

Est-ce que les différents groupes se **mélangent** ou est-ce qu'ils **se tiennent entre eux** ? (exemples ?) [selon réponse] Est-ce le cas pour tous les groupes ?

Diriez-vous qu'il y a **une ou plusieurs communautés** dans cette rue ?

Est-ce que cette rue joue un **rôle** important pour **votre communauté** ?

Est-ce que cette rue finit par former un **petit monde social** en tant que telle ?

Son commerce

Et pour revenir à votre commerce, parlez-moi des biens que vous vendez.

Qui sont vos clients à vous? **D'où** viennent-ils? (du quartier ou de l'extérieur?)

Avez-vous des « habitués » parmi vos clients ? Avez-vous des clients que vous connaissez mieux que d'autres ?

Avez-vous des clients qui, pour une raison ou une autre, sont plus **difficiles** à satisfaire ?

Arrive-t-il que vos clients **entrent en contact** les uns avec les autres dans votre magasin? De façon générale, comment les clients **se conduisent-ils** les uns avec les autres ?

Y est-il arrivé un événement chouette dans votre magasin?

Est-ce qu'on a déjà écrit un **article de journal** ou une revue dans un guide à propos de votre commerce? (si oui) Est-ce qu'il a eu un impact sur les affaires? Est-ce que des clients vous en a parlé?

À votre avis, peut-on décrire certains commerces comme des commerces « **ethniques** »? Qu'est-ce que cette expression veut dire pour vous?

Diriez vous que votre commerce est commerce « **ethnique** »?

Souvenirs et changements

Quels **changements** avez-vous vus dans la rue pendant ce temps ?

Connaissez-vous des **histoires remarquables** à propos de cette rue ?

Est-ce qu'il vous est arrivé quelque chose de **mémorable** dans cette rue ?

Quel est le lieu qui **représente** la rue le mieux pour vous?

Comment voyez-vous l'**avenir** de la rue?

Qu'est-ce que vous **changeriez** dans cette rue si vous le pouviez ?

Comment décririez-vous la rue X **en un mot**? Pourquoi?

Questions finales

Aimeriez-vous **ajouter** quelque chose ?

Y a-t-il d'**autres personnes** à qui je devrais parler, ou d'autres enjeux que je devrais explorer ?

Données sociodémographiques

- Dans quel quartier habitez-vous ?
- D'habitude, vous venez à cette rue par quel moyen de transport et en provenance d'où ?
- Est-ce que vous habitez seul ou avec d'autres personnes ? [si pas seul] Qui habite chez vous ?
- Quelle est votre occupation principale ?
- À part vous, combien de personnes travaillez dans votre commerce?
- Comment décririez-vous votre origine ethnique ou culturelle ?

Remercier le participant

Réitérer les mesures de protection de la confidentialité des données.

Appendix F In-depth interview schedule for local residents and other users

English version

Own use of the street

Tell me how you got to know X Street. How long have you been using it?

Do you go to X street often?

What mode of transport do you usually use to get here and where do you usually come from?

Which shops or businesses do you use most?

Do you go to the street to buy specific things, or for pleasure? What kind of things do you do for pleasure on the street?

Do you use the street for socializing at all?

What kinds of things do you do [have coffee, eat out], where, when, and who with?

Do you tend to socialise mostly at home and at friends' homes, or do you mostly go out?

Is X street an important place for your social activities compared to other places?

Do many other people in your social network use the street?

Would you say you know the street well?

Do you know some of the shopkeepers or businesspeople in the street?

Do you like this street? Why (or why not)?

Image of the street

What kind of street would you say this was? Would you say it's a lively street? A nice street?

What are its strong points and weak points?

Where does it begin and where does it end? Do you think of it as having different sections?

If you think about other shopping streets in Montréal, how is this one different? What is special about it?

How does it compare to other streets?

What do you think this street adds to the neighbourhood? What do you think it adds to Montréal?

Sociability in the street

How would you describe the different kinds of people that use this street?

How old are they? Are they mainly men, women, families? How about different ethnic groups?

Where do you think they come from – from the neighbourhood, from other neighbourhoods or from other cities?

Do different groups use the street in different ways? Do they go to different shops, or do different activities in the street?

Do men and women use the street differently? Old and young people? Families? How about the different ethnic groups?

How do you think the different groups of people get on with each other here? Do people mix or do they keep themselves to themselves? (probe for examples) Is it the same for all the groups?

Do you see different people or different activities in the street at different times of the day (daytime, evening), on different days of the week (weekdays or weekends), at different times of year (spring, summer, autumn, winter)?

Would you say that there are one or many communities on this street?

Is this street important to your community?

Would you say this street is its own social world?

Changes and memories

Have any big issues or controversies affected the street over the years?

How have things changed in this street over the years?

Has anything memorable happened to you in this street?

Can you think of any memorable stories that you've heard about the street?

What single place in the street is the most important one for you, and what is the place that best sums up the street?

How would you describe XXX street, in one word? Why?

If you could change something about it, what would you change?

How do you see the future of this street?

Wrapping up

Would you like to add anything?

Can you think of any other people I should talk to, or other issues I should explore?

Sociodemographic data

- What neighbourhood do you live in?
- Do you live alone or with other people? [if not alone] Who lives with you?
- What is your occupation?
- How would you describe your ethnocultural origin?

Thank the participant.

Reiterate steps taken to protect the confidentiality of data.

Invite participant to choose a pseudonym for the research reports.

Version française

Usage de la rue

Racontez-moi comment vous avez connu cette rue. Depuis combien de temps vous la fréquentez?

Est-ce que vous y allez souvent?

D'habitude, vous venez par quel moyen de transport et en provenance d'où?

Quels magasins ou commerces fréquentez-vous le plus?

Est-ce que vous venez spécifiquement pour acheter des choses ou par plaisir? Si par plaisir, de quelles activités s'agit-il?

Utilisez-vous la rue X pour vos activités sociales?

Quelles activités [prendre un café, manger au restaurant...], quand, avec qui?

Vos activités sociales ont-elles lieu plutôt chez vous et chez des amis, ou plutôt à l'extérieur?

La rue X est-elle un lieu important pour vos activités sociales, comparée à d'autres lieux?

Est-ce que d'autres personnes dans votre réseau social fréquente cette rue?

Est-ce que vous connaissez bien cette rue?

Connaissez-vous des commerçants dans la rue?

Est-ce que vous aimez cette rue? Pourquoi (ou pourquoi pas)?

L'image de la rue

Comment trouvez-vous cette rue? Trouvez-vous que c'est une rue animée? une rue agréable?

Quels sont ses points forts et ses points faibles?

La rue, où commence-t-elle et où finit-elle? Y a-t-il pour vous différentes sections? Lesquelles?

Si vous comparez cette rue à d'autres rues commerçantes à Montréal, qu'est-ce qui la distingue? Qu'est-ce qu'elle a de particulier?

Comment la trouvez-vous en comparaison à d'autres?

Qu'est-ce que vous pensez que cette rue apporte au quartier? Qu'est-ce que vous pensez qu'elle apporte à la ville?

La sociabilité dans la rue

Quels types de personnes fréquentent cette rue, selon vous?

Quel est la tranche d'âge typique? S'agit-il d'hommes, de femmes, de familles? Et les différents groupes ethniques?

D'où viennent-elles (du quartier, d'autres quartiers, d'autres villes)?

Est-ce que les **différents groupes** utilisent la rue de **différentes façons**? Utilisent-ils des magasins spécifiques, participent-ils à des activités spécifiques?

Les **hommes** et les **femmes** utilisent-ils la rue de différentes façons? Les **jeunes** et les personnes plus **âgées**? Les familles? Et les différents groupes **ethniques**?

Comment les différents groupes s'entendent-ils? Est-ce qu'ils se mélangent ou est-ce qu'ils se tiennent entre eux? (exemples?) [selon réponse] Est-ce le cas pour tous les groupes?

Voit-on dans cette rue différents types de gens ou d'activités à différents moments ... de la journée (le jour, le soir), de la semaine (en semaine ou en fin de semaine), de l'année (différentes saisons)?

Diriez-vous qu'il y a une ou plusieurs communautés dans cette rue?

Est-ce que cette rue joue un rôle important pour votre communauté?

Est-ce que cette rue finit par former un petit monde social en tant que telle?

Changements et souvenirs

Y a-t-il déjà eu des enjeux majeurs ou des controverses concernant la rue?

Quels changements avez-vous vus au fil des ans?

Est-ce qu'il vous est arrivé quelque chose de mémorable dans cette rue?

Connaissez-vous des histoires remarquables à propos de cette rue?

Quel est le lieu le plus important pour vous sur la rue, ou quel est le lieu qui la représente le mieux?

Comment décririez-vous la rue XXXX en un mot?

Qu'est-ce que vous changeriez dans cette rue si vous le pouviez?

Comment voyez-vous l'avenir de cette rue?

Questions finales

Aimeriez-vous ajouter quelque chose?

Y a-t-il d'autres personnes à qui je devrais parler, ou d'autres enjeux que je devrais explorer?

Données sociodémographiques

- Dans quel quartier habitez-vous?
- Est-ce que vous habitez seul ou avec d'autres personnes? [si pas seul] Qui habite chez vous?
- Quelle est votre occupation principale?
- Comment décririez-vous votre origine ethnoculturelle?

Remercier le participant, réitérer les mesures de protection de la confidentialité des données

Inviter le participant à choisir un pseudonyme pour les rapports de recherche

Appendix G Short interview schedule

English version

I'm a student doing a PhD in urban studies and I'm doing a research project on shopping streets in Montréal. I'm interested in how individuals and different social and ethnic groups use certain streets, including this one, X Street. I would very much like to know what you think about the street. Do you have a few minutes to answer my questions?

1. Do you come to this street often? Why?
2. Which shops or businesses do you usually use?
3. Which shops or businesses will you use or have you used today?
4. Have you come here today for any other reason (e.g. meeting friends, going for a walk)?
5. Where have you come from and what mode of transport did you use to get here?
6. What do you think about the atmosphere of this street? How does it compare to other streets?
7. What kind of people use this street, in your view?
8. How would you describe X Street, in one word?

Sociodemographic data

1. What neighbourhood do you live in?
2. Do you live alone or with other people? [if not alone] Who lives with you?
3. What is your occupation?
4. How would you describe your ethnocultural origin?

[Sex : M / F]

[If participant was approached when in a group, note how many adults and children were with them.]

- Thank participant and hand out leaflet about the research.

Version française

Je suis étudiante au doctorat en études urbaines et je fais un projet de recherche sur les rues commerçantes à Montréal. Je m'intéresse à la manière dont les individus et les différents groupes ethniques et sociaux utilisent certaines rues, dont celle-ci, la rue X. J'aimerais connaître votre opinion là-dessus. Auriez-vous quelques minutes pour répondre à des questions ?

1. Venez-vous sur la rue X souvent ? Pourquoi ?
2. Quels commerces utilisez-vous d'habitude ?
3. Quels commerces avez-vous utilisés ou allez-vous utiliser aujourd'hui ?
4. Êtes-vous venus aujourd'hui pour d'autres raisons (rencontrer des amis, vous promener) ?
5. Par quel moyen de transport êtes-vous venus et en provenance d'où ?
6. Que pensez-vous de l'ambiance de cette rue ? Comparée à d'autres ?
7. Quel genre de monde fréquente cette rue selon vous ?
8. Comment décririez-vous la rue X dans un mot ?

Données sociodémographiques

1. Dans quel quartier habitez-vous ?
2. Est-ce que vous habitez seul ou avec d'autres personnes ? [si pas seul] Qui habite chez vous ?
3. Quelle est votre occupation principale ?
4. Comment décririez-vous votre origine ethnoculturelle ?

[Sexe : H / F]

[Si le participant était abordé quand il était en groupe, note combien d'adultes et d'enfants était avec lui.]

Remercier le participant et lui donner le dépliant sur la recherche.

Appendix H Sample interview schedule for municipal civil servants

Interviews were conducted in French. Questions were selected and adapted according to the interviewee's position.

Quel est votre poste? Quelles en sont les responsabilités principales? Quelle est votre formation?

Depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous à l'arrondissement? Où étiez-vous avant?

Connaissez-vous bien certains quartiers de l'arrondissement?

De votre point de vue, quels sont les points forts et les points faibles de cette rue dans la dynamique [économique] du quartier?

Je m'intéresse au tronçon Y en particulier. Cette section forme-t-elle un tout pour vous? Sinon, avez-vous une autre façon de voir la rue dans son ensemble?

Selon vous, ce tronçon a-t-il des particularités

- sur le plan de l'urbanisme – qualité/harmonie des bâtiments, fonctions, zonage
- sur le plan de la circulation [et l'accessibilité des services?]
- sur le plan du patrimoine
- par rapport à d'autres rues commerçantes de l'arrondissement?
- dans le contexte du quartier (NDG, V, P-Ex, M-E)?

Y a-t-il une adéquation entre les usages et l'aménagement de la rue? [activités / zonage? service / accessibilité?]

Y a-t-il des enjeux urbanistiques importants sur cette rue, selon vous? Y en a-t-il eu dans le passé?

Est-ce que l'arrondissement encadre de façon particulière...

- les terrasses
- les événements – ventes de trottoir, festivals et fêtes de quartier
- les enseignes
- les rénovations
- le permis d'occupation, les permis d'alcool, le zonage commercial

Qu'est-ce qui fait une **artère commerciale bien développée**, voire **réussie**?

Les **facteurs** qui favorisent la réussite sont-ils les **mêmes** pour tous les types de rue, ou y en a-t-il des facteurs spécifiques à, par exemple, les grandes artères régionales ou les rues de quartier?

Quel **type de contact** avez-vous, en ce moment ou dans le passé, avec les commerces de cette rue?

Quels sont les « **types** » de commerçants qui y ont pignon sur rue, selon vous?

Y a-t-il des **enjeux de développement économique** importants sur cette rue, selon vous? Y en a-t-il eu dans le passé? Comment les enjeux se déroulent-ils?

Y a-t-il des types ou des dimensions d'activité commerciale que vous aimeriez voir **se développer** dans cette rue?

Selon vous, cette rue a-t-elle des **particularités**

- par rapport à d'autres **rues commerçantes** de l'arrondissement?
- dans le contexte du **quartier**?

A-t-elle quelque chose de particulier par rapport à **Montréal**?

Accordez-vous une importance particulière aux **événements** – ventes de trottoir, festivals et fêtes de quartier - dans la réussite d'une rue commerçante?

- aux **terrasses**?
- À l'**aménagement**?
- Au **zonage**?

En général, quand vous intervenez dans cette rue, qui sont les interlocuteurs et les partenaires avec lesquels vous collaborez?

- des commerçants et propriétaires individuels?
- des groupes ou des associations?
- [Associations] Les associations sont-elles dynamiques? Les porte-paroles collaborent-ils souvent avec l'arrondissement?

Comment se passe la cohabitation des fonctions dans cette rue? Avez-vous un rôle d'intervention sur ce plan?

Êtes-vous appelés à répondre aux besoins de cette rue de manière différente que dans le cas des autres rues commerçantes?

Y a-t-il des projets particuliers pour cette rue?

Comment voyez-vous son avenir?

Si vous pouviez changer quelque chose dans cette rue, que changeriez-vous?

Petite question finale : Comment décririez-vous la rue X en un mot?

Appendix I Transcriber confidentiality agreement

English version

Research project

„Sociability in multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal“

I am a PhD student in Urban Studies at INRS-UCS. For my thesis, I am doing a research project about multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal. I'm especially interested in how people use these streets, and what they think about the streets' shops and businesses and general social atmosphere.

To find out more, I am conducting interviews with shopkeepers, local residents and other users of the streets. I have undertaken to treat everything they tell me as strictly confidential. This means:

1. I keep the notes and/or recording of the interviews in a secure place: electronic copies are kept in password-protected locations and hard copies are kept in a locked cabinet.
2. When I write or talk about the results of my research, nothing that I present will allow the interviewees or anyone else they talk about to be personally identified.

This commitment to my research participants entails that anyone who collaborates with me on the research must also respect these conditions. As transcriber of the interviews, I would like you to sign the agreement overleaf in order to ensure the confidentiality of the data.

Please feel free to ask me any questions about the research project. You can also contact one of the resource people named below.

Thank you very much for your help. Your collaboration is greatly appreciated.

Martha Radice

PhD Student and Principal Researcher

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Research supervisor:

Annick Germain, Professor

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External resource-person :

Marie-France Gagnier

Chair of the Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains

(Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects)

Institut national de la recherche scientifique, 490, rue de la Couronne, Québec (QC), G1K 9A9

Tel. : 418 654 2514

E-mail: marie-france.gagnier@uqtr.ca

Transcriber confidentiality agreement

„Sociability in multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal“

My role in this research project is to transcribe interviews conducted by Martha Radice with shopkeepers, local residents and other users of the street(s) that she is studying. The signature below confirms that:

- I understand that the researcher has undertaken to keep the recordings and transcriptions of the interviews in a secure place, and I agree to keep my copies in a secure place.
- Once my collaboration on the project has come to an end, I will return all hard copies (CD-Roms, printouts, etc.) to the researcher and erase any electronic copies of the data on my computer.
- I understand that the researcher has undertaken to protect the confidentiality of the data and the identity of all participants. I therefore agree to treat all information contained in the interviews as strictly confidential, including any information that identifies the interviewees or anyone else they talk about.
- I have received information about the research project. My questions about the study and my role as transcriber have been answered satisfactorily.

Signature

Name

Address

Date

Study approved by the Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains (Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects) of the INRS : 23 May 2006

Projet de recherche

« La sociabilité dans les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal »

Je suis étudiante au doctorat en études urbaines à l'INRS-UCS. Dans le cadre de ma thèse, je fais une recherche sur les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal. Je m'intéresse particulièrement à comment les gens utilisent ces rues et à leurs points de vue sur l'ambiance sociale de ces rues ainsi que sur les types de commerces qui y sont présents.

Pour en savoir plus, je fais des entrevues avec des commerçants, des résidents locaux et d'autres usagers des rues. Je me suis engagée à traiter les propos recueillis comme strictement confidentiels. Cela veut dire que :

1. Je garde les notes et/ou la bande sonore des entrevues dans un lieu sûr, les copies électroniques dans des fichiers protégés par mot de passe et les copies papier dans un classeur fermé à clé.
2. Lorsque je présente les résultats de recherche à l'écrit ou à l'oral, je ne présente rien qui permet de retracer l'identité des répondants ou des autres personnes dont ils parlent.

Cet engagement envers les répondants implique que tout autre collaborateur sur ce projet de recherche doit aussi respecter ces conditions. Comme vous transcrivez plusieurs entrevues dans le cadre de ce projet de recherche, j'aimerais que vous signiez une copie du formulaire ci-joint afin d'assurer la confidentialité des données.

N'hésitez pas à me demander d'autres renseignements sur le projet de recherche. Vous pouvez aussi joindre une des personnes-ressources mentionnées ci-dessous.

Je vous remercie sincèrement. Votre collaboration me tient à cœur.

Martha Radice

Étudiante au doctorat et chercheuse principale

Tél. 514 499 4050

Adresse électronique martha.radice@ucs.inrs.ca

Sous la direction d'**Annick Germain**, professeur

Tél. 514 499 4004

Adresse électronique annick.germain@ucs.inrs.ca

Personne-ressource extérieure au projet :

Marie-France Gagnier

Présidente du Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains

Institut national de la recherche scientifique

490, rue de la Couronne

Québec (Québec) G1K 9A9

Téléphone : (418) 654-2514

Télécopieur : (418) 654-3858

courriel: marie-france.gagnier@uqtr.ca

Formulaire de confidentialité pour les assistant(e)s de transcription

« La sociabilité dans les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal »

Mon rôle dans ce projet de recherche est de transcrire les entrevues que fait Martha Radice avec des commerçants, des résidents locaux et d'autres usagers des rues commerçantes qu'elle étudie. La signature en bas indique que :

- Je comprends que la chercheuse s'est engagée à garder toutes les bandes sonores et transcriptions des entrevues dans un lieu sûr et je vais garder mes copies dans un lieu sûr.
- Une fois que j'aurai cessé de collaborer à ce projet, je rendrai à la chercheuse toutes les copies dures des données (CD-Roms, copies papier etc.) et j'en effacerai toutes les copies électroniques de mon ordinateur.
- Je comprends que la chercheuse s'est engagée à protéger la confidentialité des données et l'identité des répondants. Je traiterai le contenu des entrevues comme strictement confidentielles, y compris toutes les informations qui permettent de retracer l'identité des répondants ou des personnes dont ils parlent.
- J'ai reçu l'information concernant le projet de recherche et on m'a répondu de façon satisfaisante à mes questions concernant l'étude et mon rôle d'assistante à la transcription.

Signature

Nom

Adresse

Date

Approbation du Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains de l'INRS : 23 mai 2006

Appendix J St-Viateur festival de rue questionnaire

(overleaf)

Tell me about your St-Viateur!

How often do you come to St-Viateur Street?

- several times a day several times a month
 several times a week several times a year
 other (please specify)
-

How and when did you first get to know St-Viateur Street?

Which kinds of shops or businesses on St-Viateur Street do you use most often?

What do you like best about St-Viateur Street?

What do you like least about it?

What's missing from St-Viateur Street?

If you could change something about St-Viateur Street, what would you change?

How would you describe St-Viateur Street (on a normal day) in **just one word**? 😊



Who are you with today at the festival?

friend(s) my family, including a child/children

I'm on my own my family, no children

other (please specify)

Why did you come along to the festival today?

What do you think of the festival?

How did you get here?

on foot by bicycle by public transportation by car

Where do you live? Mile End Other neighbourhood - which one?

Where do you work and/or study? Mile End Other neighbourhood(s) - which one(s)?

How old are you?

0-12 yrs 13-20 yrs 21-30 yrs 31-40 yrs 41-50 yrs 51-60 yrs 61+ yrs

Sex: male female

What language(s) do you speak at home

English French Other(s) (please specify)

What is your ethnic origin?

If you would like to receive a report about the research when I've finished (end 2008), please write your postal or electronic address here.

Your answers will be treated as strictly confidential.
No information that allows you to be identified will be used in reports of the research.

A great big thank you!

Racontez-moi votre St-Viateur!

À quelle fréquence venez-vous sur la rue St-Viateur?

- plusieurs fois par jour plusieurs fois par mois
 plusieurs fois par semaine plusieurs fois par année
 autre (précisez)
-

Depuis quand et pourquoi connaissez-vous la rue St-Viateur?

Quels types de commerces sur la rue St-Viateur fréquentez-vous le plus?

Qu'est-ce que vous aimez le plus à propos de cette rue?

Qu'est-ce que vous aimez le moins?

Qu'est-ce qui manque à la rue St-Viateur?

Si vous le pouviez, que changeriez-vous dans la rue St-Viateur?

Comment décririez-vous l'ambiance de la rue St-Viateur (une journée normale) **en un seul mot?** ☺



Avec qui êtes-vous venu au festival aujourd'hui?

- avec un(e) ou des ami(e)s avec ma famille, avec enfant(s)
 je suis venu(e) seul(e) avec ma famille, sans enfants
 autre (précisez)
-

Pourquoi êtes-vous venu au festival aujourd'hui?

Que pensez-vous du festival?

Comment êtes-vous venu au festival?

- à pied en vélo en transport en commun en voiture
-

Où habitez-vous? Mile End Autre quartier - lequel?

Où travaillez-vous et/ou étudiez-vous? Mile End Autre quartier(s) - le(s)quel(s)?

Quelle âge avez-vous?

- 0-12 ans 13-20 ans 21-30 ans 31-40 ans 41-50 ans 51-60 ans 61+ ans

Sexe : masculin féminin

Quelle langue(s) parlez-vous à la maison?

- anglais français autre(s) (précisez)
-

Quelle est votre origine ethnique?

Si vous souhaitez recevoir une copie des résultats de recherche quand j'aurai fini (fin 2008),
veuillez laisser vos coordonnées (adresse postale ou électronique).

Les propos recueillis sont strictement confidentiels. Rien dans les présentations des
résultats de recherche ne permettra de retracer votre identité.

Un très grand merci!

Appendix K Table of interviewees

Street	Type of interview	Connection with street	Residence	Gender	Ethnic origin	Immig	Lang
St-Viateur	11 workers	10 business (co)owners 1 employee	5 local 4 elsewhere 2 ex-local	7 men 4 women	3 Italian 3 French-Canadian 2 Anglo-Canadian 1 East-European 1 Latin-American 1 West-Euro/N-American	2 imm 3 G2 6 long	6 Eng 5 Fre
	3 users	3 local residents	–	3 women	1 French-Canadian 1 West-European 1 West-Euro/N-American	1 imm 1 G2 1 long	3 Fre
	14 festival (6 with 2 people) (so 20 people feature)	*	*	11 men 8 women 1 girl	*	*	9 Eng 1 mix 4 Fre
Sherbrooke Ouest	13 workers	8 business (co)owners 5 employees	9 local 4 elsewhere	10 men 3 women	2 Anglo-Canadian 2 Anglo-Can/French-Can 2 Iranian 2 Caribbean 2 Korean 1 West-Euro/East-Euro 1 Tamil 1 Italian	8 imm 1 G2 4 long	13 Eng
	1 user	1 local resident	–	1 man	1 East-European	1 G2	1 Eng
	13 brief	7 local residents 3 visitors 2 residents/employees 1 employee	9 local 4 elsewhere	7 men 6 women	4 French-Canadian 3 Anglo-Canadian 2 Caribbean 1 French-Canadian/Irish 1 East-European 1 Iranian 1 Middle-Eastern	5 imm 8 long	11 Eng 2 Fre

See explanatory notes on next page.

Street	Type of interview	Connection with street	Residence	Gender	Ethnic origin	Immig	Lang
de Liège	9 workers (1 with 2 people) (so 10 people feature)	7 business (co)owners 3 employees	5 local 5 elsewhere	5 women 5 men	3 Middle-Eastern 2 Greek 1 Sri Lankan 1 Pakistani 1 Italian 1 Caribbean 1 Chinese	6 imm 4 G2	7 Eng 3 Fre
	1 user	1 ex-local resident	–	1 man	1 Greek	1 G2	1 Eng
	10 brief (1 with 4 people) (1 with 3 people) (1 with 2 people) (so 16 people feature)	*	11 local 4 elsewhere 1 ex-local	6 women 3 girls 7 men	9 Greek 4 Bangladeshi 1 Italian 1 Haitian 1 Indian	9 imm 4 G2 3 long	14 Eng 2 Fre
Jean-Talon Est	10 interviews (1 with 3 people) (1 with 2 people) (so 13 people feature)	8 business (co)owners 5 employees	10 elsewhere 1 local 2 unknown	8 men 5 women	4 Italian or Canadian-Italian 3 Maghrebi 2 Iranian 1 Latin-American 1 Haitian 1 Vietnamese 1 French-Canadian	8 imm 4 G2 1 long	7 Fre 5 Eng 1 mix
	4 brief	3 local residents 1 local employee	–	2 women 2 men	1 Italian 1 Maghrebi 1 Haitian 1 French-Canadian	3 imm 1 long	3 Fre 1 mix
Municipal civil servants	7 in-depth, 1 brief (1 with two people)	– –	– –	9 men 3 women	8 French-Canadian 1 English-Canadian	9 long	8 Fre 1 Eng

* = information not systematically collected

– = information not applicable or stated elsewhere

Ethnic origin = in the case of business owners and employees of the street, I have sometimes aggregated ethnic origin into regions of origin in order to protect anonymity. Otherwise, I have tried to remain as close as possible to the descriptions interviewees gave me of their ethnic origin.

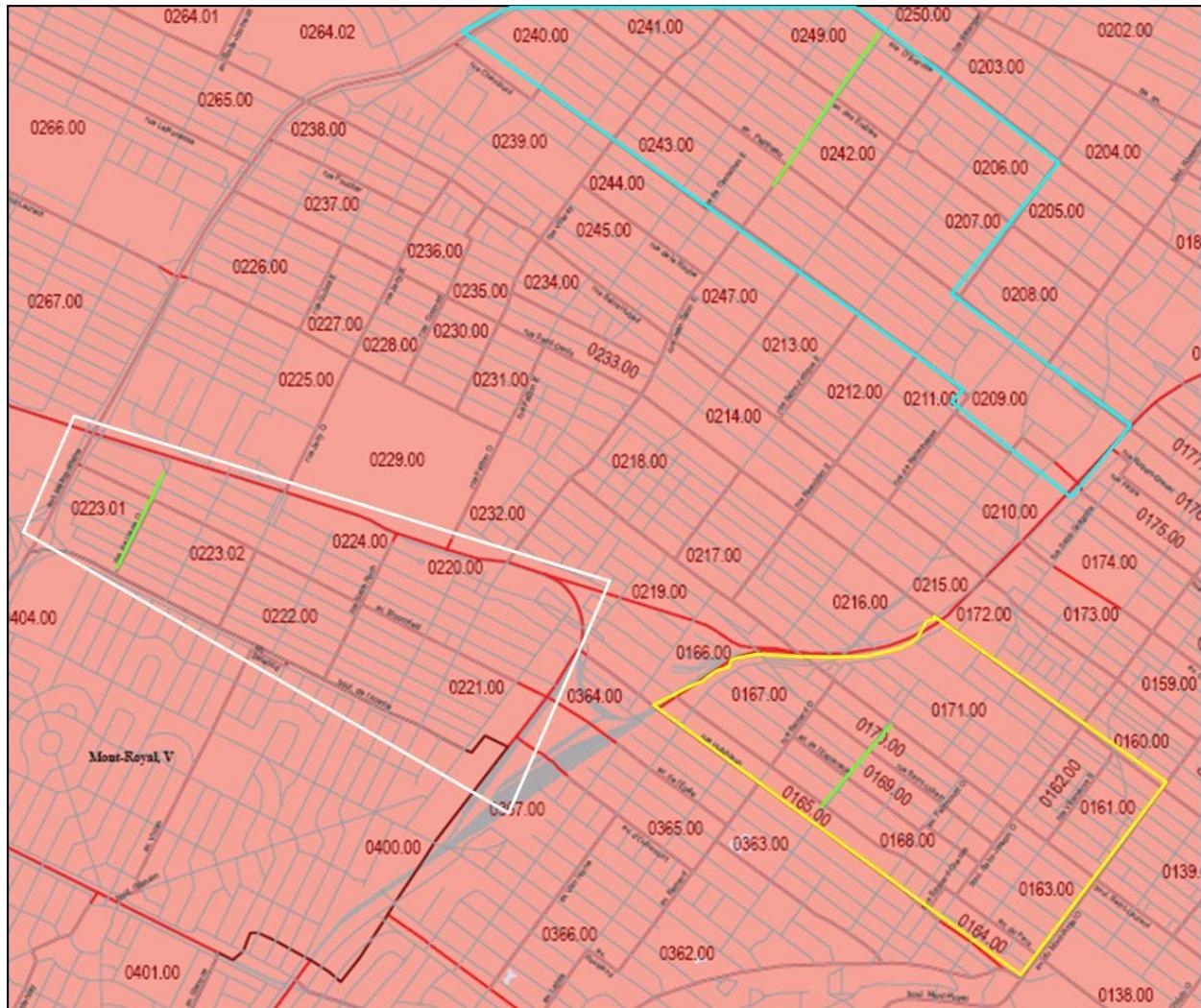
Immig = Immigration status; „imm“ = immigrant; „G2“ = second generation (i.e. child of at least one immigrant parent); „long“ = family long-established in Canada (several generations).

Lang = language used during interview, NOT language of interviewee.

Appendix L Census tracts used to collect statistical data

Census tracts for Jean-Talon Est, de Liège and St-Viateur streets

Data was collected for tracts within the areas outlined in blue for Jean-Talon Est, white for de Liège and yellow for St-Viateur; the streets themselves marked in green. Tracts 240, 241 and 249 extend north to railway track.



Adapted from the Statistics Canada publication 2006 Census, *Census Tract Reference Maps, by Census Metropolitan Areas or Census Agglomerations, Update*, Catalogue 92-146-UIB. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=92-146-U> (accessed 26 June 2009)

Appendix M Letter of information

English version

Research project

„Sociability in multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal“

I am a PhD student in Urban Studies at INRS-UCS. For my thesis, I am doing a research project about multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal. I'm especially interested in how people use these streets, and what they think about the streets' shops and businesses and general social atmosphere.

To find out more, I would like to interview you. This will take about an hour. What you say will be treated as strictly confidential. The notes and/or recording of the interview will be kept in a secure place. When I write or talk about the results of my research, I will not present anything that allows you or anyone else you talk about to be identified.

If you like, I can send you a report of the research results when I have finished my project (probably not before 2008).

Please feel free to ask me any questions about the research project. You can also contact one of the resource people named below.

Thank you very much for your help. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Martha Radice

PhD Student and Principal Researcher
Tel. 514 499 4050

E-mail martha.radice@ucs.inrs.ca

Research supervisor:

Annick Germain, Professor
Tel. 514 499 4004

E-mail annick.germain@ucs.inrs.ca

External resource-person :

Marie-France Gagnier

Chair of the Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains
(Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects)

Institut national de la recherche scientifique, 490, rue de la Couronne, Québec (QC), G1K 9A9

Tel. : 418 654 2514

E-mail: marie-france.gagnier@uqtr.ca

Projet de recherche

« La sociabilité dans les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal »

Je suis étudiante au doctorat en études urbaines à l'INRS-UCS. Dans le cadre de ma thèse, je fais une recherche sur les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal. Je m'intéresse particulièrement à comment les gens utilisent ces rues et à leurs points de vue sur l'ambiance sociale de ces rues ainsi que sur les types de commerces qui y sont présents.

Pour en savoir plus, j'aimerais faire une entrevue avec vous. Cette entrevue durera environ une heure. Les propos recueillis sont strictement confidentiels et seront gardés dans un lieu sûr. Lorsque je présente les résultats de recherche à l'écrit ou à l'oral, je ne présenterai rien qui permettra de retracer votre identité ou celles des autres personnes dont vous parlez.

Si vous le désirez, je pourrai vous envoyer un rapport des résultats de recherche quand je l'aurai complété (probablement pas avant 2008).

N'hésitez pas à me demander d'autres renseignements sur le projet de recherche. Vous pouvez aussi joindre une des personnes-ressources mentionnées ci-dessous.

Je vous remercie sincèrement. Votre participation me tient à cœur.

Martha Radice
Étudiante au doctorat et chercheure principale
Tél. 514 499 4050
Adresse électronique martha.radice@ucs.inrs.ca

Sous la direction d'Annick Germain, professeur
Tél. 514 499 4004
Adresse électronique annick.germain@ucs.inrs.ca

Personne-ressource extérieure au projet :
Marie-France Gagnier
Présidente du Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains
Institut national de la recherche scientifique
490, rue de la Couronne
Québec (Québec) G1K 9A9
Téléphone : (418) 654-2514
Télécopieur : (418) 654-3858
courriel: marie-france.gagnier@uqtr.ca

Appendix N Consent form

English version

Consent form

„Sociability in multiethnic shopping streets in Montréal“

- I agree to participate in this research project on multiethnic shopping streets in Montreal by giving an interview to the researcher about my experiences of the street(s) that she is studying.
- I understand that what I say in this interview will be used for a thesis and other reports and publications, and I agree to this on condition that no information that allows me to be identified is reported.
- I am aware that I can refuse to answer any of the questions and that I can stop the interview at any time.
- The signature below confirms that
 - I have received the information about the research project
 - I have understood all of the above
 - my questions about the study have been answered satisfactorily, and
 - I am agreeing to participate in the study voluntarily.

Signature

Name

Date

Address (optional, if you would like to receive a report)

Approved by the Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains (Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects) of the INRS : 23 May 2006

Formulaire de consentement

« La sociabilité dans les rues commerçantes pluriethniques à Montréal »

- J'accepte de participer à cette étude universitaire qui a pour but de mieux comprendre les relations sociales dans les rues commerçantes pluriethniques de Montréal, et j'accorde à la chercheuse une entrevue portant sur mes expériences des rues qu'elle étudie.
- Je comprends que les propos recueillis lors de cette entrevue seront utilisés à des fins de thèse, de rapport et de publication ultérieurs, et je consens à cette utilisation des données à la condition qu'aucun renseignement permettant de m'identifier ne soit diffusé.
- Je suis consciente que je peux refuser de répondre à une question qui m'indispose et que je peux arrêter l'entrevue à tout moment.
- La signature en bas indique :
 - que j'ai reçu l'information concernant le projet de recherche,
 - que j'ai bien compris tout ce qui est mentionné ci-dessus,
 - qu'on m'a répondu de façon satisfaisante à mes questions concernant l'étude, et
 - que c'est volontairement que j'accepte d'y participer.

Signature

Nom

Date

Adresse (facultative, si vous voulez recevoir un rapport)

Approbation du Comité d'éthique en recherche avec des êtres humains de l'INRS : 23 mai 2006

Appendix O Leaflet

English version



URBANISATION, CULTURE ET SOCIÉTÉ
INRS

My name is Martha Radice. I'm a student doing a PhD in Urban Studies at the Urbanisation, Culture et Société centre of the Institut national de la recherche scientifique, Montréal.

I'm doing a research project on four shopping streets in multiethnic neighbourhoods of Montréal. I'm interested in how individuals and different social and ethnic groups use these streets, and what they think of them.

I'm talking to all kinds of people who use the street – business owners, customers, local residents and visitors – from many different backgrounds. I'm also spending time in the streets to see how they are used at different moments.



Thank you very much for helping me with my project. If you would like any further information about it, or if you would like to receive a report when I finish (2008), please feel free to contact me at the following address.

Martha Radice
INRS Urbanisation, Culture et
Société
385 rue Sherbrooke Est
Montréal, QC H2X 1E3
☎ 514 499 4050
✉ martha.radice@ucs.inrs.ca





URBANISATION, CULTURE ET SOCIÉTÉ
INRS

Je m'appelle Martha Radice. Je suis étudiante au doctorat en études urbaines au centre Urbanisation, Culture et Société de l'Institut national de la recherche scientifique, Montréal.

Je fais un projet de recherche sur quatre rues commerçantes dans des quartiers pluriethniques à Montréal. Je m'intéresse à la manière dont les individus et les différents groupes ethniques et sociaux utilisent certaines rues et à ce qu'ils en pensent.

Pour en savoir plus, je parle avec des gens de toutes origines qui utilisent les rues – commerçants, clients, habitants du quartier, visiteurs. Aussi, je passe beaucoup de temps dans les rues afin de voir comment on les utilise à différents moments.



Merci beaucoup de m'avoir aidée dans mon projet. Si vous souhaitez en savoir plus ou si vous voulez recevoir un rapport des résultats lorsque j'aurai fini (2008), n'hésitez pas à communiquer avec moi.

Martha Radice
INRS Urbanisation, Culture et Société
385 rue Sherbrooke Est
Montréal, QC H2X 1E3
☎ 514 499 4050
✉ martha.radice@ucs.inrs.ca



Appendix P Immigration data

All data is 20% sample data, extracted from Statistics Canada's e-stat service.

Table P.1 Top ten countries of birth of immigrants, census tracts surrounding rue De Liège

1996 Census		2001 Census		2006 Census	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
Greece	26.4	Greece	22.4	Greece	21.4
India	10.0	India	15.0	Pakistan	12.7
Haiti	8.7	Pakistan	8.4	India	12.4
Sri Lanka	5.8	Sri Lanka	8.1	Bangladesh	8.1
Poland	3.5	Bangladesh	6.5	Sri Lanka	6.3
Pakistan	3.3	Haiti	4.9	Haiti	6.0
El Salvador	3.0	Italy	2.7	China	2.2
Viet Nam	2.8	Viet Nam	2.6	Italy	1.5
Italy	2.5	El Salvador	2.0	Poland	1.4
Lebanon	2.1	China	1.9	El Salvador	1.3
Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	68.0	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	74.5	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	73.5
Total immigrants as % of total population	60.6	Total immigrants as % of total population	62.0	Total immigrants as % of total population	61.6
Total top ten (absolute nos.)	12 295	Total top ten (absolute nos.)	14 495	Total top ten (absolute nos.)	13 705
Total immigrants	18 080	Total immigrants	19 455	Total immigrants	18 645
Total population	29 835	Total population	31 375	Total population	30 250

Table P.2 Top ten countries of birth of immigrants, census tracts surrounding rue Jean-Talon Est

1996 Census		2001 Census		2006 Census	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
Italy	28.4	Italy	23.5	Italy	17.5
Haiti	12.4	Haiti	13.7	Haiti	10.0
Viet Nam	9.3	Viet Nam	12.2	Viet Nam	9.0
Portugal	7.3	Portugal	6.3	Algeria	6.9
El Salvador	3.2	France	4.3	Morocco	6.0
Lebanon	2.8	Algeria	4.0	Portugal	5.7
Morocco	2.6	El Salvador	3.7	France	4.7
France	2.4	Morocco	3.7	China	2.6
China	2.1	USA	1.5	El Salvador	2.4
Chile	2.0	Lebanon	1.5	Peru	2.0
Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	72.5	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	74.4	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	66.8
Total immigrants as % of total population	29.4	Total immigrants as % of total population	31.9	Total immigrants as % of total population	33.5
Total top ten (nos.)	6 900	Total top ten (nos.)	7 805	Total top ten (nos.)	7 180
Total immigrants	9 520	Total immigrants	10 490	Total immigrants	10 745
Total population	32 390	Total population	32 900	Total population	32 035

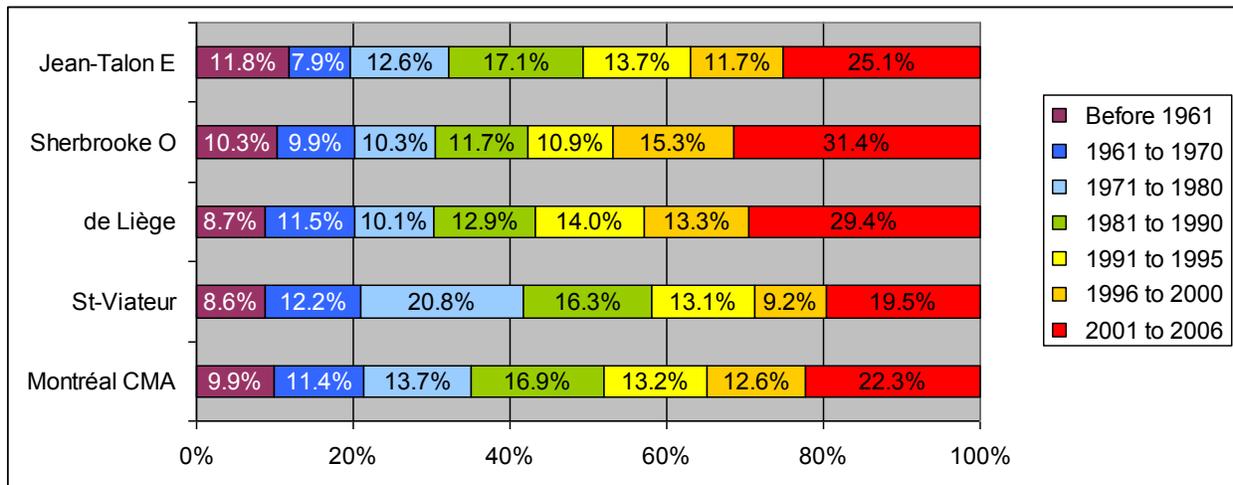
Table P.3 Top ten countries of birth of immigrants, census tracts surrounding rue Sherbrooke Ouest

1996 Census		2001 Census		2006 Census	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
Italy	9.1	Italy	8.1	China	13.1
United Kingdom	6.2	China	5.9	Romania	6.1
USA	5.4	France	5.3	Italy	5.2
France	5.0	Iran	5.2	Iran	4.7
Iran	4.3	United Kingdom	5.0	France	4.6
Jamaica	3.7	Romania	4.5	USA	4.2
Romania	3.6	USA	4.0	United Kingdom	3.3
Poland	3.5	Poland	3.6	Philippines	3.3
Philippines	3.3	Philippines	3.2	Morocco	2.7
Korea, South	3.1	Jamaica	2.9	Jamaica	2.6
Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	47.0	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	47.6	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	49.8
Total immigrants as % of total population	32.2	Total immigrants as % of total population	32.0	Total immigrants as % of total population	37.3
Total top ten (nos.)	7 405	Total top ten (nos.)	7 680	Total top ten (nos.)	9 550
Total immigrants	15 750	Total immigrants	16 135	Total immigrants	19 180
Total population	48 920	Total population	50 350	Total population	51 390

Table P.4 Top ten countries of birth of immigrants, census tracts surrounding rue St-Viateur

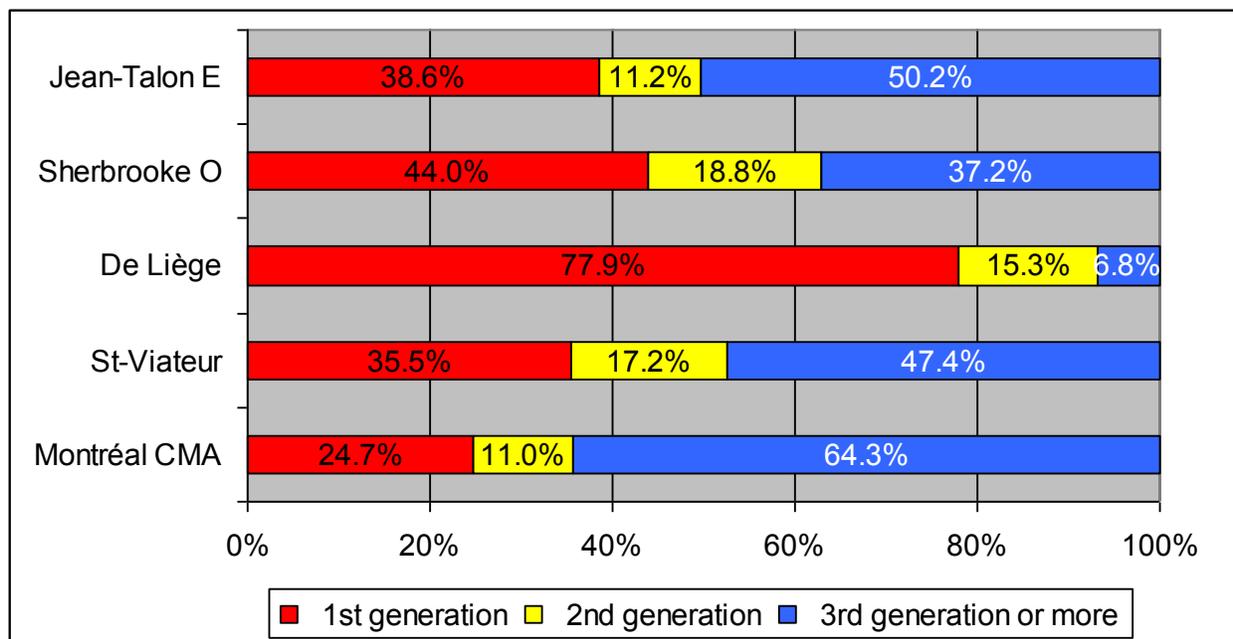
1996 Census		2001 Census		2006 Census	
Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants	Country	% immigrants
Portugal	16.9	Portugal	16.6	France	15.3
Greece	10.6	France	14.0	Portugal	12.6
France	9.3	Greece	8.2	Greece	8.3
Italy	5.1	USA	5.0	USA	5.1
USA	4.1	Italy	3.8	China	4.8
China	3.8	United Kingdom	3.6	Italy	3.1
Viet Nam	3.4	China	2.8	United Kingdom	2.5
India	2.9	Poland	2.2	Chile	2.3
Poland	2.4	Chile	2.1	Haiti	2.1
Haiti	2.3	Algeria	2.0	Algeria	2.1
Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	60.8		60.4	Total top 10 as % of all immigrants	58.1
Total immigrants as % of total population	31.6		28.3	Total immigrants as % of total population	27.4
Total top ten (nos.)	4 560		4 165	Total top ten (nos.)	3 790
Total immigrants	7 500		6 895	Total immigrants	6 525
Total population	23 765		24 350	Total population	23 845

Figure P.1 Immigrant population by period of immigration, 2006 census



20% sample data, extracted from Statistics Canada's e-stat service.

Figure P.2 Total population 15 years and older by immigration generation status, 2006 census



20% sample data, extracted from Statistics Canada's e-stat service.

Generation status is derived from place of birth of the respondent, respondent's father and respondent's mother. The three response categories are defined as follows in the Statistics Canada Census 2006 reference material:

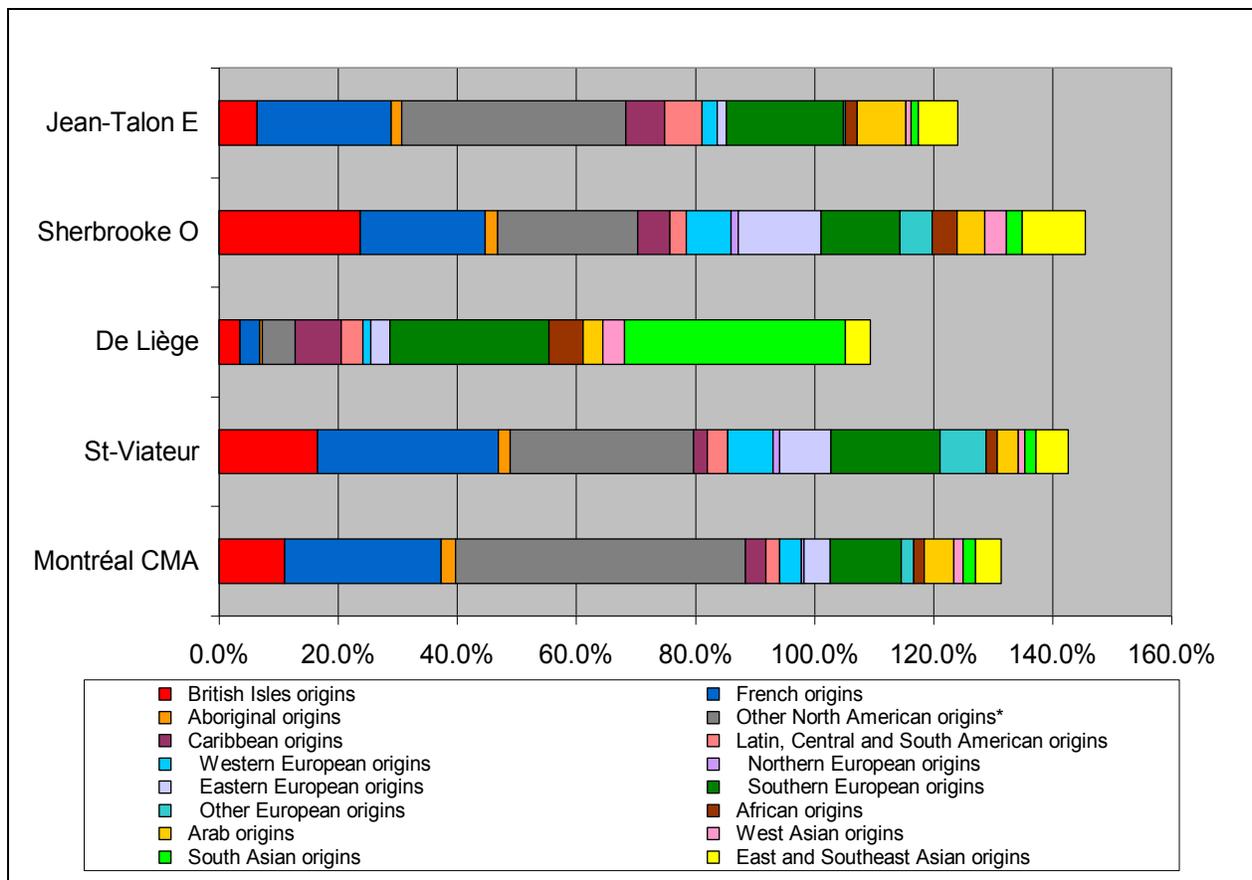
1. First generation: persons born outside Canada;
2. Second generation: persons born inside Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada. This includes (a) persons born in Canada with both parents born outside Canada and (b) persons born in Canada with one parent born in Canada and one parent

born outside Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well);

3. Third generation or more: persons born inside Canada with both parents born inside Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).

Appendix Q Ethnic origin data

Figure Q.1 Broad categories of ethnic origins, 2006 census, single and multiple responses



* includes Québécois and Canadian

20% sample data, extracted from Statistics Canada's e-stat service.

Table Q.1 Ethnic origins of population surrounding St-Viateur, 2006 census

Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data	23845	100%
British Isles origins	3945	16.5%
English	1560	6.5%
Irish	2060	8.6%
Scottish	1635	6.9%
British Isles, n.i.e.	300	1.3%
French origins	7235	30.3%
French	7165	30.0%
Aboriginal origins	475	2.0%
North American Indian	450	1.9%
Other North American origins	7345	30.8%
American	315	1.3%
Canadian	6520	27.3%
Québécois	720	3.0%
Caribbean origins	565	2.4%
Haitian	305	1.3%
Latin, Central and South American origins	825	3.5%
European origins	9145	38.4%
Western European origins	1805	7.6%
Belgian	270	1.1%
Dutch (Netherlands)	325	1.4%
German	1045	4.4%
Northern European origins	260	1.1%
Scandinavian origins	235	1.0%
Eastern European origins	2045	8.6%
Hungarian (Magyar)	455	1.9%
Polish	670	2.8%
Russian	450	1.9%
Ukrainian	495	2.1%
Southern European origins	4385	18.4%
Greek	1100	4.6%
Italian	1045	4.4%
Portuguese	1470	6.2%
Spanish	670	2.8%
Other European origins	1830	7.7%
Jewish	1735	7.3%
African origins	450	1.9%
Arab origins	855	3.6%
Lebanese	240	1.0%
Maghrebi origins	335	1.4%
West Asian origins	270	1.1%
South Asian origins	430	1.8%
East and Southeast Asian origins	1290	5.4%
Chinese	765	3.2%
Includes single and multiple responses, so totals for specific groups will add up to more than 100%. Ethnic origins reported by less than 1% of the population are not shown.		

Table Q.2 Ethnic origins of population surrounding de Liège, 2006 census

Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data	30250	100.0%
British Isles origins	1055	3.5%
English	605	2.0%
Irish	410	1.4%
French origins	1020	3.4%
French	1005	3.3%
Other North American origins	1670	5.5%
Canadian	1575	5.2%
Québécois	85	0.3%
Caribbean origins	2320	7.7%
Haitian	1510	5.0%
Latin, Central and South American origins	1125	3.7%
Salvadorean	405	1.3%
European origins	9280	30.7%
Western European origins	375	1.2%
Eastern European origins	970	3.2%
Polish	385	1.3%
Southern European origins	8090	26.7%
Greek	6660	22.0%
Italian	755	2.5%
African origins	1740	5.8%
Ghanaian	500	1.7%
African, n.i.e.	570	1.9%
Arab origins	1020	3.4%
Maghrebi origins	485	1.6%
Arab, n.i.e.	310	1.0%
West Asian origins	1100	3.6%
Armenian	365	1.2%
Turk	635	2.1%
South Asian origins	11215	37.1%
Bangladeshi	1330	4.4%
Bengali	470	1.6%
East Indian	4585	15.2%
Pakistani	2715	9.0%
Sri Lankan	1345	4.4%
Tamil	355	1.2%
South Asian, n.i.e.	685	2.3%
East and Southeast Asian origins	1270	4.2%
Chinese	770	2.5%
Vietnamese	295	1.0%
Includes single and multiple responses, so totals for specific groups will add up to more than 100%. Ethnic origins reported by less than 1% of the population are not shown.		

Table Q.3 Ethnic origins of population surrounding Sherbrooke Ouest, 2006 census

Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data	51390	100.0%
British Isles origins	12185	23.7%
English	6185	12.0%
Irish	5590	10.9%
Scottish	4440	8.6%
British Isles, n.i.e.	795	1.5%
French origins	10795	21.0%
French	10635	20.7%
Aboriginal origins	1065	2.1%
North American Indian	920	1.8%
Other North American origins	12125	23.6%
American	750	1.5%
Canadian	11165	21.7%
Caribbean origins	2740	5.3%
Haitian	520	1.0%
Jamaican	870	1.7%
Latin, Central and South American origins	1415	2.8%
European origins	18125	35.3%
Western European origins	3865	7.5%
Dutch (Netherlands)	655	1.3%
German	2575	5.0%
Northern European origins	655	1.3%
Scandinavian origins	500	1.0%
Eastern European origins	7145	13.9%
Hungarian (Magyar)	750	1.5%
Polish	2325	4.5%
Romanian	1820	3.5%
Russian	2165	4.2%
Ukrainian	1060	2.1%
Southern European origins	6785	13.2%
Greek	775	1.5%
Italian	3765	7.3%
Portuguese	645	1.3%
Spanish	1145	2.2%
Other European origins	2805	5.5%
Jewish	2565	5.0%
African origins	2125	4.1%
Arab origins	2430	4.7%
Lebanese	775	1.5%
Maghrebi origins	925	1.8%
Moroccan	640	1.2%
West Asian origins	1860	3.6%
Iranian	1065	2.1%
South Asian origins	1345	2.6%
East Indian	915	1.8%
East and Southeast Asian origins	5470	10.6%

Chinese	3695	7.2%
Filipino	920	1.8%
Korean	360	0.7%
Includes single and multiple responses, so totals for specific groups will add up to more than 100%. Ethnic origins reported by less than 1% of the population are not shown (except for Korean, shown because of the prevalence of Korean businesses on Sherbrooke Ouest).		

Table Q. 4 Ethnic origins of population surrounding Jean-Talon Est, 2006 census

Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data	32040	100.0%
British Isles origins	2035	6.4%
English	495	1.5%
Irish	1330	4.2%
Scottish	435	1.4%
French origins	7220	22.5%
French	7115	22.2%
Aboriginal origins	575	1.8%
North American Indian	530	1.7%
Other North American origins	12065	37.7%
Canadian	11245	35.1%
Québécois	845	2.6%
Caribbean origins	2080	6.5%
Dominican, n.o.s.	545	1.7%
Haitian	1415	4.4%
Latin, Central and South American origins	2025	6.3%
Peruvian	320	1.0%
Salvadorean	445	1.4%
European origins	7605	23.7%
Western European origins	800	2.5%
German	320	1.0%
Eastern European origins	515	1.6%
Southern European origins	6300	19.7%
Italian	4300	13.4%
Portuguese	1125	3.5%
Spanish	1000	3.1%
African origins	620	1.9%
Arab origins	2640	8.2%
Lebanese	445	1.4%
Maghrebi origins	1825	5.7%
Algerian	560	1.7%
Berber	310	1.0%
Moroccan	745	2.3%
South Asian origins	365	1.1%
East and Southeast Asian origins	2130	6.6%
Chinese	860	2.7%
Vietnamese	1170	3.7%
Includes single and multiple responses, so totals for specific groups will add up to more than 100%. Ethnic origins reported by less than 1% of the population are not shown		

Appendix R Approximate ethnicity of people and businesses

Notes for the following figures

Data for people are from the 2006 census and include both single and multiple responses. The percentage represents a weighted percentage of total origins declared, rather than percentage of people declaring them. They are organized according to the broad „regional“ categories used by Statistics Canada. Where a more specific category of ethnic origin is used (e.g. Greek), the number of responses from this category has been subtracted from those of the broad category (e.g. Southern European). This presents some distortions, since due to multiple responses the sum of specific categories do not add up to the total for each broad category. However, the resulting figure is an adequate indicator, given the data available (and the subjective nature of ethnic origin).

Data for shops are from personal observation and interpretation. The category „Other North American origins“ includes shops classed as „mainstream Québécois/Canadian/North American“, such as most depanneurs, banks, and non-specific grocery stores and restaurants. The category „Uncertain“ includes both stores for which information is lacking, and stores that are hard to categorize because some elements are ethnically marked and others are not, or because their ethnic markers are of two or more different broad ethnic origins.

Figure R.1 Approximate ethnicity around St-Viateur

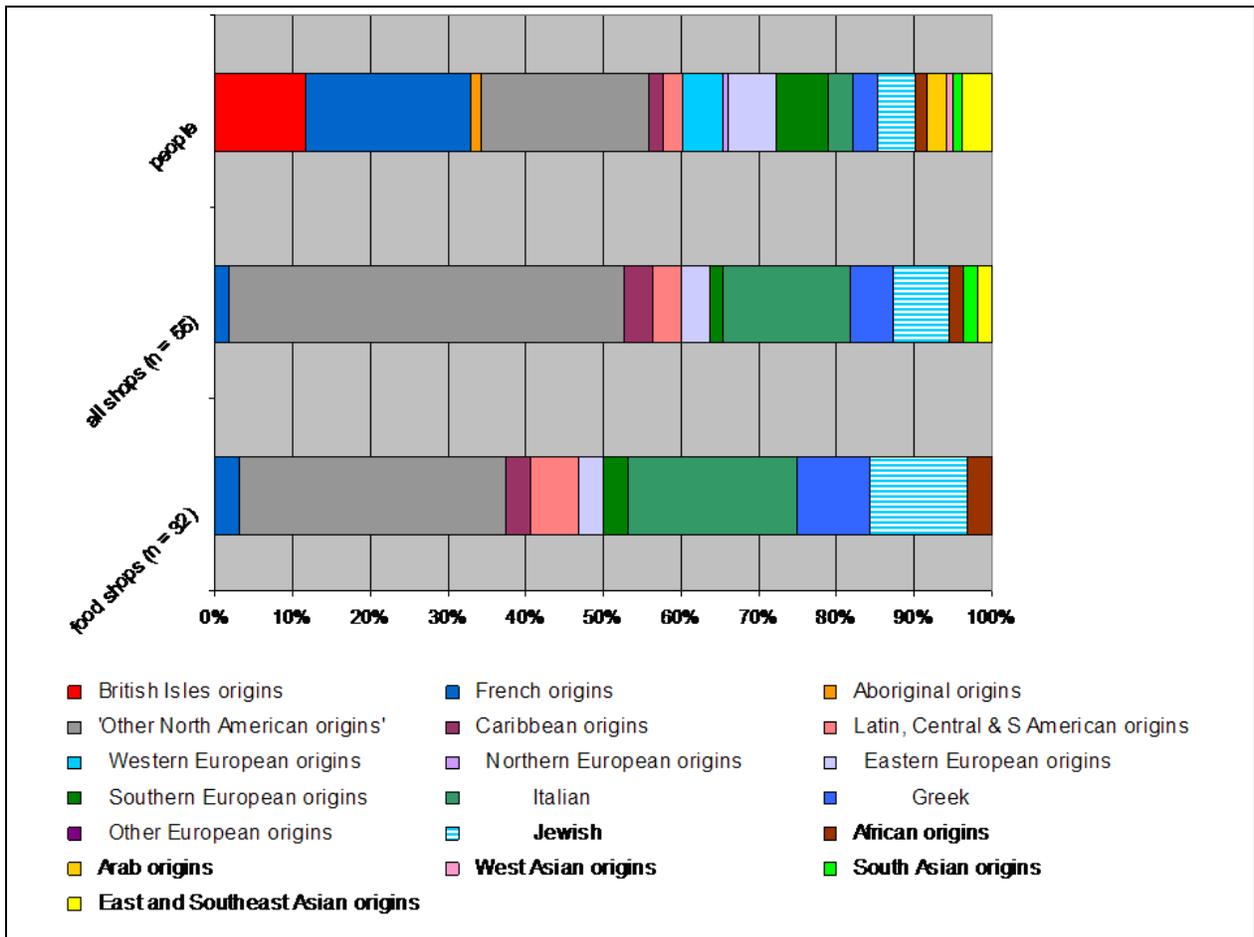


Figure R.2 Approximate ethnicity around Sherbrooke Ouest

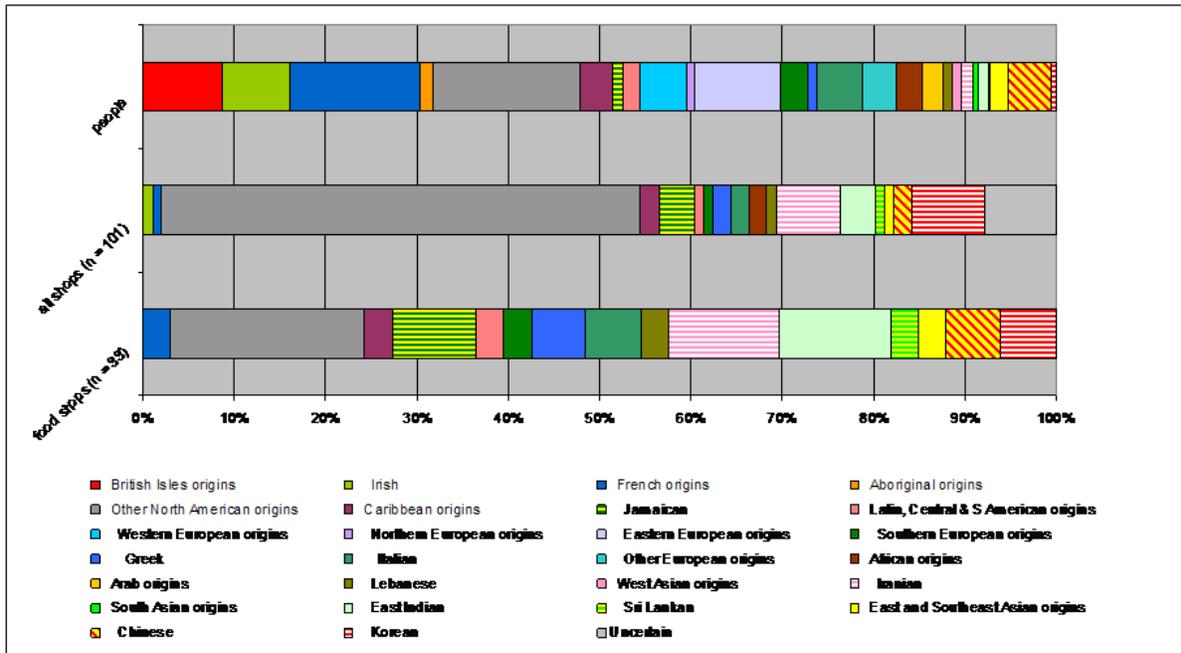


Figure R.3 Approximate ethnicity around de Liège

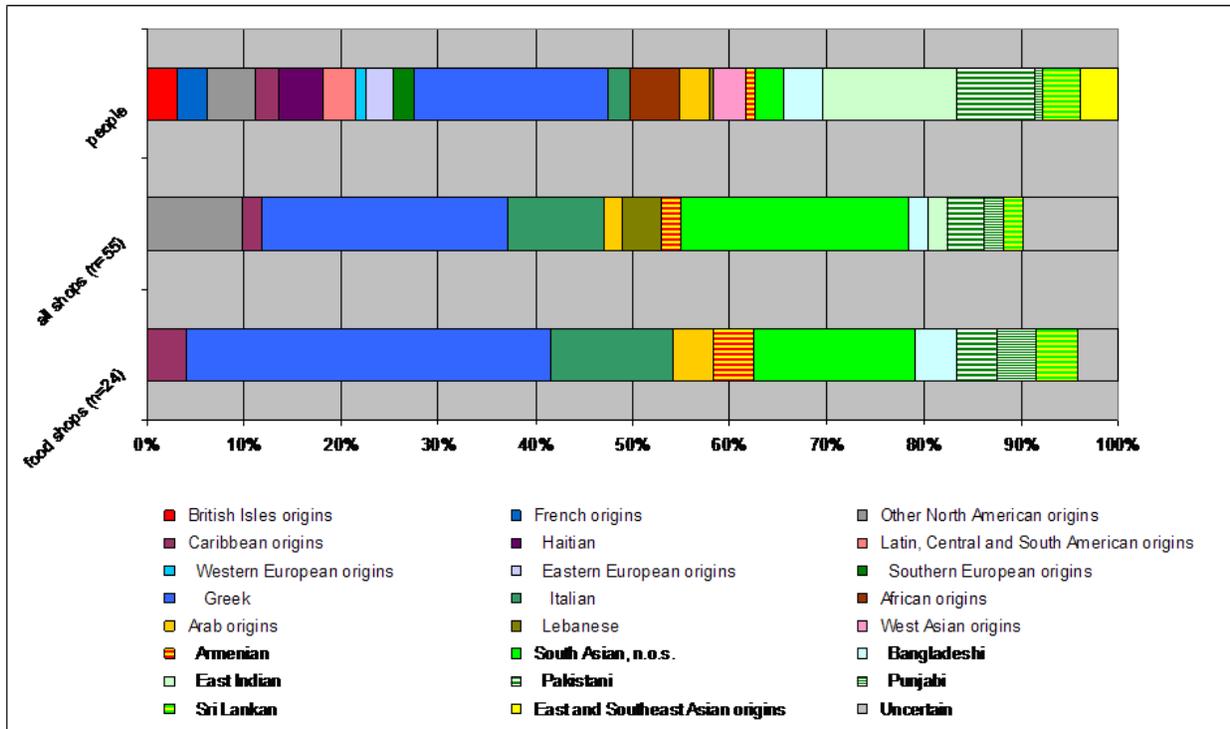
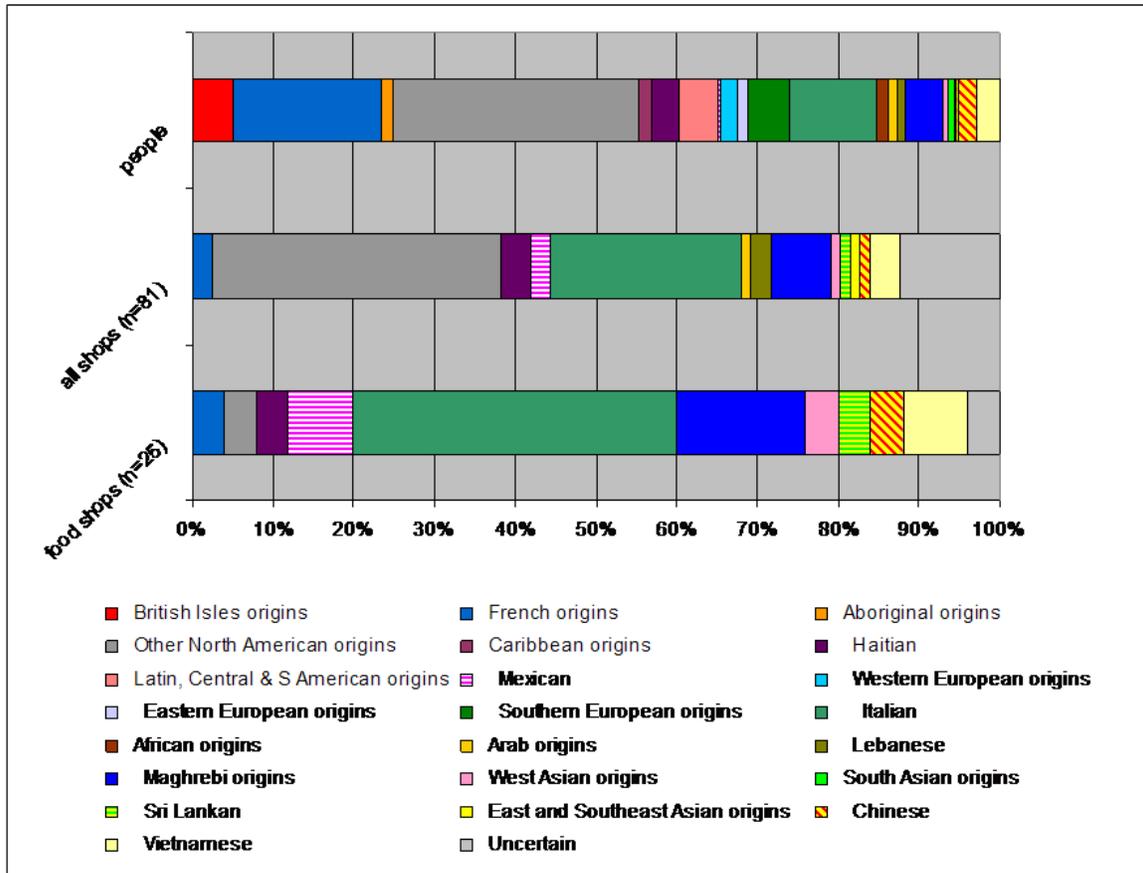
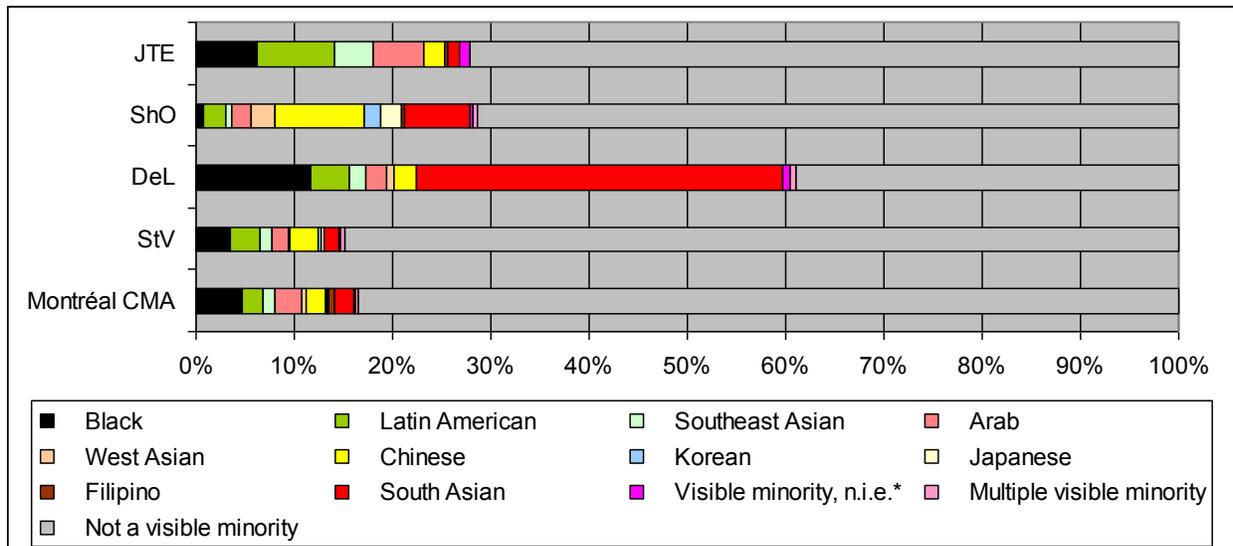


Figure R. 4 Approximate ethnicity around Jean-Talon Est



Appendix S Visible minority status of local population

Total population by visible minority groups, Census 2006

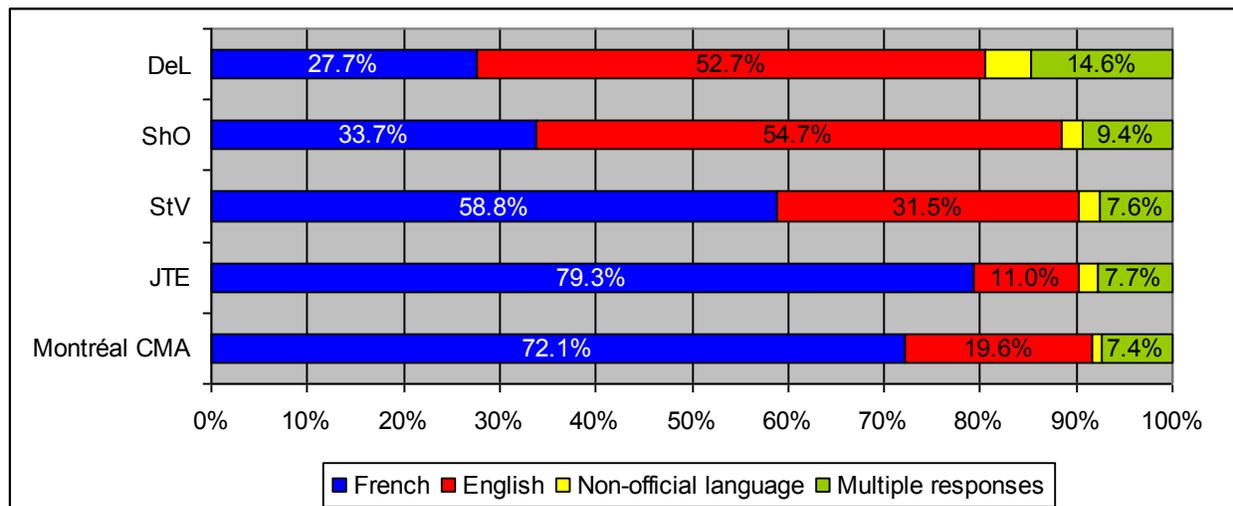


* n.i.e. = not included elsewhere

20% sample data, extracted from Statistics Canada's e-stat service.

Appendix T Language used most often at work

Total population 15 years and over who worked since January 1, 2005 by language used most often at work, Census 2006



Appendix U Illustrations for Chapter 5

Vie de quartier Notre-Dame-de-Grâce



« Pas besoin d'être juif pour fabriquer le bagel! », assure le propriétaire de D.A.D.S. bagels, Kashmir Randhawa. Ce Québécois d'origine indienne tient boutique rue Sherbrooke, dans NDG. PHOTO ANDRÉ PICHETTE, LA PRESSE ©

DU CÔTÉ DE SHERBROOKE OUEST

Figure U.1 The ambiguity of ethnicity in „ethnic“ business. The caption of this magnificent photograph reads: „You don't need to be Jewish to make bagels!“ the owner of D.A.D.S. bagels, Kashmir Randhawa confirms. This Quebecer of Indian origin owns the store on rue Sherbrooke, in NDG” (my translation). Photo: André Pichette, La Presse. Front-page illustration to the „Actuel“ section featuring the article on Sherbrooke Ouest by Laurence (2006).



Figure U.2 Multilingual sign on Jean-Talon Est



Figure U.3 Multilingual welcome on St-Viateur

Appendix V Illustrations for Chapter 6



Figures V.1 and V.2 Posters for Canada Day, 2007 and the 6th „Mary Deros Annual Picnic“, 2008, festivals in Parc Howard, rue de Liège.



Figure V.3 Children's Bangladeshi dance troupe, Canada Day 2007, rue de Liège



Figure V.4 The audience at Canada Day, 2007, Parc Howard, rue de Liège

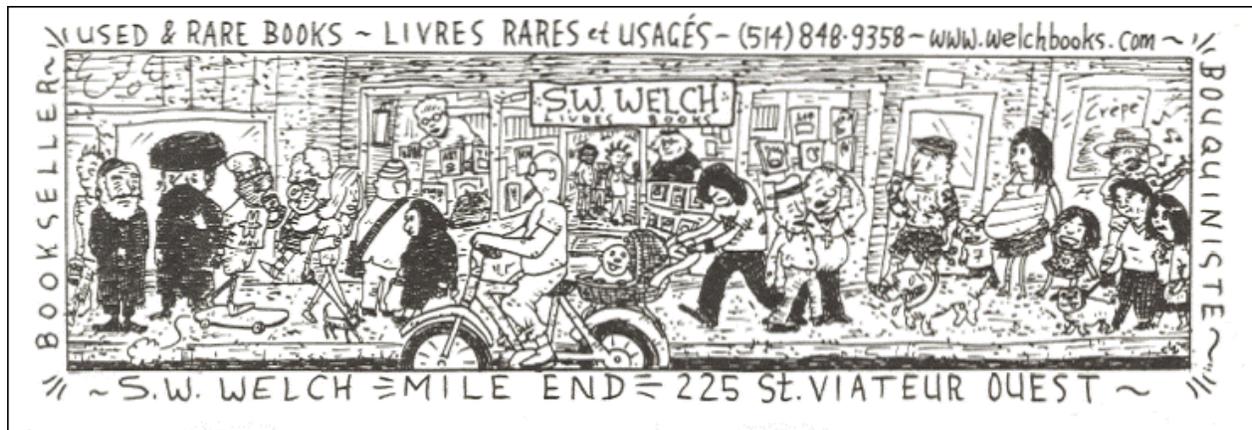


Figure V.5 Dance at the 2008 picnic organized by councillor Mary Deros (centre, in green suit), Parc Howard, rue de Liège

Varieties of St-Viateur street culture



Photograph of Garcia's portraits of Olimpico staff (taken by author, 17 September 2006).

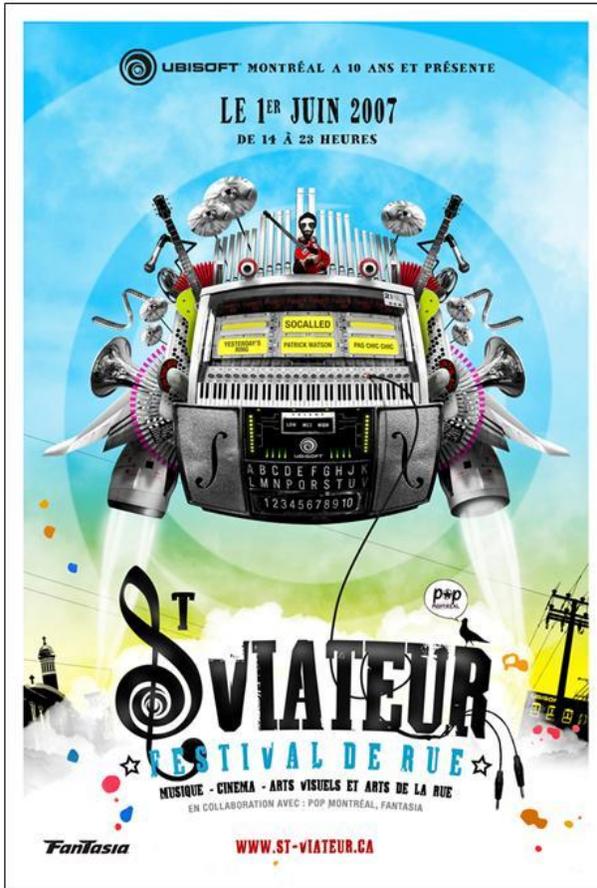


Bookmark with St-Viateur street scene.

Bookmark showing typical St-Viateur characters, such as woman with yoga mat, long-haired man pushing baby, short older men chatting, cyclist, Orthodox Jews, skater, busker, and people eating bagels. Reproduced with permission of the bookseller, S W Welch, and the artist, Howard Chackowicz.

Overleaf: St-Viateur t-shirt design by Joern at www.tresnormale.com. Reproduced with artist's permission.





Flyer for St-Viateur festival de rue showing programme. Above the programme on the right, I have added a red dotted line to highlight the subtle Ubisoft logo in the festival logo.



Left: two men fill in questionnaires at the research kiosk at St-Viateur festival de rue.

Right: view of the festival with me interviewing someone at the research kiosk to the right.



Above: Polish sausage sandwiches for sale at the St-Viateur festival de rue.

Below: the festival in the evening (photo by Christopher DeWolf, used with permission).



Appendix W Zoning regulations for each street

The following details are taken from the zoning regulations (*règlements d'urbanisme*) published by each borough, which were all first adopted in 2001 when urban planning was decentralized to the boroughs (see Chapter 1) (Arrondissement Côte-des-Neiges – Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, 2001-2006; Arrondissement du Plateau Mont-Royal, 2001-2006; Arrondissement Villeray – St-Michel – Parc-Extension, 2001). Each set of regulations is modified when necessary in council meetings, and modifications are integrated into the whole official document.¹ All are in French, so translations are mine. I am grateful to the municipal urban planners who helped me make sense of these rather complex documents (and who are not responsible for any errors of interpretation I have made!).

Zoning is made up of a combination of factors, including permitted land uses, surface areas, number of storeys and distances between certain kinds of businesses and various detailed architectural specifications (which I do not list here). The table overleaf lists the permitted commercial and collective land uses for each street's zoning. A distinction is made between „specific“ and „additional“ commercial uses, the reasons for which need not concern us here. Other relevant factors are listed below for each street, in order of appearance in Chapter 5.

Rue de Liège

De Liège is zoned as C.2A H. The „A“ signifies that the authorized commercial uses are permitted, but not compulsory, at ground floor and below ground level; „H“ means that housing is permitted at all levels of the buildings. A C.2 zone is reserved for “low-intensity” retail sales and general services (article 180). In the C.2 zone, commercial uses cannot exceed 200 m², with the exception of grocery stores and pharmacies which are limited to 1000 m² (a. 183-184). A new restaurant must not open less than 25m from an existing restaurant (unless the new one is smaller than 50m²) (a. 230), and a new bar selling alcohol (*débit de boissons alcooliques*) must not open less than 200m from an existing one (a. 234).

The exceptions to commercial zoning are that Parc Howard and Parc Jean-Valets are zoned as parks (classification E.1(1), community garden, park or promenade, a. 294), Parc-École Sinclair-Laird is zoned as a school (E.4(1), a. 303), and the block opposite Parc Jean-

¹ I consulted versions updated in 2006 for the boroughs of Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (rue Sherbrooke Ouest) and Plateau Mont-Royal (St-Viateur). For the borough of Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension, I consulted the version available on the borough website on 22 April 2009, which was dated only to 2001 but presumably includes more recent modifications.

Valets, between de l'Épée and Bloomfield, is zoned for residential buildings only, of two to eight dwellings.

Rue Jean-Talon Est

Jean-Talon Est is zoned as C.3(10)B, H between Fabre and de Lorimier, and C.4B, H between de Lorimier and d'Iberville. The „B“ denotes that commercial uses are permitted at ground-level, below ground-level and on the floor immediately above ground-level; the „H“ means housing is permitted at all levels. The exceptions are the Parc Gabriel-Sagard, zoned as E.1(1), park, community garden or promenade, and the church at the corner of Papineau, zoned as E.5(1), place of worship.

In both zones C.3(10) and C.4B, commercial or collective/institutional use is compulsory for all ground-level premises (unless they are only adjacent to a façade that faces onto a road zoned solely for housing, if I have understood correctly²) (article 194, article 200). A C.4 zone is for “medium-intensity” commercial retailing and services (a. 197). C.3 zones are customized “to respond to the needs and particularities of the designated sectors” (a. 186), and the C.3(10) zone is called the „Quartier Italien – Rue Jean-Talon” (sous-section 5, a. 194-196). This suggests that at some point, zoning was adapted to existing uses of or future plans for this sector, perhaps in response to lobbying from businesspeople. Its particularities seem to be the following. In the C.3(10) zone, commercial uses cannot exceed 200 m² (a. 195), whereas in the C.4 zone, the surface area limit is 4 000 m² for grocery stores and 10 000 m² for other specific commercial uses (a. 157). In zone C.4B, a new bar cannot open up less than 75m from an existing one, zone C.3(10) sets no minimum distance, and is the only zone to do so (a. 234). No minimum distance between restaurants is set in either of the zones C.3(10) or C.4B (a. 230). It therefore seems plausible that the special „Quartier Italien” zone on Jean-Talon, between Fabre and de Lorimier, was created in order to encourage commercial continuity of small shops, bars and restaurants.

The table below shows that some of the commercial uses permitted in a C.2 zone are not permitted in C.3(10); the most relevant is likely the exclusion of the sale of automobile parts and accessories. I suspect that this may be because there is already a large automobile lot in the sector: perhaps the intention is to avoid the zone becoming dominated by that use.

² Compulsory commercial continuity does not apply “à un local qui n'est adjacent qu'à une façade faisant face au prolongement d'une voie publique sur laquelle est seule autorisée une catégorie de la famille habitation” (a. 194, a. 200).

Café-terrasses not exceeding 50% of the surface area of the business to which they are attached are permitted in both zones, from April 1 to November 1 (a. 348-351).

Rue Sherbrooke Ouest

Sherbrooke Ouest is zoned as C.2A, H west of Hampton and C.4A, H east of Hampton. The „A“ means that authorized commercial uses are permitted (but not compulsory) at ground floor and below ground level. Housing is permitted at all levels of the buildings. A C.2 zone is reserved for “low-intensity” retail sales and general services, C.4 for “medium-intensity” retail sales and general services (articles 184 and 196 respectively) and, in principle, commercial use is compulsory for all ground-level premises (with the same exception as for Jean-Talon Est, see above) (a. 199).

In the C.2 zone, commercial uses cannot exceed 200 m², with the exception of grocery stores and pharmacies which are limited to 1000 m² (a. 187-189). In the C.4 zone, commercial uses can be up to 10 000 m², except for grocery stores which are limited to 4000 m² (a. 161). In both zones, a new restaurant cannot be opened less than 25m from an existing one, unless it is smaller than 50 m² (a. 229-230). Café-terrasses not exceeding 50% of the surface area of the business to which they are attached are permitted, from April 1 to November 1, as long as the next-door buildings at ground level are not residential (a. 346-349).

Rue St-Viateur

St-Viateur is zoned as C.1(1)A, H.1-4. This means that housing is permitted at all levels (up to four storeys), and commercial use is permitted (but not compulsory) at ground floor and below ground level (article 161) for “retailing businesses and services that serve everyday needs in the residential sector” (a. 173). The most interesting point to note here is that the permitted uses do not include restaurants (and therefore café-restaurants), which means that the current ones are either there by acquired right (*droit acquis*) or are infringing zoning regulations.

Each establishment cannot occupy a surface area of more than 100 m² (a. 176) except for artists’ and artisans’ studios, bric-a-brac and craft stores and personal or domestic services, which can only take up half that surface area (a. 177).

Interestingly, this zoning covers exactly the section that I am studying: St-Laurent to Avenue du Parc (plus the block to the Outremont border). Note also that it is more restrictive than the zoning on the parallel (but apparently less active) commercial streets north and south of St-Viateur (Bernard and Fairmount) and on de Liège. The sole zoning exception is of course St. Michael’s church, zoned as a place of worship.

Table W.1 Permitted commercial and collective land uses for each zone

zoning	C.1	C.2	C.3(10)	C.4
streets	St-Viateur	de Liège part of Sherbrooke O	part of Jean-Talon Est	part of Jean-Talon Est part of Sherbrooke O
	commercial use not compulsory		commercial use compulsory at ground level	
specific commercial uses	grocery florist bookshop (newsstand) craft or bric-a-brac store pharmacy personal and domestic services	As C.1(1) plus: electronic/computer equipment and accessories personal accessories petshops, except kennels and pet schools antique shops sports and leisure equipment office supplies fuel bookshop (stationers) department store scientific and professional equipment furniture, domestic equipment and accessories sale of automobile parts and accessories fishmongers ironmongers restaurant, caterers clothes, shoes wine & liquor store bar (<i>bar not permitted on Sherbrooke O</i>)	As C.2 except that the following are excluded: fuel department store scientific and professional equipment sale of automobile parts and accessories	As C.2 plus recreational games establishment pawnshop exhibition hall dance hall reception hall meeting hall concert or theatre venue automobile sales or rentals
additional commercial uses	artist's or craftsperson's studio office art gallery personal and domestic services, except laundromats personal care	As C.1(1) plus: gym medical clinic specialized school hotel financial institution laboratory, unless dangerous or toxic pool hall production studio funeral home	As C.2 except that the following are excluded: laboratory production studio funeral home	As C.2 plus: recreational games establishment pawnshop exhibition hall dance hall reception hall meeting hall concert or theatre venue automobile sales or rentals
collective uses	daycare centre library	As C.1(1) plus: community or sociocultural activity primary school and preschool secondary school local cultural centre (<i>maison de la culture</i>) museum	As C.2	As C.2 plus: religious site, such as place of worship or convent neighbourhood police station

Appendix X Résumé long en français¹

La création des lieux cosmopolites au quotidien : les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier à Montréal

Cette thèse porte sur le « vivre-ensemble » de la ville à l'échelle de la vie quotidienne. Plus particulièrement, elle explore les façons dont des citoyens très différents les uns des autres, notamment sur le plan ethnique, entrent en relation dans des rues commerçantes multiethniques des quartiers centraux de Montréal. Le concept théorique au cœur de cette recherche est le cosmopolitisme, que l'on peut définir sommairement (d'après Hannerz, 1990) comme l'ouverture à l'Autre, ou la volonté d'interagir avec l'Autre. J'explore donc les multiples façons dont les usagers des rues commerçantes multiethniques interagissent avec ceux qu'ils perçoivent comme « autres », en me penchant sur les pratiques de sociabilité publique, la production de sens autour des échanges commerciaux et la création des lieux (*place making*) formelle et informelle. Dans chacun de ces domaines, la différence ethnique, tout comme d'autres différences, peut être construite, mise en scène et interprétée (« correctement » ou non). Il en résulte diverses variétés d'ouverture ou de fermeture à l'Autre, qui se manifestent dans les rues en tant que lieux et qui se traduisent par des « figures » ou personnages urbains.

La thèse se divise en sept chapitres. Les chapitres 1 et 2 sont d'ordre théorique et servent à construire la problématique de recherche. Le chapitre 3 présente la méthodologie. Les chapitres 4, 5 et 6 sont d'ordre empirique et présentent les analyses du matériau du travail de terrain portant respectivement sur la sociabilité publique, la mobilisation de l'ethnicité et la création des lieux. Enfin, le chapitre 7 revient à l'abstrait en présentant ma contribution aux théories du cosmopolitisme. La conclusion évalue les forces et les faiblesses de la thèse et offre une réflexion sur sa contribution au champ des études urbaines.

1. Problématiser la ville multiethnique

Le premier chapitre entame la construction du cadre théorique en cernant trois concepts clés – le cosmopolitisme, la ville multiethnique et l'ethnicité – qui structurent le chapitre en trois grandes parties. Le chapitre fournit également, dans la deuxième partie, des détails sur la ville multiethnique qui nous intéresse, Montréal.

¹ Je présente ce résumé long de la thèse afin de conformer à la politique linguistique de l'INRS. / I have provided this long summary of my thesis in order to comply with the linguistic policy of the INRS.

Les chercheurs en sciences sociales affichent depuis une dizaine d'années un intérêt renouvelé pour le cosmopolitisme. Or, comme des ouvrages collectifs récents le démontrent (Binnie et al., 2006; Cheah and Robbins, 1998; Featherstone, 2002; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002a), le terme « cosmopolitisme » prend des sens différents, tantôt compatibles et tantôt contradictoires, pour différents auteurs. Le mot « cosmopolitisme » est souvent employé comme simple synonyme de pluriethnicité, mais l'étymologie grecque du mot – citoyen [*polites*] du monde [*kosmos*] – évoque des significations plus complexes. À partir de mes lectures, j'ai construit une typologie de quatre grandes « variétés » de cosmopolitisme : le politique, l'identitaire, le personnel et le marchandisé (voir la figure 1.1).

Le cosmopolitisme *politique* appartient au registre de la philosophie et des sciences politiques (voir notamment les travaux d'Ulrich Beck). Il s'agit de l'ouverture de la citoyenneté et des institutions politiques aux étrangers ou encore de l'établissement d'institutions supranationales, telles que l'ONU, et d'organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) internationales dans le but d'instaurer une véritable « citoyenneté du monde ». La littérature sur le cosmopolitisme politique est généralement normative; on le voit, du moins de nos jours, d'un œil approuvateur. Son opposé serait le nationalisme ou la xénophobie.

D'autres chercheurs conçoivent le cosmopolitisme comme la reconnaissance d'*identités* multiples. C'est l'idée que l'on peut appartenir – et revendiquer son appartenance – à plusieurs groupes ethniques, culturels, sociaux ou nationaux (Law, 2002; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002b: 18). C'est le cas de beaucoup d'immigrants et de leurs enfants, de conjoints et d'enfants d'unions mixtes et même de certains « gens d'ici » qui sont de grands voyageurs. Les identités « gigognes » (s'identifier à Montréal, au Québec, au Canada et aux Amériques, par exemple) constituent aussi une sorte de cosmopolitisme identitaire. Puisqu'il permet des appartenances multiples, on oppose parfois ce cosmopolitisme identitaire au multiculturalisme, qui, lui, semble n'admettre qu'une affiliation ethnoculturelle minoritaire par personne.

La variété la plus pertinente pour cette recherche est celle du cosmopolitisme vu comme un attribut *personnel*, une volonté de s'ouvrir à l'Autre et d'interagir avec lui (Hannerz, 1990). Cette volonté d'ouverture à l'Autre peut entraîner l'acquisition d'un savoir-faire quant à comment se sentir à l'aise dans des milieux culturels étrangers (il s'agit non seulement d'« apprendre » une culture étrangère mais aussi d'apprendre à apprendre). Le cosmopolitisme personnel est souvent associé aux élites globe-trotters; aussi est-il critiqué par certains auteurs, du fait qu'il ne répondrait pas aux préoccupations et aux revendications des gens « ordinaires » (Friedman, 2002). Cependant, Werbner (1999) et Albrow (1997) soutiennent que des membres des classes

populaires, surtout les migrants, acquièrent aussi des compétences cosmopolites. L'opposé du cosmopolitisme personnel serait la fermeture vis-à-vis de l'Autre, le repli sur sa propre communauté ou l'ethnocentrisme.

On peut aussi interpréter le cosmopolitisme comme un discours qui récupère l'idéal de l'ouverture à l'Autre pour des fins égoïstes, conscientes ou non. On s'ouvre à l'Autre non pas parce qu'il est « bien » de le faire, mais parce que cela permet d'accumuler du capital économique ou de se distinguer, à la Bourdieu, en accumulant du capital culturel (Binnie and Skeggs, 2004). En d'autres mots, le cosmopolitisme *marchandisé* serait une nouvelle forme d'élitisme, visant à tirer profit des affiliations et des connaissances culturelles « étrangères », pour se positionner avantageusement dans l'économie mondiale (Zachary, 2000 en est un exemple éloquent). Son opposé serait le multiculturalisme, conçu comme le respect véritable et inclusif de chaque culture (Mitchell, 2003).

À partir de deux idées de base, la citoyenneté du monde et l'ouverture à l'Autre, le cosmopolitisme revêt alors une variété de formes – politique, personnel, identitaire et marchandisé –, chacune pouvant se manifester d'une manière ou d'une autre dans la ville. Il est cependant difficile de séparer complètement le cosmopolitisme personnel du marchandisé dans des espaces urbains de consommation, où il est très probable que l'ouverture à l'Autre sera récupérée et rentabilisée dans une certaine mesure. Vu que le cosmopolitisme est si polysémique en théorie, il devient d'autant plus pertinent d'aller voir comment il se manifeste en pratique, sur le terrain, dans des espaces publics urbains.

La ville de Montréal fournit un contexte particulièrement intrigant et approprié pour étudier le cosmopolitisme. Dès ses débuts, elle est en quelque sorte multiethnique, d'abord en tant que poste de commerce entre différentes Premières nations, puis en tant que poste de traite entre Premières nations et colons européens. Montréal demeure une petite ville française missionnaire durant le siècle suivant sa fondation coloniale en 1642. Après la conquête britannique en 1759, des Anglais, des Écossais et des Irlandais sont venus s'y installer, à proximité des habitants français, quoique généralement dans des quartiers distincts. La ville se diversifie sur le plan ethnique plus tardivement que d'autres métropoles industrielles nord-américaines, mais pendant la période 1880-1930, on voit s'installer à Montréal des Allemands, des Ukrainiens, des Noirs, des Chinois, des Juifs ashkénazes en grand nombre, quelques Arabes, en plus des migrants ruraux canadiens-français. Plus tard au 20^e siècle arrivent des Italiens, des Portugais et des Grecs. En général, la plupart des immigrants s'établissent près du centre-ville et près de leurs compatriotes.

On voit donc apparaître à Montréal des « villages ethniques », parfois annoncés par le toponyme du quartier (le Quartier chinois, la Petite Italie) ou d'autres lieux symboliques (ex. Parc du Portugal, Parc Athéna, Parc Dante, voir Germain et al., 2008). Si l'association d'un lieu avec une communauté ethnique peut perdurer en raison des commerces et des institutions qui y sont installés, la population de ces quartiers a généralement beaucoup changé depuis l'arrivée, dès les années 1980, de ce qu'on appelle souvent « la nouvelle immigration » (Germain and Rose, 2000: 230 ff.). En raison des modifications des politiques d'immigration fédérales et provinciales, l'origine des flux migratoires s'est déplacée de l'Europe vers l'Asie, l'Afrique et l'Amérique latine (voir annexe A). On passe ainsi de l'époque des « quartiers ethniques » à celle des « quartiers multiethniques » (Germain, 1999b) et la plupart des Montréalais côtoient, dans la vie de tous les jours, des gens de nombreuses origines ethniques.

Cette diversité ethnoculturelle est « gérée » par diverses politiques, chaque palier de gouvernement ayant la sienne. Au niveau fédéral, le multiculturalisme officiel reconnaît le patrimoine de chaque « groupe culturel canadien » et la contribution de chacun à la grande « mosaïque » nationale (Mackey, 2002). La politique quasi-officielle de l'interculturalisme consiste en une réponse provinciale au multiculturalisme fédéral. À la différence de ce dernier, qui voit tous les groupes culturels comme égaux, l'interculturalisme reconnaît la centralité de la culture canadienne-française majoritaire, distincte des autres « communautés culturelles » (immigrantes ou non) (Juteau, 1999: 158). Cela dit, les programmes « interculturels » financés par le gouvernement provincial ressemblent aux programmes « multiculturels ». Le palier municipal, pour sa part, a fait preuve d'un certain « adhocratisme » en ce qui concerne la gestion de la diversité (Germain and Alain, 2006). La restructuration municipale récente laisse peu de ressources disponibles pour les services municipaux qui cherchent la bonne façon de répondre, entre autres, aux demandes particulières de certains groupes ethniques. Parfois des inquiétudes à propos de l'intégration des communautés culturelles resurgissent malgré ces politiques, par exemple lors de la récente controverse autour des « accommodements raisonnables » (Bouchard and Taylor, 2008), que l'on peut interpréter comme une réaction de défense du territoire culturellement et linguistiquement indépendant durement gagné par les Franco-Québécois. En somme, on pourrait supposer qu'une telle multiplicité de politiques de gestion de la diversité laisse un certain flou en ce qui concerne la vie quotidienne.

L'ethnicité est l'un des axes majeurs de la différence et de la diversité urbaines. L'ethnicité est un phénomène socialement construit qui s'appuie sur la *croyance* en certains traits culturels et physiques partagés par un groupe qui cherche à établir, à négocier et à

contester les frontières qui le distinguent d'autres groupes, dans un contexte de rapports de force inégaux. Les groupes ethniques sont formés par une dialectique entre les frontières externes et internes; ainsi, l'étude de l'ethnicité implique toujours dans une certaine mesure l'étude de la multiethnicité. Les groupes ou les individus peuvent puiser dans l'ethnicité pour des fins instrumentales, afin d'obtenir l'accès à certaines ressources, ou pour des fins symboliques, afin de trouver un sentiment d'appartenance et de penser leur monde en catégories porteuses de sens pour eux. Cela dit, l'ethnicité est loin d'être la seule facette de l'identité utilisée à ces fins; elle ressort davantage dans certaines situations, interactions et relations que dans d'autres.

L'étude de l'ethnicité en sciences sociales est étroitement liée à l'étude des migrations intranationales et internationales vers la ville (Banks, 1996; Hannerz, 1980; Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 2008). Notre vision de la ville multiethnique varie selon l'échelle à laquelle nous l'abordons. Au niveau de la ville entière, on imagine souvent une mosaïque de zones de concentration ethnique, définies comme telles à cause de la population ou des institutions qui s'y trouvent, qui évoluent au fil du temps. Au niveau du quartier, ces zones – qu'il s'agisse du quartier en entier ou d'une de ses parties – peuvent constituer des ressources importantes pour des groupes ethniques, tout en augmentant leur visibilité auprès d'autres habitants de la ville.

La multiethnicité urbaine est généralement abordée par les chercheurs soit à travers la « lentille ethnique », ce qui risque d'occulter les relations sociales non ethnicisées, soit seulement à l'échelon du quartier, ce qui risque d'occulter les relations sociales non localisées. Or les citoyens vivent leur ville par l'intermédiaire d'autres appartenances que celles à leur propre groupe ethnique et à leur propre quartier, parce que leurs activités quotidiennes font appel à diverses facettes de leur identité, au-delà de l'ethnicité, et les amènent en d'autres lieux que leur quartier résidentiel. En ce sens, il est pertinent d'étudier la façon dont la multiethnicité et les relations interethniques sont vécues à l'échelle spatiale « micro », en observant ce qui se passe dans les lieux de travail et d'étude, les commerces, les équipements collectifs, le transport en commun et les rues où se trouvent les citoyens à différents moments.

S'ensuit une question : Quels types de « micro-lieux » alimentent le mieux ce que Remy (1998[1990]) appelle « la socialisation à la pluriethnicité » ou la coexistence interethnique paisible et habituelle? D'après le « paradoxe de l'inconséquence » de Remy (ibid.), les espaces interstitiels et peu « programmés » de la ville ne sont pas aussi inconséquents qu'ils en ont l'air. Ils seraient même essentiels au tissage de relations interethniques, car ils constituent des « scènes » où sont interprétées et négociées certaines caractéristiques de l'identité ethnique (dont ses frontières). La présente recherche se penche donc sur les interactions qui ont lieu

entre divers acteurs et publics sur la scène d'un seul type d'espace urbain « sans conséquence » : la rue commerçante de quartier.

2. Explorer les rues

Le chapitre 2 expose les qualités propres à la rue commerçante en tant que « figure » de la ville. Il esquisse d'abord une brève histoire de la rue commerçante de quartier, suivie d'une discussion sur la forme urbaine de la rue. Ensuite, il explique comment la rue sert de scène pour les relations sociales aux niveaux individuel et collectif, avant de se pencher sur la rue comme destination et objet d'intervention urbaine. En conclusion, il présente la proposition de recherche.

De façon très sommaire, on peut distinguer trois périodes dans l'histoire de la rue commerçante de quartier, ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'histoire de l'urbanisation. Une première phase d'essor date de l'apparition dans la métropole moderne du quartier résidentiel géographiquement séparé du centre-ville, où la rue commerçante répond simplement aux besoins quotidiens de la population du quartier. La deuxième période en est une de déclin; la rue commerçante locale souffre alors du dépeuplement ou de l'appauvrissement des quartiers centraux (en parallèle avec la croissance des banlieues). La troisième phase, à partir des années 1970-1980, annonce une renaissance de la rue commerçante de quartier, grâce notamment à la gentrification résidentielle ou aux politiques de revitalisation qui entraînent souvent une gentrification commerciale.

Du point de vue de la forme et de la fonction, la rue commerçante se distingue des centres commerciaux et des routes des zones résidentielles en ce qu'elle rassemble nombre d'usages et de types d'espaces. Sa forme parcellaire lui permet une lente évolution, imbriquée dans la voirie de l'ensemble de la ville; elle est également porteuse de valeurs symboliques et économiques (Gourdon, 2002). Les travaux de Jane Jacobs (1961) et de William H Whyte (1988) démontrent qu'en général, les citadins piétons apprécient cette diversité. Ceux-ci préfèrent en effet des édifices à échelle humaine, qui fournissent des endroits où s'asseoir, où s'accouder, ainsi qu'un aménagement non monotone qui permet une variété d'activités.

Si le rejet par Jacobs et Whyte de l'urbanisme moderniste est fascinant, il nous dit peu de choses sur le rôle que joue la rue commerçante de quartier en tant que scène des relations sociales. D'une part, elle abrite les interactions sociales entre individus; malgré leur caractère éphémère, ces interactions contribuent certainement à l'ambiance générale d'un lieu. D'autre part, elle permet la mise en scène de ce que j'appelle les dynamiques sociales, c'est-à-dire des

relations intergroupes qui perdurent, grâce à la fois aux marqueurs visibles d'appartenance (dont les symboles affichés dans les magasins) et à la catégorisation des étrangers avec qui on interagit comme membre d'un groupe. Par exemple, des études de quartiers mixtes ou en voie de gentrification soulignent les tensions et l'ambivalence qui peuvent surgir dans les rapports entre anciens et nouveaux résidents, entre gentrificateurs et membres de la classe populaire et entre majorité et minorités ethniques. On relève, d'une part, un sentiment de perte chez les anciens habitants de classe populaire et, d'autre part, une attirance esthétique, sans engagement plus profond, pour la diversité sociale et ethnique chez les gentrificateurs. (Curieusement, les voix des minorités ethniques sont souvent absentes de ces études.) L'offre commerciale de la rue commerçante va à la fois symboliser et structurer les mutations en cours dans le quartier.

Enfin, la rue commerçante de quartier est devenue, depuis un certain temps, un objet d'intervention de la part des acteurs collectifs, publics et privés, de la ville (urbanistes, promoteurs, gouvernements municipaux, etc.). Depuis le « retour en ville » des classes moyennes, l'espace public urbain (dont la rue commerçante de quartier) est revalorisé comme l'un des facteurs qui peuvent attirer des touristes, des entrepreneurs, des investisseurs et des consommateurs vers la ville et ainsi augmenter sa valeur dans l'économie symbolique urbaine (Zukin, 1995). En effet, les symboles de la ville, par exemple les images, les significations et les représentations des lieux, sont imbriqués dans l'économie de la ville (constituée de la valeur du sol, des marchés d'investissement et de consommation, etc.). Les uns sont de plus en plus mis au service du roulement de l'autre. Cette attention nouvellement portée à la rue commerçante justifie en partie ma décision d'étudier la rue et non le quartier multiethnique.

Ces deux chapitres théoriques conduisent à la proposition de recherche qui suit.

Dans la métropole, des gens qui sont socialement distants les uns des autres se trouvent en proximité physique. Cette thèse explore le degré, le contenu et la qualité du contact entre ces gens qui sont étrangers les uns face aux autres, particulièrement en ce qui relève de l'ethnicité. Les chercheurs ont souvent abordé l'ethnicité et les relations interethniques en ville soit du point de vue de la communauté ethnique, soit du point de vue du quartier. Cependant, la « lentille ethnique » risque d'occulter l'hétérogénéité sociale au sein de la communauté ethnique, en mettant trop l'accent sur l'ethnicité aux dépens d'autres axes de différence. L'approche du quartier ne prête pas suffisamment attention aux effets de la mobilité intra-urbaine quotidienne. Je privilégie donc l'étude des pratiques et des discours du « vivre-ensemble dans la différence » chez des citoyens de diverses origines sociales et ethniques pendant qu'ils vaquent à leurs

activités dans des lieux publics et semi-publics à l'échelle « micro » de la ville. Mon approche exige de porter une attention particulière à la mobilisation de l'ethnicité sur les plans individuel et interactionnel, ainsi que dans l'environnement immédiat (les enseignes, les décors, etc.). Globalement, je propose d'interroger la volonté de s'ouvrir à l'Autre et d'interagir avec lui – en d'autres mots, le cosmopolitisme personnel – dans la vie quotidienne urbaine. Pour ce faire, il faut reconnaître que cette ouverture peut aussi être « marchandisée », c'est-à-dire, récupérée au nom du capital économique ou culturel.

À la lumière du paradoxe de l'inconséquence de Remy (1998[1990]), j'étudie les relations sociales dans un espace urbain particulier : la rue commerçante multiethnique de quartier. Ce choix se justifie à plusieurs égards. Premièrement, à la différence d'autres espaces publics ou semi-publics, comme des parcs, des squares ou des centres commerciaux, la rue commerçante est pleinement intégrée dans les réseaux de circulation urbains (au lieu d'aboutir dans des « culs-de-sac » adjacents à ces réseaux). Cela veut dire aussi que l'on peut la voir comme un microcosme de la ville où se cristallisent des dynamiques urbaines économiques, sociales et politiques beaucoup plus larges. Deuxièmement, à la différence de la rue commerçante du centre-ville, la rue commerçante de quartier symbolise et structure les dynamiques sociales de la population résidentielle locale. En tant qu'espace de la vie quotidienne apparemment sans conséquence, elle constitue un lieu où les citoyens interagissent à titre d'acteurs situés ayant leur identité propre. Troisièmement, il est intéressant d'étudier la rue commerçante de quartier, au lieu du quartier en tant que tel, parce que celle-ci est récemment devenue un lieu privilégié de l'économie symbolique de la ville.

J'étudie les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier d'une ville en particulier : Montréal. Cette ville constitue un excellent « laboratoire » de recherche, non seulement parce que sa population est très diversifiée et peu ségréguée sur le plan ethnique, mais aussi parce que les politiques complexes et parfois contradictoires de « gestion » de cette diversité rendent encore plus pertinente la recherche sur l'expérience de la diversité dans la vie quotidienne.

Cette thèse explore alors les questions suivantes :

- Comment les gens interagissent-ils dans les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier à Montréal? Quelles formes de sociabilité publique s'y trouvent? Certains types de lieux génèrent-ils certains types de sociabilité? Comment les interactions sociales sont-elles influencées par l'ethnicité et d'autres axes de différence?

- Comment l'ethnicité est-elle mobilisée dans les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier? Comment l'environnement bâti est-il marqué par des symboles ethniques? Dans quelle mesure les gens mettent-ils en scène leur propre identité et reconnaissent-ils celle des autres dans le milieu social de la rue? Comment l'ethnicité entre-t-elle en jeu dans les pratiques de consommation?
- Comment les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier sont-elles produites en tant qu'espaces? Sont-elles ciblées pour des interventions spécifiques, en tant que rues? Quels acteurs institutionnels ou collectifs influencent la création de ces lieux? Quel impact les individus ont-ils sur la forme de la rue? Comment leurs visions et leurs actions se réalisent-elles? L'ethnicité ou la multiethnicité est-elle un facteur dans la création de ces rues comme lieux?

L'intérêt théorique qui chapeaute cette recherche est celui du cosmopolitisme urbain. Je souhaite explorer les conditions de la production de l'espace cosmopolite – ou peut-être de la production du cosmopolitisme dans l'espace. Cela soulève une dernière question :

- Quels types de cosmopolitisme sont produits dans les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier à Montréal?

Une façon de regrouper et d'organiser les trois façons de voir la rue commerçante de quartier expliquées ci-haut – la rue comme site de relations sociales, comme lieu où circulent les symboles, comme objet d'aménagement – est d'emprunter le cadre théorique triadique d'Henri Lefebvre (1974) sur la production sociale de l'espace (voir les figure 2.1 et 2.2). Les questions touchant la sociabilité publique correspondent au domaine de la pratique spatiale, l'espace perçu, puisqu'elles concernent l'usage quotidien des rues. L'exploration de la mobilisation de l'ethnicité relève du domaine de l'espace des représentations, l'espace vécu, puisqu'elle se penche sur la façon dont se déploient les symboles identitaires. La question de la rue en tant qu'objet d'aménagement correspond à la représentation de l'espace, l'espace conçu, parce qu'elle touche la conception de la rue dans son ensemble par des groupes qui agissent sur la rue comme espace physique. Enfin, tous les domaines sont encadrés par le concept du cosmopolitisme urbain, concept dont je souhaite faire avancer la théorisation.

3. La rue comme terrain : méthodologie de recherche

Il faut dès lors mettre à l'épreuve ces questions, en sélectionnant des rues à étudier et des méthodes de cueillette de données. Les questions de recherche ne se prêtent qu'à une recherche de type qualitatif et exploratoire, visant à capter à la fois les pratiques et les discours

des individus qui fréquentent les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier. L'objectif n'est pas d'en arriver à un devis de recherche représentatif ou reproductible, mais d'élucider les concepts, afin de générer des outils théoriques qui pourront éventuellement éclairer des cas semblables à l'étude ailleurs dans le monde.

En ce qui concerne le choix des rues, j'ai construit un échantillonnage théorique afin de générer une variété de cas à étudier. Chaque rue étudiée est multiethnique, en ce sens que des indicateurs d'une variété d'origines ethniques sont observables tant dans les marqueurs spatiaux (enseignes, noms des magasins, façades, etc.) que dans la population d'« usagers » de la rue (passants, clients, commerçants, employés, etc.). De plus, les rues sélectionnées varient selon leur forme et leur insertion dans la trame urbaine (petite rue au cœur du quartier ou tronçon de grande artère passante et « interstitielle »). Ce critère s'inspire de l'argument de Remy (1998[1990]), selon lequel les lieux interstitiels sont plus propices à la « socialisation à la pluriethnicité » que d'autres types de lieu. Les rues choisies diffèrent aussi de par leurs caractéristiques économiques, selon qu'elles sont situées dans un milieu à faible ou moyen revenu ou dans un milieu aisé ou en voie de gentrification. Ce critère s'inspire de la littérature sur la gentrification suggérant que les circonstances économiques d'un lieu ont un impact profond sur les relations sociales entre les différents groupes (anciens habitants, gentrificateurs, minorités ethniques nouvelles ou anciennes).

Cet échantillonnage théorique donne un tableau croisé où s'insèrent quatre terrains d'étude (voir tableau 3.1) : la rue de Liège (entre Querbes et Acadie), une rue traditionnelle au cœur du quartier Parc-Extension; la rue Saint-Viateur (entre Saint-Laurent et du Parc), une rue en voie de gentrification au cœur du quartier Mile End, la rue Jean-Talon Est (entre Fabre et d'Iberville), une grande artère interstitielle dans le quartier Villeray; et la rue Sherbrooke Ouest (entre Harvard et Grand), une grande artère interstitielle dans le quartier de Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG). (Voir les cartes, à la figure 3.1 et en Annexe B, et les photos, Annexe C.)

Afin de capter les pratiques et les discours des usagers, j'ai privilégié un travail de terrain et des méthodes ethnographiques, notamment des observations et des entrevues, au cours de la période allant de l'été 2006 à l'automne 2007 (voir Annexe D). Les observations visaient à capter l'usage qui est fait des rues et notamment les interactions sociales qui s'y déroulent (voir tableau 3.6). Elles étaient de type « statiques », faites à partir d'un point fixe (banc public, café-terrasse), ou « mobiles », faites tout en déambulant dans la rue et en visitant des commerces. Au début, les observations – qui duraient au moins une heure, parfois beaucoup plus – étaient plutôt « directes », c'est-à-dire, sans interaction de l'observatrice avec les personnes observées.

Avec le temps, elles sont devenues plus « participantes », c'est-à-dire que j'agissais comme un participant « normal » à la vie de la rue. Les notes d'observation étaient transcrites en détail dès que possible après la fin de séance.

Quant aux entrevues, j'en ai réalisé une soixantaine, de durées variées, avec divers acteurs : des commerçants, des employés des commerces et autres travailleurs (catégorie « travailleurs »); des résidents locaux, des passants et des visiteurs (catégorie « usagers »); et des fonctionnaires municipaux travaillant aux services d'urbanisme et du développement économique de la Ville de Montréal (voir les schémas d'entrevue pour chaque catégorie d'interviewés aux annexes E, F, G, H). Les interviewés sont des hommes et des femmes d'âge, d'origine ethnique et de statut immigrant variés (voir Annexe K). J'ai également expérimenté une méthode plutôt originale en tenant un « stand de recherche » à un festival sur la rue Saint-Viateur, le 1^{er} juin 2007. J'ai invité les gens à me « raconter leur Saint-Viateur » par le biais de courtes entrevues ou à remplir un court questionnaire sur leurs perceptions de la rue et du festival (Annexe J). J'ai mené la recherche dans le respect des principes d'éthique en recherche avec les êtres humains (politiques de l'INRS et des Trois conseils), notamment en ce qui concerne l'obtention du consentement libre et éclairé des participants à la recherche et la protection de leur vie privée (voir les instruments en Annexes I, M, N et O).

J'ai eu recours à certaines méthodes complémentaires, dont la compilation de statistiques des tracts de recensement dans les environs des rues étudiées (voir Annexe L) et la recherche documentaire (articles de la presse écrite, annuaires de rues, sites Web, films documentaires).

Je me suis servie du logiciel NVivo7 pour faciliter l'analyse de ces données (transcriptions d'entrevues, notes d'observation de terrain, réponses au questionnaire du festival et matériau complémentaire). Le processus d'analyse ressemblait à l'approche de la théorie ancrée (Paillé, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1990), en ce qu'il était inductif, partant des données pour aller vers la théorie (*bottom-up*), et itératif, impliquant un va-et-vient constant entre les données, les questions de recherche, des micro-hypothèses d'analyse et des catégories d'analyse.

Ce type de devis de recherche comporte certaines limites. Entre autres, sa fécondité dépend du rapport que le chercheur ou la chercheure arrive à entretenir avec les participants. En outre, comme quatre cas sont à l'étude, l'ampleur de la comparaison l'emporte sur l'approfondissement de chacun des cas.

Un point intéressant ressort du fait de prendre la rue comme objet de recherche. Bien qu'il soit facile de se trouver dans la rue et de l'observer, ce n'est pas nécessairement une catégorie d'espace qui structure *consciemment* l'expérience des interviewés. En effet, la rue en elle-même tend à « disparaître » de leurs discours, qui se centrent soit sur les micro-espaces constitutifs de la rue (les commerces, etc.), soit sur le quartier dont la rue fait partie. Prendre la rue comme objet d'étude est donc quelque peu paradoxal, car elle est à la fois une partie intégrante de la ville et une échelle d'expérience fuyante. Le prochain chapitre ouvre la partie empirique de la thèse, en traitant des pratiques de sociabilité publique dans les quatre rues étudiées.

4. Lieux et pratiques de la sociabilité publique

Trois thèmes structurent ce chapitre : les espaces, les formes et les fins de la sociabilité publique ou, autrement dit, le « où », le « quoi » et le « pourquoi » de la sociabilité publique. En s'inspirant notamment de l'œuvre sociologique de Georg Simmel (1950[1911], 1999), on peut définir la sociabilité publique comme le domaine d'interactions sociales relativement éphémères qui ont lieu en public entre des étrangers, c'est-à-dire des gens qui ne se connaissent pas ou qui se connaissent seulement en tant que membres d'une catégorie (adolescent, chauffeur de taxi, etc.). C'est le mode principal de relations pour tout ce qui circule dans la rue : échanges sociaux, transactions commerciales et échanges qui résultent de l'intervention collective (zonage, surveillance policière, etc.). En tant que principe de relations entre des personnes, la sociabilité publique couvre une large gamme d'interactions, dont l'indifférence, l'interaction minimale, l'évitement, le conflit, en plus de la solidarité, la coopération ou la convivialité (Dansereau, Séguin and Gaudette, 1993; Tonkiss, 2003). L'étude de la sociabilité publique cherche à résoudre un des grands « problèmes » de la vie urbaine : comment des gens si différents les uns des autres arrivent-ils à partager l'espace public urbain en si grande proximité? Pour Simmel (1979 [1903]), c'est l'attitude de réserve qui facilite ce partage d'espace, car, en gardant son quant-à-soi, le citoyen arrive à « trier » les contacts et à se protéger de la surstimulation propre à la ville.

Comme toute forme de sociabilité relativement « pure », la sociabilité publique est régie moins par la poursuite d'intérêts « objectifs » que par des codes de « bonne forme » – politesse, tact, civilité. De plus, sa réussite dépend de la satisfaction réciproque de tous les participants; elle a, pour ainsi dire, une dimension « démocratique », ce qui peut mener à la suspension temporaire de différences marquées entre les individus. On fait « comme si » tous étaient égaux pour la durée du contact. Le caractère public de la sociabilité publique vient du fait qu'elle se

produit en public, devant « un public ». Dans un sens, les interactions sociales constituent une mise en scène et on voit ici la pertinence de la métaphore dramaturgique de Goffman (1959, 1963, 1971) : sur la scène publique, chacun incarne un certain personnage, joue un certain rôle et suit certains scénarios devant un public, tandis que d'autres espaces constituent des coulisses. Le caractère public de ces interactions n'est surtout pas déterminé par le statut de propriété (public ou privé) du lieu où elles se jouent. Par exemple, des relations intimes peuvent se dérouler dans l'espace public d'un parc; des relations de sociabilité publique peuvent se dérouler dans l'espace semi-privé d'un musée de beaux-arts.

À partir de mon analyse du matériau cueilli sur le terrain, j'ai relevé plusieurs axes selon lesquels les pratiques et les lieux de sociabilité publique varient.

L'observation des activités démontre que chaque rue offre une variété d'espaces qui constituent des ressources pour la sociabilité, tantôt la facilitant, tantôt l'entravant. La rue constitue à la fois une collection de micro-lieux et une route intégrée aux itinéraires quotidiens; elle fournit donc à la fois des destinations pour la sociabilité et des occasions pour des rencontres au hasard des itinéraires (on pourrait dire des occasions de séjour et de parcours de sociabilité, respectivement). La rue offre aussi des espaces de sociabilité qui sont relativement inaccessibles, réservés à certains groupes, et d'autres qui sont plutôt accessibles à tous.

Quant à la variation dans les formes de sociabilité, la rue rassemble des personnes connues et inconnues les unes des autres, y compris les figures de l'étranger, du familier et de l'« étranger familier » (Milgram, 1992). Certains commerces, notamment des cafés, ont aussi leurs « habitués », un statut qui est parfois particulièrement convoité. Il faut distinguer le degré de familiarité des personnes du degré de familiarité de comportement : on peut en effet interagir sur un mode de grande familiarité avec un parfait inconnu, ou inversement garder sa distance avec des gens connus (par exemple, des voisins). J'ai ainsi relevé une forme de sociabilité familière qui peut se déployer entre étrangers que j'appelle « l'intimité sans conséquence ». Il s'agit de traiter des étrangers sur un mode très familier mais aussi de sauter du coq à l'âne dans les conversations, couvrant ainsi une large gamme de sujets sans en creuser aucun : une sorte de *tapas* conversationnel.

Les formes de sociabilité publique varient aussi selon la mesure dans laquelle elles sont remarquables ou non. J'appelle « lisses » (*smooth*) ces interactions sociales qui sont non remarquables, proches de ce que Goffman appelle « l'inattention civile ». Ensuite, il y a les interactions remarquables, qui laissent une impression durable, positive ou négative. C'est comme si elles donnaient des contours à la sociabilité publique qui, d'habitude, est plutôt lisse,

ne laissant pas d'impression. J'appelle les interactions remarquables positives et conviviales *rolling*, (« vallonnées »), alors que les négatives – tendues ou conflictuelles – sont plutôt *spiky* (« hérissées »). Les interactions hérissées ressemblent à ce qu'on appelle communément des incivilités, et sont de plus en plus étudiées par des chercheurs et des intervenants, car elles menaceraient la quiétude du « réenchantement » de l'espace public (Garnier, 2008).

Produire de la sociabilité « vallonnée » fait partie de la description de tâches de plusieurs travailleurs des rues commerçantes, dont les serveurs et barmen des cafés et des restaurants, mais aussi les petits commerçants qui peuvent se démarquer des grandes chaînes par le service personnalisé. Cela nous mène au thème des fins de la sociabilité publique : est-elle « pure », désintéressée, ou est-elle utilitaire, instrumentalisée? En l'occurrence, il est souvent impossible de distinguer ces deux fins qui sont entremêlées dans les pratiques et dans les discours des travailleurs : être « sociable » fait partie du travail, mais c'est souvent une partie agréable du travail.

Ce chapitre nous apprend surtout que la rue commerçante de quartier multiethnique constitue une sorte d'écosystème riche et diversifié des relations sociales. Le mot écosystème est approprié parce qu'il évoque l'interdépendance des divers types de relations. Bien que certains types soient plus appréciés que d'autres – le statut convoité de l'habitué, le *tapas* conversationnel de l'intimité sans conséquence – les relations ou les interactions anonymes ou moins remarquables sont tout aussi importantes pour la durabilité de l'écosystème. Elles sont par ailleurs essentielles pour conserver le caractère explicitement « public » de la sociabilité publique. Tout comme personne ne souhaiterait voir une rue commerçante déserte, personne ne voudrait non plus la voir remplie d'amis qui ne se lieraient qu'entre eux. C'est peut-être d'autant plus le cas en contexte pluriethnique, puisque certaines formes de sociabilité publique – comme « traîner au coin de la rue », par exemple – peuvent avoir des significations distinctes, voire opposées pour des gens de différentes origines.

Les pratiques de la sociabilité publique alimentent le « sens du lieu » global de la rue commerçante de quartier (voir le chapitre 6), et la diversité de ces pratiques est certainement une des raisons pourquoi elle est censée être un vecteur du « réenchantement » de l'espace public (Garnier 2008). La sociabilité publique est également liée au cosmopolitisme, en ce sens que ses formes d'échange social constituent, pour ainsi dire, la matière première pour la réalisation de l'ouverture à l'Autre – ou, dans le cas des interactions sociales « à pic », de la fermeture à l'Autre. En effet, la sociabilité publique met en contact des gens d'origines sociales,

ethniques et culturelles différentes. Le chapitre suivant explore plus en détail la mobilisation de l'ethnicité dans les rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier.

5. Signaler la différence : la mobilisation de l'ethnicité

Ce chapitre explore les questions suivantes : Dans quelle mesure les quatre rues commerçantes sont-elles marquées et reconnues comme multiethniques? Quelles références à l'origine, l'affiliation ou l'affinité ethniques sont en circulation? Comment l'ethnicité intervient-elle dans les interactions sociales? Le chapitre se divise en quatre parties. La première compare ce qui se voit comme présence des groupes ethniques dans la rue avec les chiffres du recensement; la deuxième rajoute les affiliations ethniques des commerces à cet exercice. La troisième porte sur la mobilisation de l'ethnicité dans le commerce « ethnique ». En quatrième lieu, je reviens à l'échelle de la rue pour traiter de discours d'individus sur les relations interethniques dans chacune des rues à l'étude. Il est important de noter que mon approche se centre sur des représentations que des *individus* ont de l'ethnicité et des relations interethniques. Je n'ai pas exploré les relations entre les *groupes* ethniques, sur le plan collectif. Cela exigerait de la recherche sur les institutions collectives de la société civile, dont la vie associative locale (associations, services et équipements, lieux de culte, etc.). L'étude *Cohabitation interethnique et vie de quartier* (Germain et al., 1995) est consacrée en partie à cette dimension de la vie de quartier. Ma recherche poursuit plutôt l'autre objet de recherche de cette étude, soit les usages et les représentations des espaces publics en contexte multiethnique.

Dans la première section, j'ai exploré le rôle que joue l'ethnicité dans le repérage des différents groupes sociaux, ainsi que le degré de visibilité (ou d'invisibilité) qui en découle. Dans chaque rue, certains groupes ethniques ont une présence plus marquée que d'autres, peu importe leur poids réel dans la population locale. Par ailleurs, certains autres types de groupes sociaux sont plus remarqués et nommés que les groupes ethniques.

Ainsi, les usagers de la rue de Liège l'imaginent comme ayant été peuplée par une vague plus ancienne d'immigrants de la Grèce et d'autres pays européens ou moyen-orientaux, suivie d'une vague plus récente des pays sud-asiatiques. En plus, les « gens pauvres » y constituent un groupe assez visible. Sur la rue Jean-Talon Est, les groupes les plus visibles sont : les Italiens, les « Arabes » (Marocains, Algériens, Tunisiens), les Latino-Américains (la plupart Salvadoriens ou Péruviens), les Haïtiens, les Vietnamiens (parfois perçus comme Chinois) et les Québécois (francophones) ou Canadiens français. Au-delà des différences ethniques, les interviewés se représentent la rue comme étant peuplée de gens « ordinaires » et travailleurs. Ce qui frappe les usagers de la rue Sherbrooke Ouest est le grand mélange –

d'origines, de couleurs de peau, de langues et de modes de vie (ce qui inclut des groupes comme les étudiants). La rue Saint-Viateur est moins clairement « ethnique » qu'elle l'était; tandis que les Juifs hassidiques et les cafés italiens « prouvent » que la rue est encore multiethnique, d'autres groupes ethniques (les Grecs, les Portugais, les Chinois, etc.) sont nommés moins souvent que la bande de jeunes artistes (*hipsters*, musiciens, créatifs, bohèmes) qui semble s'y être installée depuis un certain temps.

Ces variations dans la visibilité des groupes peuvent s'expliquer par l'histoire et l'image du quartier environnant, par la manifestation de tendances socioéconomiques (comme la gentrification ou le déclin commercial) ou par des pratiques de sociabilité qui font que des personnes qui se ressemblent (ou qui ne se ressemblent pas!) s'assemblent dans des lieux particuliers (voir le Chapitre 4). C'est comme si les usagers « triangulent » les informations disponibles afin de repérer les différents groupes. Mais leur point de vue est toujours partiel, étant déterminé par leur propre position sociale et affiliation ethnique. Je soutiens que ces perceptions de la population locale ne sont pas anodines, mais qu'elles participent à la construction individuelle des frontières ethniques et, ultimement, confèrent le statut d'acteurs de rue légitimes à certains groupes seulement.

La présence des commerces ethniquement et culturellement marqués contribue également à la visibilité des groupes ethniques et sociaux. Dans la deuxième section, je démontre qu'un commerce particulier peut afficher son mélange propre de marqueurs ethniques, de par ses produits, son décor, ses employés et sa clientèle. Ces marqueurs peuvent indiquer des origines simples, multiples ou « gigognes »; ils peuvent être transparents ou quelque peu opaques. Les commerces affichent aussi des marqueurs d'autres facteurs que l'ethnicité, dont des représentations de localité (produits locaux ou du terroir) ou d'« altérité » non spécifique. La capacité de décoder tous ces marqueurs dépend de connaissances ou de compétences déjà acquises; chaque citoyen les aborde équipé de différentes ressources pour les « lire ».

En dernier lieu, l'attribution d'une identité ethnique unique à chaque commerce sur ces rues multiethniques est un exercice de classification inadéquat, voire impossible. Sa seule utilité est de souligner l'absence de corrélation entre la composition ethnique d'une rue commerçante et sa population environnante. Tandis que certains groupes, pourtant très présents dans la population, disparaissent de vue dans la rue, d'autres ont une « vitrine commerciale » (pour ainsi dire) beaucoup plus importante que leur proportion dans la population ne le laisserait croire. Globalement, comme le notent Hackworth et Rekers (2005: 232), cela remet en question

l'idée reçue que le paysage commercial reflète de manière « naturelle » ou « organique » le paysage résidentiel. Cela brise le modèle de la métropole comme mosaïque en soutenant le modèle de la métropole comme composé d'une « offre urbaine » d'occasions distinctives dans lesquelles les citoyens mobiles puisent, de façon très différenciée, pour construire leur identité selon différentes pratiques de consommation et de sociabilité (Ascher, 2005; Bourdin, 2004a, 2005; Zukin, 1998).

Il s'ensuit que les affiliations ethniques ne peuvent pas être directement déduites à partir des façades et des étiquettes des rues commerçantes multiethniques : au contraire, elles sont présentées, mises en scène et perçues par des individus, en partie en fonction des biens en circulation. Un courant des *cultural studies* tend à interpréter ces mises en scène comme représentant des cultures circonscrites en rapport inégal les unes par rapport aux autres; ce courant soutient que les échanges entre individus que ces mises en scène génèrent sont inauthentiques, voire relèvent de l'exploitation (hooks, 1992). Il est vrai que les pratiques de production et de consommation dans les commerces ethniques sont imbriquées dans la distribution inégale de ressources matérielles et symboliques (emplois, capital économique et culturel, revenus à dépenser et reconnaissance), comme le démontre le travail de Parker (2000) sur le racisme subi par les employés aux comptoirs de commandes à emporter des restaurants chinois. Or la relation entre la différence ethnique ou culturelle et ces inégalités n'est pas directe et ne peut pas être détachée du contexte immédiat. Comme le disent Dwyer et Crang (2002: 427, traduction libre):

[L]a marchandisation n'est pas quelque chose que l'on fait à des ethnicités et à des sujets ethniques qui existent déjà, mais est plutôt un processus par lequel les ethnicités sont reproduites et les sujets ethnicisés agissent dans des discours et des institutions plus larges.

En analysant ce qu'ont dit les usagers des rues à propos des commerces ethniquement marqués, j'ai dégagé une variété de principes qui régissent leurs actions : des stratégies d'authentification et de diversification; des modes de consommation traditionnels et exploratoires; des patterns de mobilité résumés par des notions du quartier local « ethnique » ou « mixte » et le quartier fondateur ou la destination de consommation lointains (voir la figure 5.1). Plusieurs de ces principes peuvent opérer à la fois dans un seul commerce, selon les personnes et les produits qui y sont mis en contact. Par ailleurs, ils peuvent générer des échanges interethniques portés par la curiosité et l'exploration. Si ceux-ci sont banals, ils ne sont pas moins « véritables » ou authentiques. La mobilisation (ou non) de l'ethnicité dans des milieux commerciaux a certainement un impact sur la façon dont les usagers expérimentent la

différence ethnique, ainsi que sur leurs attitudes vis-à-vis de celle-ci; ces échanges ont donc le potentiel de les habituer à la différence. Par ailleurs, la présentation des différences ethniques comme étant équivalentes les unes aux autres dans l'offre commerciale de la rue peut avoir l'effet paradoxal de suspendre la signification des différences entre les usagers (cf. de La Pradelle, 2006; Lallement, 2005). « [D]ans ce contexte de différenciation sociale généralisée, l'autre, justement parce qu'il est différent, ne devient-il pas objet d'intérêt, donc d'une autre manière, vecteur de lien social? » (Bourdin, 2005: 36).

Cela dit, les rencontres interethniques dans ces rues commerçantes sont également influencées par les dynamiques sociales plus larges, dans lesquelles les groupes ethnicisés (et autrement étiquetés) occupent des positions assez différentes. Mon analyse des perceptions individuelles des relations interethniques dégage les cas suivants. Sur Jean-Talon Est, une certaine tension paraît parfois dans les relations entre les communautés italiennes et maghrébines, ce qui s'explique par leur trajectoire sociale opposée et peut-être aussi par leur affinité imaginée. Sur Saint-Viateur, une minorité visible, les Juifs hassidiques, déstabilise la représentation idéalisée que se font les autres usagers de la cohabitation interethnique dans cette rue. Sur de Liège, certains des « établis » (la plupart d'origine grecque) expriment du ressentiment vis-à-vis des « nouveaux venus » (les immigrants récents de l'Asie du Sud) car l'arrivée de ces derniers cristallise leur propre déclin en importance. Enfin, sur la rue Sherbrooke Ouest, la diversité prononcée de la population locale, le vide laissé par l'exode des Anglo-Montréalais et la forme interstitielle de l'artère font en sorte que la rue n'a pas été appropriée par un seul groupe et que le « confort culturel » (McNicoll, 1993) de la multiethnicité y règne.

L'ethnicité en tant que telle n'est donc pas toujours centrale dans la construction des relations interethniques (cf. De Rudder, 1991; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009; Glick Schiller, Çağlar and Guldbrandsen, 2006). Ces dernières peuvent être influencées par des forces historiques plus larges : ainsi, les circonstances de Sherbrooke Ouest sont formées par la transformation politique et économique du Québec (Levine, 1990), et celles de la rue de Liège par les politiques d'immigration qui attirent davantage de flux de l'Asie que de l'Europe (Poirier, 2006, et voir le Chapitre 1). Les trajectoires sociales des groupes sont souvent plus pertinentes que leurs particularités ethniques : Jean-Talon Est, par exemple, fait preuve de potentiel de friction entre un groupe en montée sociale et un groupe en déclin social (tout comme la rue de Liège dans une certaine mesure). Ces deux facteurs, entre autres, ont un impact sur l'ambiance perçue de chaque rue et déterminent en partie quels groupes seront en position de « donner le ton » aux relations interethniques.

De surcroît, la construction des relations interethniques est pleine d'ambivalence. Les usagers des rues peuvent à la fois entretenir une cohabitation interethnique relativement paisible et tenir des opinions assez négatives à l'égard de l'un ou de plusieurs des groupes qu'ils côtoient au quotidien. Non seulement sont-ils capables de dire une chose et faire son contraire, ils peuvent aussi dire deux choses contradictoires. Il faut analyser de telles contradictions en tenant compte des circonstances matérielles qui structurent la vie des gens. Valentine nous rappelle que :

entretenir des préjugés peut servir à des fins positives pour certaines personnes, par exemple en leur fournissant un bouc émissaire pour leurs propres échecs sociaux ou économiques (Valentine, 2007a). Ainsi, les individus qui ont des préjugés peuvent avoir intérêt à demeurer intolérants malgré des rencontres positives avec des personnes ou des groupes différents d'eux. (Valentine, 2008: 328, traduction libre)

Cela aide à expliquer ce que j'ai observé sur de Liège et sur Jean-Talon Est, où des groupes ethniques établis depuis longtemps traduisent parfois leur anxiété au sujet du déclin de leur propre communauté en ressentiment envers des groupes récemment arrivés (voir Wells and Watson, 2005). À l'inverse, des personnes qui sont plus confortables sur le plan matériel, ayant plus d'options devant elles, peuvent « se permettre » un discours plus tolérant vis-à-vis des « Autres » (peut-être même malgré des rencontres négatives sur le plan individuel) (cf. Chamboredon and Lemaire, 1992 [1970]). C'est pourquoi il est important de dégager les différents processus à l'œuvre dans la mobilisation de l'ethnicité et de la « re-matérialiser », que l'on pense aux commerces particuliers ou à la rue dans son ensemble.

Quelle est donc la place de l'ethnicité sur la rue commerçante multiethnique? Si tant est qu'elle est « là », on peut concevoir l'ethnicité comme étant une sorte de ressource mobilisée dans la fabrication des liens sociaux. Elle peut lubrifier les liens sociaux, comme elle le fait souvent dans le « commerce ethnique », tout comme elle peut les irriter, comme dans le cas de l'ethnisation de certaines pratiques commerciales ou esthétiques et leur rattachement à des stéréotypes ethniques. Les multiples dimensions de l'ethnicité, matérielles et symboliques, culturelles et sociales (et sociables), aident à rendre compte de l'ambivalence et des contradictions qui sont au cœur des perceptions des relations ethniques. Il est important d'essayer de dégager, au lieu de la nier, cette ambivalence. Comme le dit Ghassan Hage à propos de ses recherches sur les relations entre des migrants et leurs voisins établis depuis longtemps à Sydney :

Il serait absurde de classer ces interactions selon une simple étiquette binaire « raciste » ou « non raciste », car ces interactions interculturelles varient selon que les individus se connaissent depuis longtemps ou non, selon leur niveau d'éducation, le fait qu'ils aient ou non des enfants, leur degré d'assimilation, etc. Or

la relation elle-même et la conception de l'autre qu'elle encapsule étaient également ambivalentes et en fluctuation continue. (Hage, 1997: 114-115, traduction libre)

Dans l'ensemble, ce qui est en jeu dans ces rues est peut-être mieux défini par une conception fluctuante de l'Autre (pour paraphraser Hage) que par la construction de l'ethnicité en tant que telle. Les échanges apparemment « interethniques » auxquels les gens participent dans la rue commerçante multiethnique portent moins sur l'ethnicité que sur un jeu d'altérité et de similitude. Ils impliquent moins la mobilisation de l'ethnicité que la mobilisation de l'altérité. Le chapitre suivant aborde la rue multiethnique commerçante de quartier sous un autre angle, en se tournant vers la création de la rue comme lieu.

6. La création des lieux, planifiée et non planifiée

Ce chapitre se penche sur la création des quatre rues comme lieux distincts et reconnaissables. Il emprunte la conceptualisation de Michel de Certeau (1990 [1980]) qui distingue les « stratégies » des « tactiques » pour démontrer comment les quatre rues sont produites comme lieux, par l'intermédiaire d'actions formelles et informelles, collectives et individuelles, concertées et éphémères. Bien qu'il y ait souvent un sens largement partagé chez les usagers de ce qu'est la rue, il y a souvent beaucoup de variation quant au type de lieu que la rue *devrait être*. Le chapitre se divise en cinq sections : une première consacrée aux concepts clés du cadre théorique, suivie d'une section par rue pour raconter son histoire propre. Ce chapitre se base sur l'analyse du matériau portant sur les associations de marchands, les événements (festivals, braderies, etc.), les interventions municipales (zonage, travaux publics, etc.) et sur l'image et le pouvoir d'attraction de ces rues.

Dans ce chapitre, je fais appel notamment aux concepts du « tournant spatial » des sciences sociales du monde anglophone, concepts qui datent du début des années 1990. Dans le virage postmarxiste, des chercheurs d'autres disciplines que la géographie se sont rendu compte que l'espace n'est pas seulement un contenant des relations sociales, il les constitue aussi. (Dans le monde francophone, l'espace ne semble pas avoir été aussi négligé, grâce peut-être à la vocation appliquée des sciences sociales dans la période d'après-guerre pour résoudre des problèmes urbains, dont la pénurie de logement.) Deux courants principaux animent la réflexion sur la signification de l'espace. Selon les constructivistes, *l'espace* est conçu comme de la matière première que l'on investit de sens pour la transformer en *lieux* significatifs. Les lieux sont créés grâce aux processus de production sociale et de construction sociale de l'espace (Low, 1996). Selon les phénoménologistes, les lieux sont a priori significatifs, puisqu'il est impossible de se trouver dans un espace abstrait, dénué de sens. C'est l'idée de la création

des lieux porteurs de sens qui nous intéresse ici – l'idée de *place making*, que nous traduisons approximativement par « création des lieux » – que celle-ci soit conçue, au niveau épistémologique, comme le résultat de constructions sociales ou d'un processus incarné continu. Nous retenons aussi le concept heuristique des « sens du lieu » (*senses of place*), soit les diverses et multiples significations que peuvent porter un lieu donné pour différentes personnes (Feld et Basso, 1996).

Une autre facette pertinente de la création des lieux est le marketing des lieux (*place marketing*) (Kearns et Philo, 1993). Dans le contexte de l'économie postfordiste globalisée, les acteurs des rues commerçantes sont appelés à promouvoir une image de marque distinctive de la rue afin d'attirer investisseurs et consommateurs. Cela reflète, en miniature et à l'échelle intra-urbaine, la concurrence interurbaine dans laquelle est insérée la ville dans son ensemble, en suivant la logique de l'économie symbolique urbaine. Les sens du lieu deviennent donc objets de manipulation et de promotion explicite par des alliances entre des acteurs publics (comme les instances municipales) et des acteurs privés (comme des associations de commerçants, des boîtes de consultants, etc.).

Une dernière paire de concepts éclaire l'analyse présentée dans ce chapitre : la stratégie et la tactique, telles que définies par Michel de Certeau (1990 [1980]). La stratégie, selon lui, consiste en :

[L]e calcul (ou la manipulation) des rapports de force qui devient possible à partir du moment où un sujet de vouloir ou de pouvoir (une entreprise, une armée, une cité, une institution scientifique) est isolable. Elle postule *un lieu* susceptible d'être circonscrit comme *un propre* et d'être la base d'où gérer les relations avec *une extériorité* de cibles ou de menaces (les clients ou les concurrents, [...] etc.). (ibid. : 59 ; italiques dans l'original)

La tactique, par contre, est « l'action calculée que détermine l'absence d'un propre » (ibid. : 60). Si les stratégies supposent la maîtrise de l'espace, les tactiques nécessitent la mobilisation du temps. Les stratèges de la rue commerçante seraient alors ces acteurs qui ont pu la délimiter comme territoire d'action, tels que les urbanistes, les associations de marchands, les associations de résidents ou des fonctionnaires municipaux. Les tacticiens seraient les sujets qui agissent dans la rue commerçante sans pouvoir pour autant la revendiquer comme un « propre », au sens entendu par de Certeau, comme par exemple les commerçants, les habitants, les clients et autres passants. Il faut par ailleurs préciser que, si le commerçant peut déployer des stratégies en ce qui concerne son commerce (propre), la maîtrise territoriale de la rue dans son ensemble lui échappe; il a donc recours à des tactiques.

Ce chapitre dégage les stratégies et les tactiques des divers acteurs des quatre rues étudiées en les reliant aux processus de *place making* et, le cas échéant, de *place marketing*. Il présente ainsi quatre cas assez différents les uns des autres (voir le tableau 6.2). La rue de Liège, résolument traditionnelle, n'attire guère de stratégies d'intervention de la part des fonctionnaires municipaux ou d'autres associations; les tactiques de ses commerçants visent la survie commerciale et l'indépendance économique, ce qui nécessite quand même une certaine entraide informelle. Sur la rue Jean-Talon Est, les stratèges municipaux sont parvenus à assurer la stabilité commerciale mais n'aspirent, pour l'instant, à rien de plus. Les tactiques des autres usagers (travailleurs, résidants, passants) placent la rue sous la bannière de « l'ordinaire » – ordinaire et fière de l'être. Sur la rue Sherbrooke Ouest, si des stratégies de promotion ont pu porter fruit un certain temps, la « recette magique » qu'est la Société de développement commercial (SDC) a laissé un arrière-goût à des commerçants incertains des avantages de cette « communauté » imposée. Enfin, la rue Saint-Viateur, animée et largement connue, voire convoitée, devrait présenter un cas idéal pour la promotion stratégique. De fait, une compagnie multinationale s'en est servie à ses propres fins de promotion, lors du *Saint-Viateur festival de rue*. Mais ses petits commerçants ne ressentent pas le besoin de telles stratégies et préfèrent saisir les occasions de collaboration ponctuelle comme les festivals ou les mobilisations des résidants.

Plusieurs conclusions ressortent de cette analyse. Premièrement, la rue est le produit d'actions tactiques et stratégiques, planifiées ou non, qui opèrent à plusieurs échelles. Les acteurs qui y participent peuvent agir seuls ou en alliance officielle ou informelle et peuvent même se soutenir sans le savoir. Bien sûr, la rue est le produit non seulement de collaboration mais aussi de conflits (par exemple, celui autour de la SDC de Sherbrooke Ouest).

Deuxièmement, les cas des quatre rues suggèrent que malgré la montée de l'économie symbolique urbaine, la création *non planifiée* des lieux joue encore un rôle majeur dans la mise en œuvre de la rue commerçante de quartier. De par leur nature, les rues « non planifiées » n'attirent que peu d'attention de la part des intervenants stratégiques (urbanistes, promoteurs urbains, etc.), mais elles constituent quand même une figure unique dans « l'offre urbaine » (Bourdin, 2005) de la métropole contemporaine. Le fait qu'elles ne soient pas promues comme telles ne les rend pas moins une « option de mode de vie » viable pour leurs usagers.

Troisièmement, les résultats démontrent que même là où l'on fait du marketing du lieu, la forme finale et la durée de celui-ci peuvent être fort contestées. La plupart des recherches sur le marketing du lieu l'abordent « d'en haut », en se penchant sur des cas déjà ciblés pour des

interventions et en analysant des politiques en place et des entrevues avec ceux qui les réalisent (par ex. Aguiar, Tomic and Trumper, 2005; Kearns and Philo, 1993; Shaw, Bagwell and Karmowska, 2004). L'étude des rues qui ne sont pas *a priori* des cas de promotion du lieu et d'y interviewer une gamme d'acteurs a permis de voir que le marketing du lieu ne relève pas toujours de l'évidence.

La création des lieux est étroitement liée à la sociabilité publique et à la mobilisation de l'ethnicité. Par définition, les sens des lieux comportent des pratiques et des représentations de sociabilité publique. Ainsi, à titre d'exemple, les usagers de la rue de Liège soulignent la chaleur et l'entraide qu'ils y trouvent, et l'ambiance « amicale » (*friendly*) de la rue Sherbrooke dépend en partie de son usage comme destination et comme artère. Inversement, l'ambiance d'une rue peut être instrumentale dans des stratégies pour la promouvoir (par exemple, le festival sur Saint-Viateur). L'ethnicité est mobilisée moins directement dans la création de ces lieux. Le caractère multiethnique des quatre rues est spontanément reconnu et apprécié par les gens qui les fréquentent; il fait partie intégrante de leur sens du lieu. Mais il n'est pas mis de l'avant dans des stratégies de promotion, sauf peut-être sur la rue Saint-Viateur où, grâce aux souvenirs de l'ancienne fête de la Saint-Jean, la multiethnicité est devenue une sorte de « mythe » du quartier (Simon, 1997a), mythe néanmoins résistant au recyclage en « image de marque ». Quelques regroupements de commerçants à Montréal revendiquent des stratégies de promotion explicitement ethniques, les derniers cas étant le Village hellénique sur l'avenue du Parc et le Petit Maghreb sur la rue Jean-Talon Est (plus loin vers l'est). Or l'obtention de ce type de reconnaissance devient assez difficile, étant donnée la tendance actuelle à « pasteuriser » l'espace public des signes de cultures particulières (Germain et al., 2008).

Quant à la dynamique interne de chaque rue, il est intéressant de noter que l'origine ethnique ne semble pas être un facteur ni dans la création ni dans la promotion des rues. Si l'on peut relever une certaine culture du petit commerçant, indépendant de nature et peu enclin à se faire « planifier », on ne peut pas associer cette culture davantage au commerçant du commerce « ethnique » qu'à celui du commerce non marqué. Il y aurait une légère tendance des Franco-Québécois ou des Anglo-Québécois à soutenir plus prestement les stratégies de promotion, mais les conflits autour de la promotion ne se jouent pas selon le statut ethnique ou immigrant. Chaque camp inclut des immigrants récents ou établis, des membres de la deuxième génération et des Franco-Québécois ou des Anglo-Québécois. Bien que le croisement des stratégies et des tactiques produise un résultat différent dans le cas de chaque rue, globalement, les rues commerçantes étudiées semblent souligner les vertus de la création des

lieux non programmée. Les rues commerçantes de quartier constituent une offre urbaine plus près du produit « organique » que de la recette magique d'intervention si souvent promue par les acteurs du marketing des lieux dans l'économie symbolique de la ville. Le chapitre suivant démontre comment la création des lieux, la mobilisation de l'ethnicité et la sociabilité urbaine peuvent alimenter le cosmopolitisme à l'échelle de la rue.

7. Revisiter le cosmopolitisme urbain

Le chapitre 7 puise dans les thèmes et le matériau présentés dans les trois chapitres précédents afin de dégager les formes de cosmopolitismes produits dans ces rues commerçantes multiethniques de quartier. En ce sens, il constitue une réponse à l'appel de Hannerz (1990) et de Beauregard (2007) à creuser le cosmopolitisme non pas sur le plan théorique, mais tel qu'il existe dans la vie quotidienne, aussi imparfait, inégal ou ambigu soit-il. Le chapitre se divise en quatre parties : la première porte sur le cosmopolite « du coin de rue »; la deuxième porte sur les figures du cosmopolitisme (et de son opposé); la troisième porte sur le cosmopolitisme des lieux; et la quatrième conclut par une réflexion sur les conditions du cosmopolitisme dans la rue commerçante de quartier multiethnique.

Dans la première partie, je développe un argument (entamé dans le chapitre 1) venant à la défense du cosmopolite « local » (dans le sens géographique). Je soutiens, à l'encontre d'une certaine tendance dans la littérature théorique (par exemple Friedman, 2002; Nijman, 2007), que le cosmopolitisme n'est pas réservé à l'élite du *jet-set*. En appliquant des éléments de la sociologie de Simmel (1999) telle qu'interprétée par Truc (2005) à mon matériau de terrain, je démontre qu'il existe bel et bien des cosmopolites qui habitent au « coin de rue » (*street-level cosmopolitans*). Pour illustrer cet argument, je présente en détail l'entrevue que j'ai menée avec Peter, un homme dans la trentaine, rencontré sur la rue de Liège. Fils d'immigrants grecs, il a grandi dans le quartier Parc-Extension (mais sa famille et lui ont quitté le quartier depuis). Peter n'est ni voyageur ni membre de l'élite, mais un Montréalais de classe ouvrière (employé dans les métiers de la construction), dont le discours reflète néanmoins cette fameuse « volonté d'interagir avec l'Autre » (Hannerz, 1990). En revenant sur la rue de Liège pour passer du temps à son café préféré ou pour acheter les produits grecs qu'il aime, il se montre à la fois attaché à son ancien quartier et ouvert aux « Autres » culturels qui l'habitent aussi maintenant. On peut même dire que son ouverture s'explique en partie par son enracinement, puisqu'il reconnaît les ressemblances entre sa propre expérience de vie et la leur, tout en pouvant imaginer ce qui rend leur expérience différente de la sienne. Dans ce sens, Peter est cosmopolite *parce qu'il est* « local ».

Le cosmopolitisme « empirique » est avant tout émergent, le produit d'interactions sociales entre des êtres humains avec tous leurs défauts, qui parfois parviennent à « être cosmopolites » et parfois ne le sont pas. Strictement parlant, le cosmopolitisme n'est pas une qualité d'un individu, d'un groupe ou d'un lieu, mais bien d'une rencontre (Beauregard, 2007 : 692). Cela dit, une rencontre se produit toujours entre personnes dont l'expérience, la position sociale et l'attitude générale peuvent en influencer l'issue. Il faut alors quand même mettre les rencontres cosmopolites dans le contexte de vie des acteurs qui y participent. C'est pourquoi, à mon avis, il est raisonnable de chercher à dégager des types d'individus cosmopolites (ou non cosmopolites), pourvu qu'on ne s'attende pas à trouver l'incarnation du cosmopolitisme parfait.

Dans la deuxième partie, je présente une série de « figures » sociologiques qui incarnent le cosmopolitisme et son opposé (que je désigne non pas par le terme « localisme » mais par « *parochialism* » – « paroissialisme »). Il s'agit de types de personnes ou de personnages que l'expérience et la perspective – telles que formées par leurs rencontres – rendent nettement cosmopolites (ou paroissiaux).

Je dégage quatre figures du cosmopolitisme : le passeur, l'habitant ouvert, l'hôte et le connaisseur. Elles diffèrent les unes des autres dans leur façon d'interagir avec l'Autre, ainsi que dans leur orientation vis-à-vis de leur propre culture et de celle d'autrui (voir la figure 7.1). L'hôte – plus souvent l'hôtesse, en fait – s'ouvre à l'Autre en lui offrant l'hospitalité; en faisant cela, il ne change pas vraiment en lui-même. Son cosmopolitisme est dirigé plus vers l'extérieur que vers l'intérieur. L'habitant ouvert, dont Peter est un exemple, est peut-être moins actif que l'hôtesse dans son cosmopolitisme, mais davantage transformé par celui-ci : son ouverture le mène à l'observation, à la réflexion et à l'éventuelle modification de ses propres façons de faire ou de penser. Le connaisseur est en quelque sorte un cosmopolite-flâneur : son ouverture à l'Autre consiste surtout en la découverte de certains éléments de sa culture plutôt qu'en un lien à long terme. Il s'attache moins aux cultures dont il fait la connaissance et, ce faisant, mobilise peu la sienne. Le passeur est un intermédiaire entre les cultures, typifié par le commerçant du commerce (multi)ethnique, qui s'ouvre à l'Autre et qui interagit avec lui en faisant circuler des biens ou des informations de part et d'autre. Son cosmopolitisme est bidirectionnel; il produit de l'altérité tout autant qu'il s'y adapte.

Les figures paroissiales que je présente sont l'individualiste, l'insulaire et l'indifférent. L'individualiste est celui qui ne s'ouvre pas à l'Autre parce qu'il est trop préoccupé par la poursuite de ses propres projets et intérêts. Il est typifié, dans ma recherche, par le commerçant si pris par l'exploitation de son commerce qu'il n'a ni le temps ni l'envie d'interagir avec l'Autre.

L'insulaire se montre fermé, voire hostile aux autres, même lorsque ceux-ci l'entourent dans son milieu de vie. Il se coupe des autres comme s'il était sur une île, ou comme si son groupe à lui formait une île au milieu d'une mer d'étrangers. J'ai rencontré et interviewé des personnes correspondant aux figures de l'individualiste et de l'insulaire au cours du travail de terrain. Or la troisième figure, l'indifférent, est présentée à titre de figure plausible, car je n'en ai pas rencontré moi-même. L'indifférent est celui qui, un peu comme la figure du blasé chez Simmel (1979[1903]), n'est pas particulièrement ouvert à l'Autre parce que l'altérité ne l'intéresse ou ne l'impressionne pas. Cela dit, il n'est pas nécessairement fermé à l'Autre non plus; il en est plutôt détaché.

La troisième partie du chapitre interroge la façon dont on peut concevoir des lieux particuliers comme étant cosmopolites. Je suggère que le cosmopolitisme d'un lieu donné, à un moment historique donné, consiste en la combinaison de plusieurs « couches » de relations sociospatiales (voir la figure 7.2). Dans le cas de la rue commerçante de quartier, ces couches seraient : 1) les micro-lieux que contient ce lieu dans son ensemble; 2) le code général de sociabilité publique; 3) les relations perçues entre les différents groupes; 4) le sens du lieu tel que diffusé plus largement, par exemple par « l'infrastructure critique » (Zukin, 1991a), c'est-à-dire, les personnes qui construisent des récits du lieu afin de distinguer la rue des autres rues (journalistes, guides touristiques, amis qui se recommandent des restaurants, etc.). Le premier couple de couches relève de l'expérience immédiate des lieux (les pratiques); le deuxième relève des représentations des lieux (les discours). Dans chacune des couches se manifestent certaines relations d'ouverture et d'altérité.

Chacune des rues commerçantes de quartier multiethnique sous étude abrite ainsi sa propre forme de cosmopolitisme. Plusieurs des usagers (mais pas tous) acceptent et soutiennent le mélange culturel qui s'y trouve; ils font preuve d'une certaine ouverture de base à l'Autre. En plus, les caractéristiques et l'histoire de chaque rue et de ses alentours produisent un cosmopolitisme *sui generis* qui remplit une certaine fonction sociale. Le cosmopolitisme « conscient » de la rue Saint-Viateur est en quelque sorte une idéalisation, un récit qui sert à orienter ses habitants envers les dimensions interculturelles de la rue. Le cosmopolitisme « pragmatique » de la rue de Liège est de l'ordre de la nécessité et constitue une ressource de grande valeur pour la vie et la survie quotidiennes dans Parc-Extension. Sur la rue Jean-Talon Est règne un cosmopolitisme d'appropriation, encore à l'œuvre, qui permet de faire lentement connaissance avec l'Autre. Et la rue Sherbrooke Ouest génère un cosmopolitisme collaboratif

dans lequel l'ouverture à l'Autre veut dire donner à chacun l'espace suffisant pour « travailler » comme il l'entend.

Je conclus ce chapitre avec une réflexion sur les conditions nécessaires au cosmopolitisme à l'échelle de la rue. Une première condition est qu'il est non seulement possible mais aussi acceptable d'entrer en échange social (verbal, non verbal, instrumental, sans conséquence, etc.) avec des personnes perçues comme « autres » selon le code local de sociabilité publique. Ensuite, il faut admettre l'imprévisibilité de ces changements sociaux. La sociabilité des interactions « lisses » n'implique pas suffisamment de contact avec l'Autre; le cosmopolitisme demande de la sociabilité remarquable. L'Autre, étant inconnu, est par définition imprévisible; il faut donc prendre le risque que l'interaction avec lui puisse être soit « vallonnée » et conviviale, soit « à pic » et désagréable. Pareillement, pour cultiver le cosmopolitisme au niveau de la rue, il faut accepter que certains micro-lieux ne soient accessibles qu'à certains groupes – car cela signale la présence de ces groupes d'« Autres ». Enfin, il me semble inutile de chercher à imposer l'interaction avec l'Autre. Une voie douce vers cet objectif est de participer aux échanges banals de la rue commerçante. Si ces échanges peuvent être « marchandisés », ils sont néanmoins propices à l'ouverture à l'Autre. Pareillement, on ne peut pas « programmer » le cosmopolitisme par le biais d'aménagements ou d'autres interventions planifiées. Si certains équipements peuvent faciliter la rencontre de l'Autre (cafés-terrasses, transports en commun, bancs publics, etc.), aucun n'est en lui-même suffisant pour produire du cosmopolitisme; des efforts de marketing ou de *branding* cosmopolite le seraient encore moins. L'ouverture à l'Autre semble être nourrie moins par les stratégies que par des tactiques de création des lieux. On ne peut programmer les conditions pour le cosmopolitisme, parce que le cosmopolitisme est lui-même conditionnel. Le cosmopolitisme urbain est, au final, le fruit de la combinaison imparfaite et inégale des processus d'ouverture et de mise en altérité que l'on mobilise à l'égard des personnes avec qui on partage les rues commerçantes multiethniques de la ville.

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