PLACE IDENTITY, CULTURAL-HISTORICAL TOURISM, AND THE POLITICS OF SPACE:

A THEORETICAL APPROACH

BY

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Abstract

This thesis examines a connection between the meaning of places - localised communities - and the changing conditions of space and culture. Addressed specifically is the role of contemporary heritage and cultural tourism practices in the expression and construction of place and community identity. A secondary research question addresses the role of the past in defining the character and sense of place, particularly the past as it is represented through heritage practices.

The conceptual framework for this discussion will be based on interpretations of the cultural and political character of space as elaborated in recent traditions of communication and geographical theory. The Kalyna Country ecomuseum, a heritage-based tourism practice in east central Alberta, will be used as a case to examine these ideas.

The broader intention of this work is to provide a deeper understanding of the popular cultural processes and public discourses that play a role in the construction of space. In this light, attention turns to how local identity, place and memory are not essential but struggled for and reconstructed in always new contexts.

Yet one day the gate, the church that were the boundary of a district become without warning its center.

Walter Benjamin, *Reflections*

New York is big, but this is Biggar.

-sign on highway outside of Biggar, Saskatchewan due west of Saskatoon; due south of North Battleford; population 2561

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Constructing a Geography

> ...what we are seeing is not just another redrawing of the cultural map - the moving of a few disputed borders, the marking of some more picturesque mountain lakes - but an alteration of the principles of mapping. Something is happening to the way we think about the way we think.
>
> (Geertz 1983, p. 20)

Pretext

The view that things look more like they are flying apart than they appear to be coming together has found frequent iteration within recent discussions of the cultural field. Whether captured in the terms of "all that is solid melts into air,"[1] "disorganised capitalism," the politics of difference, the politics of identity, the politics of representation - all of these phrases evoke a sense of "centrifugal," dispersing tendencies associated with the emergence of new social actors, political forces and economic factors; decentralising forces which do not eradicate but exist in a necessarily constant tension with centralising, centripetal forces. This "flying apart", however, while it may very well describe changing conditions of life "out there," more likely depicts a re-making of us. It more likely indicates an opening up of what we will allow ourselves to see of our selves, our borders, and our world; perhaps in the way Clifford Geertz notes above, in the very "principles of mapping." The exploration of multiple subjectivities and the naming of multiple identities, paralleled by the re-writing of geopolitical borders globally, has eroded the spirit and stability of the traditional binary oppositions of margin and centre, subjective and objective, inside and outside, personal and political. The artificiality of the boundaries of such abstract categories (poorly drawn at that) is brought to the foreground.

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[1] As in Marshall Berman's *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity.* (New York: Penguin, 1982). This is a line adopted from the *Communist Manifesto.*

Revealed in the process of this decentering is the genuine and irreducible complexity, contradiction and ambiguity within human relations and historical and cultural realities which have always lain beyond these categories. Identity is not essential but conjunctural and re-created, highlighting the political un-innocence of the very stuff of human experience. Memory, imagination, emotion, perception, cognition, expression and action are always, through and through, social and cultural affairs. Social constructions and representations are not significant of an essential or deeper truth nor merely reflective or distortive of a more fundamental reality, but are highly concrete and creative interventions in the making of the real. They are seen as constitutive, "as what the world is made of really" (Matless 1992, p. 44). As what were once certain oppositions of artifice and imagination, of representation and real are brought to a point of collision, we become concerned "neither with facts nor with poetry *per se*," writes Peter Lamborn Wilson, "but with *poetic facts* " (1987, p. 30).

Geography and history used to lie in this realm of fact and stability. Today, when "the word is...as 'material' as the world" (Hall 1991, p. 62), space, place and the past are poetic social constructions and inevitably political. Place does not tell itself, it must be imagined and told by human beings, through specific discursive and rhetorical means. Just as history involves fictionalising - turning events into facts which can then be challenged and rewritten, geography's representation has served to naturalise a certain colonial order of things which is today consistently confronted at every point with alternative "imagined geographies." The telling of place then is never established "once and for all" for the mapping of meaning to the physical landscape is part of the broader complex, chaotic, unstable field of human experience.

This to-and-fro, equivocal character of human experience and its relationship to place and the past is central to Graham Swift's novel *Waterland*. Interweaving present and past through the stories a history teacher tells his students of his personal past, of his life on the English fens, Swift shows that the human relationship to space and time proceeds not through the sweeping motions above the ground evident in the language of official histories and geographies, but is built slowly and ambiguously, in human rhythms and human terms, on and through the ground. The fens, the silt-formed low-lying region

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of eastern England that is in an always, ongoing state of reclamation through dredging, diversion, and draining, become, for Swift, a metaphor:

> My humble model for progress is the reclamation of land. Which is repeatedly, never-ending retrieving of what is lost. A dogged, vigilant business. A hard, inglorious business. But you shouldn't go mistaking the reclamation of land for the building of empires.
>
> (1983, p. 336).

The fugitive and blurrily disordered character of the world outside us is re-made and contoured by people, whose narrative representations and imaginings act like the actual material manipulation of the landscape; they are both constructive and constitutive. History and geography do not exist apart from the people who make them, apart from their lived experience and actions and are not static, but discovered, invented and lived within always changing broader forces. In the fens is a hint of the genuine simultaneity of human experience as both object and subject. As a result, history and geography cannot be seen in the simple and stable terms of progress, decline, nations, and borders; as lived they are inevitably and at once shaped and undermined, built and demolished, moving by simultaneous "accretion and erosion":

> So forget, indeed, your revolutions, your turning points, your grand metamorphoses of history. Consider, instead, the slow and arduous process, the interminable and ambiguous process - the process of human siltation - of land reclamation.
>
> (Swift 1983, p. 10)

Swift's depiction of the difference between grand scheme, "empire-building" and the ambivalent, to-and-fro nature of experience, action and narrative retrieval in the actual living and playing out of place and history is central to this paper. From within a similar line of thought, Michel Foucault saw in the past not a stable history or heritage that "is an acquisition, a possession that grows and solidifies":

> ...rather, it is an unstable assemblage of faults, fissures and heterogeneous layers that threaten the fragile inheritor from within or underneath...[the search for descent] is not the erecting of foundations: on the contrary, it disturbs what was previously considered immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself.
>
> (Foucault 1986, p. 51)

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This is where the idea of "flying apart" lies: the noting of a gap between the lived and the officially represented brings into view a complexity of experience and the constitution of differences which may be veiled or obscured at times, but which cannot be made to go away. Faced with this, as Geertz says, "simplicity flees" (1983, p. 32).

Research Problem

...We're doing this as a means...to let people know that we're here.... It's not dead...that there's a chance. That's all you need...that there's a chance we can bring it back, bring something back...
(Bell Island mural artist John Littlejohn)

...[It's] bringing back a sense of pride to the community...I think it was never lost; [it's] just emphasising it more.
...I think it's been an added attraction to the town and I am quite proud of what these guys have done...adds something to the community and gives you a sense of pride.
(residents of Bell Island, NFLD, interviewed for CBC's *On the Road Again* (1993) in regards to the painting of tourist-oriented murals depicting local figures and historical events in their community).

Heritage, for all its seductive delights, is bogus history.
(Hewison 1987, p. 144)

Where there was active historicity there is decoration and display. In the place of memory, amnesia swaggers out in historical fancy dress.
(Wright 1985)

In the incongruous registers evident between these two points - on the one hand, voices articulating the meaning of tourist expressions of place identity and local heritage for their community; on the other, recent critiques of the heritage industry - lie the basis and the impetus for this thesis. Changing conditions of culture and space have increasingly brought communities face-to-face with the political economy of tourism. In the rise of the profile of culture and consumption paralleled by a collapse of conventional distinctions of near and far, presence and absence, the identity of place - the imprint of a people on the landscape and vice versa - has found frequent expression within the "production of difference" associated with cultural-historical tourism.

I use the term "cultural-historical tourism" to group for the purpose of discussion an increasingly interrelated body of tourism-oriented practices through which the cultural and historical dimensions of the identity and meaning of place may be represented and defined. This conception expands upon the more typical idea of "cultural tourism" which is the "diffuse absorption of 'local colour,' the 'taking in' of a whole exotic scene with emphasis on material objects such as buildings, clothing, and the like..." (van den Berghe and Keyes 1984, p. 349). Extending this definition, cultural-historical tourism emphasises that the "pastness" of the character of a location may also be a part of the expression of cultural identity and of "local colour" for the tourist gaze, as in the case of the murals of Bell Island, Newfoundland, which drew their inspiration from similar murals developed in Chemainus, British Columbia. Beyond murals, this blend of tourism and heritage practice comes in various other forms: historically or culturally themed festivals, historical reconstructions, "open air" museums, historical restoration and interpretation of sites or districts, and so on.

These kinds of heritage and cultural practices "in-the-service-of-tourism" have been the subject of much debate within recent discussions of postmodernism, geography and culture. Within this dialogue they have most often been associated with the increased salience of forms of leisure consumption that characterises the contemporary "postmodern moment" and viewed in terms of their spectacle, nostalgia and inauthentic fabrication of difference and of "otherness" in time and space for visual consumption. "Bogus history," "decoration and display" and "amnesia" - terms used by Robert Hewison and Patrick Wright (above right) to describe these cultural practices - epitomise the general attitude to such expressions of place identity within this perspective.

The realisation of a need for an alternative or complementary approach to theorising these practices came about through my attempts to reconceptualise cultural-historical tourism constructions as media for the potential invention and expression of a unity of place, cultural identity and social memory. 1 wanted to explore the role these forms of expression may play for the communities in which they are developed (above left) within the current context of the deterritorialisation of identities and erosion of any sense of "fixed" places (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 17). These practices and their

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implications for a sense of "pride" of place are inadequately comprehended through discussions of nostalgia and commodification which generally end up as a dismissal of contemporary expressions of place and tradition as reactionary, simulated and evidence of false consciousness.

Diminished in such a framework is the dynamic of the active construction and localising of identity involved in place, and a sense of the relationship of that construction to the politics of space and the social landscape. Ultimately, this depiction of the relationship of place and history leaves little room for a deeper theorising of the relationship of these expressions of place and the past to "imagined geographies" and an "imagined sphere of social relations" (S. Duncan 1989). The positive affirmation of identity articulated by "pride" highlights that something is being missed by such approaches: the possibility for a concern with historicity and the role that may play in unifying a past, present and future of a community. As the symbolic shape of place and "imagined community" (Anderson 1983) take on a somewhat solidified form and historical "evidence" is re-collected, retrieved and made visible and tangible to the people who live in a place, a particular self-consciousness is brought about; a consciousness of a link between culture and space which creates the possibility for not only the expression of a cultural space but also the physical and mental manipulation of that space.

Evident in contemporary tourism practices is then the paradox and ambiguity that no cultural form is exempt from in a postmodern cultural environment. Tourism practices, while seemingly emblematic of the spectacle associated with the power of commodity relations and the predominance of mass culture, also indicate the potential for local cultural production and expression. As Linda Hutcheon writes, "...all cultural forms of representation - literary, visual, aural - in high culture or the mass media are ideologically grounded,...[they] cannot avoid involvement with social and political relations and apparatuses" (1989, p.3). This involvement is not only far from simple and straightforward; it cannot *but* be multi-layered and rife with complexity. Today the cultural field is viewed as a territory of fragments and borders, constantly redefined and crossed, a place of many subjectivities and many sites from which to see and speak. Cultural practices engaged by the people who live this territory similarly do not fit into

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any easy patterns of centre and margin, domination and emancipation, but rather implicate a postmodernism "of complicity and critique, of reflexivity and historicity, that at once inscribes and subverts the conventions and ideologies of the dominant cultural and social forces of the twentieth century western world" (Hutcheon 1989, p. 11). The insight offered by Trinh T. Minh-ha is helpful: "As notions which serve an analytical purpose, otherness and sameness are more useful when they are viewed not in terms of dualities or conflicts but in terms of degrees and movements within the same concept, or better, in terms of differences both within and between entities" (1987, p. 140).

By saying this, I realise that I am placing myself somewhat against a trend in contemporary criticism that has tended to separate decentralising from centralising effects and maintains a distinction between representational practices, generally in theatre, art, film, literature which are seen to have the potential to de-naturalise or problematise general conventions and forms of representation and those that do not - generally commodified forms, like tourism practices and (most) television.[2] I am not in any way arguing that these distinctions are inappropriate, for there is a vast and undeniable difference between "the ahistorical kitsch seen in some New York or Toronto restaurants or at Disneyland" and "the postmodern parody of Salman Rushdie or Angela Carter or Manuel Puig [which] has become one of the means by which culture deals with both its social concerns and its aesthetic needs" (Hutcheon 1989, p. 8). These are, however, two points on a continuum and I am arguing that many things, much less obviously "either/or", lie in between.

Expressive practices and representations emerging from limited contexts of place and cultural community, particularly those associated with cultural and historical tourism, I think need to be looked at within this interstitial space. Polarising the

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[2] Linda Hutcheon writes:
> The one medium that is consistently referred to as postmodern, however, is television. Jean Baudrillard calls it the paradigmatic form of postmodern signification because its transparent sign seemingly offers direct access to a signifies reality.... Most television, in its *unproblematised* reliance on realist narrative and transparent representational conventions, is pure commodified complicity, without the critique needed to define the postmodern paradox (1989, p. 10).

See also Arthur Kroker and David Cook's essay "*History in Ruins*: Television and the Triumph of Culture" in *The Postmodern Scene*. (Montreal: New World Perspectives, 1987).

examination of such expression in the terms of either opposition or co-optation often means that the actual ambiguity of specific instances is wished away in, as Geertz puts it, "a haze of forceless generalities and false comforts" (1983, p. 234). Theory is always, inevitably chasing the concrete. In order to grow a vocabulary appropriate to talking about things "in between" and to grasp complexity, process, and simultaneity, we must be ready to see what practice can show. For the initiatives and strategies of individual and groups of people in their daily lives are inevitably as diverse and complex as those individuals and groups themselves. The problem that requires attention is not whether expressions of place identity and the past are inherently oppositional or co-optive but how they arbitrate the tensions between these two points. They are at once, both and neither. Linda Hutcheon describes this paradox as it characterises postmodern cultural practice in general: "it sits on the fence between a need (often ironic) to recall the past of our lived cultural environment and a desire (often ironized too) to change its present" (1989, p. 13).

The alternative I try to develop in the following pages acknowledges this contradiction, involving an altering of perspective to attend to expressive practices and constructions of place as instances or sites of social and spatial production. This enables noting the kinds of knowledge appearing ex-centric, off-centre, and a vision of the local not as powerless "victim" but as site and cultural space that is produced socially in the ongoing and simultaneous interaction of a localising of identity and distant discourses of power. The construction and representation of identity through cultural-historical tourism is posed not in terms of fabrication or artifice, but as the latest "incarnation" within the ongoing process of reinvention of place. Further, this invention has material effects within the social production of space, establishing geographic presence and location. "We're doing this as a means... to let people know *that we're here*," says John Littlejohn, mural artist in Bell Island, Newfoundland. Identity construction here parallels Swift's "land reclamation": place does not just pre-exist, rather the making and re-creating of a place involves never-ending work to re-collect, recover and reinvent place identity against forgetting and "erosion" within a variety of contending and dominating forces. As "postmodern arts of memory," (Fischer 1986) such practices undermine any

simplistic dismissal as pastiche, rampant nostalgia or the "impoverishment, the servitude and the negation of real life" (Debord 1983, para. 215).

In order to examine these dynamics I will look at a particular area of east-central Alberta, the site of the historic Edna-Star Ukrainian bloc settlement (Fig. 1), where an ecomuseum (a contemporary variation on the community history or open-air museum) is being developed - the "Kalyna Country Ecomuseum". Briefly, the ecomuseum structure involves the symbolic bounding of an area and encompasses everything - historical, contemporary, material, biotic, human, oral, built, and environmental - within those boundaries. Emphasising the interrelationship between culture, people and landscape in place, the ecomuseum is intended as a tourist destination and to facilitate community self-definition and to enable action based on that knowledge (Fuller 1992). Drawing on the contemporary rural and settlement bloc experience as well as the east European settlement, fur trade, exploration, and native histories of the area, both cultural tourism and historical tourism are implicated in the ecomuseum. Though there are different motivations behind each form, there is a fundamental shared ground - the desire to experience "other" places, to consume other experiences, in a spatial as well as temporal sense. The past becomes place, as Leslie Hartley notes in *The Go-Between*: "The Past is a foreign country, they do things differently there."[3]

Though local and particular, this landscape also manifests broader economic and cultural processes. Tourism is a particular mediating form of cultural expression. Tied to the changing spatiality associated with the development of mass travel[4] (Kern 1983,

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[3] This line from Leslie Hartley's novel *The Go-Between* was adopted by David Lowenthal to title his book *The Past is A Foreign Country* (1985) which is considered a seminal study of history, nostalgia and the re-creation and re-construction of the past in North America as well as in Europe.

[4] See Stephen Kern's *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (1983) for a discussion of the broader changes in the experience of time and space between 1880 and the beginning of World War I, propelled by a range of technological innovations that included the automobile and airplane. These technological changes established the material foundation for new experiences of space and time, in which the new capacity for travel played a role. He notes "National boundaries themselves had become more porous so that travelers crossed them with exceptional ease. Developments in transportation generated a freer movement of people across national lines. The airplane pierced the wall of frontiers and wiped out the military significance of fixed fortifications" (p. 194). There was a "new sense of world unity that became ever sharper in the decades that followed as the railroad, telephone, bicycle, automobile, airplane, and cinema revolutionized the sense of distance" (p. 213). Henderson and Castells have made the case that contemporary telecommunications technologies extend and intensify these earlier patterns as they "are

Sack 1988) and to the historical relationship between popular culture, leisure and consumerism structured in 19th century industrialism (Featherstone 1991), tourism practices are fundamentally cultural and economic practices in capitalist spaces. The ecomuseum is part of a more recent global proliferation of tourist sites such as the community history museum, historic site and open air museum over the past several decades which has involved the broadening of the range of material culture considered worthy of preservation, extending the range of sites and pasts brought under the tourist gaze.

Within recent discussions of space and postmodernism, the sharp local variations - the variegated "senses of place" - that tourism-oriented expressions of place and history demand, are posed as emblematic of the constant production, recouping and appropriation of local identity characteristic of the geography of flexible accumulation (Harvey 1989, Urry 1988). Tourism is associated with the collapse of "space-time" produced by global transportation, communication and electronic media, through which the stock of place imagery in the consumer's *musée imaginaire* has expanded dramatically and we are able to "read with facility a vast array of clichéd signs of real and fictitious elsewheres" (Goss 1993, p. 20). Expressions of place and of heritage through such forms of promotional culture are diagnosed as simulacra and opposed to "real identity" and "real history" implying a prior state where there were autonomous spaces untouched by such consumer forces (see Hewison 1987, 1989). This is the predominant framework in which expressions of place and identity associated with cultural-historical tourism have been viewed, and indicates the polarity of authenticity and inauthenticity around which "much debate on the issue now flounders" (Matless 1992, p. 51).

Practices themselves, however, such as the ecomuseum, indicate that in the dynamic of centripetal and centrifugal that characterise the cultural field there is always an openness to cultural production. Versus the homogenising, placeless postmodernism

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the electronic highways of the information age, equivalent to the role played by the railway systems in the process of industrialization" (Henderson and Castells 1988, pp. 5-6, see also Meyrowitz 1985).

KEY

1. Edna-Star
2. Prince Albert
3. Fish Creek
4. Yorkton Area
5. Dauphin
6. Shoal Lake
7. Interlake
8. Stuartburn
9. Whitemouth

■ Area of solid Ukrainian settlement
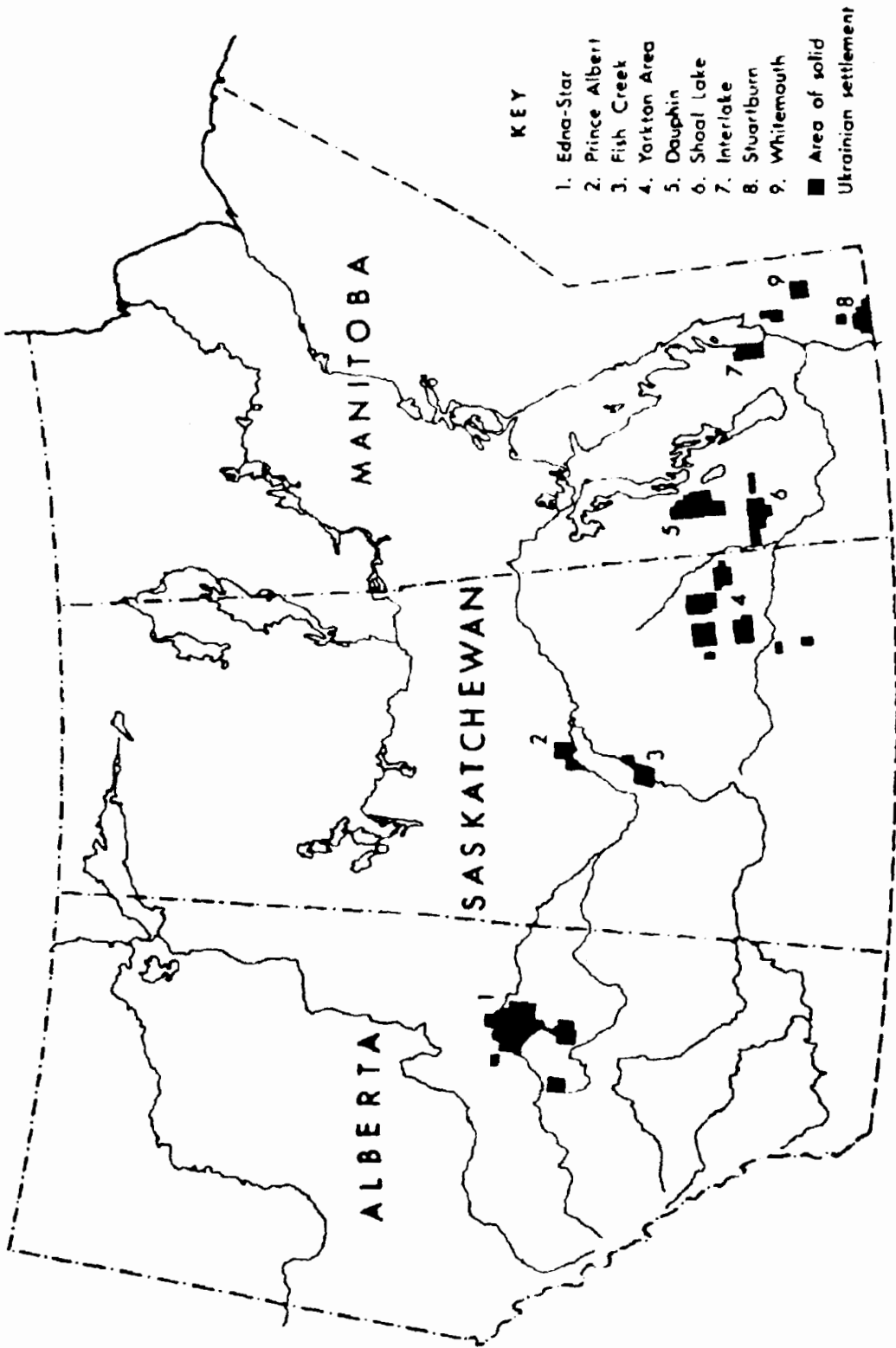
Ukrainian Bloc Settlements in 1905

Fig 1. - Ukrainian bloc settlements in 1905
Source: Canadian Ethnic Studies, IX, 2 (1977), p. 50.

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is visible another potentially critical dimension, here described, if somewhat violently, by Arthur Kroker and David Cook:

> The obliteration of the mythology of time in North American culture is a sign of the liquidation of the American Empire, and its warrior values....Opening up the spatial dimensions of existence blows the concentration of power out into the small towns and cities, as centers of micropower replicating the cosmology of postmodernity.
> (1987, pp. 288-289)

Place identity does not dissipate in this global context, but is localised and mediated through the contemporary cultural forms of public discourse and representation available. Occurrences of cultural-historical tourism, while inevitably embedded within social and political relations associated with late capitalism, can also be seen as mediating the expression of cultural and place identity within this contemporary dialectic of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. Tourist sites and museums become the settings for the assertion of place and community identity. As media for self-narration and a "struggle for place" (Ley 1989), they may be part of an ongoing narrative retrieval and human construction of geographical and cultural location.

As such, these expressions do not simply interrupt the progress of the centre or the unity of its geographies, but involve a "re-centring" of place, identity and historical memory. Their politics emerge not in irony or parody but in highlighting the illusion of the assumption of unity and fixity of roles of centre and margin in the first place, as they command attention to always existing contradictions, movement, heterogeniety and ruptures; to the actions of subjects, and to the agency of practice in history and geography. While such symbolic expression does not constitute political *action* in the way we generally think of it, it does work self-consciously to turn inevitable geographical and ideological grounding into a site of interaction, making the local and locality while building a place from which to see and speak from, and to pose alternative geographies:

> Understanding how history is made has been the primary source of emancipatory insight and practical political consciousness, the great variable container for a critical interpretation of social life and practice. Today, however, it may be space more than time that hides consequences from us, the 'making of geography' more than the 'making of history' that

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provides the most revealing tactical and theoretical world. This is the insistent premise and promise of postmodern geographies.

(Soja 1989, p. 1)

Theoretical Orientation

My basic intent is the construction of a "postmodern geography" within which symbolic, discursive constructions of place and of social identity are envisioned not as regressive or fabrication but as part of "re-making geography". Within a cultural environment dominated by mass mediated imagery as well as by transportation and communication which facilitate control and domination over space, the conscious localising of identity and memory - in fiction, autobiography, local museum practices, historic tourist sites, film, video, and voice - may be seen not only as de-constructive forces but as efforts towards re-construction: making tangible a social space through the "recollection" and re-creation of identities. This link between identity, historical memory and spatialisation is paramount. As bell hooks has written, "in much new, exciting cultural practice, cultural texts - in film, in black literature, critical theory - there is an effort to remember that is expressive of the need to create "spaces" where one is able to redeem and reclaim the past, legacies of pain, suffering and triumph in ways that transform reality" (1990, p. 147). This reconstruction is in no way a simple matter of "local resistance". The role of contemporary discourse as potentially both enabling and neutralizing of cultural politics is one of the defining contradictions of the contemporary postmodern environment. As George Lipsitz writes in his preface to *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture,* "new technologies do lend themselves to new forms of exploitation and oppression, but they also have possible uses for fundamentally new forms of resistance and revolution" (Lipsitz 1990, p. vii). While a paradox, this duplicity is also a potential strength and the absence of a "natural link" between form and effect simply means a more nuanced reading of the relationship of identity and its forms of expression is necessary.

As global forces of political economy have become increasingly fluid, local identities have not disappeared but have apparently become more important, and in some cases, more contentious, to construct. This has had the effect of confounding

assumptions that the world is growing more "drearily modern". What appears to be happening is an ongoing particularisation of cultural and place identities rather than growing uniformity. Brought to the fore is that relations in geographical space have never been imposed or rigid, nor have spatial identities ever been pure and essential. As Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson note, "representations of space in the social sciences are remarkably dependent on images of break, rupture, and disjunction. The distinctiveness of societies, nations, and cultures is based upon a seemingly unproblematic division of space, on the fact that they occupy 'naturally' discontinuous spaces" (1992, p. 6). This convenient fiction that mapped cultures onto places and peoples was also the basis for understanding social change and cultural transformation. Separate, autonomous, "pure" spaces, brought into the "contaminating" capitalist global village, are seen in terms of the erosion of cultural distinctiveness. In this framework, any expression of local identity after this point would inevitably be false and simulated.

Counter to the vision of a "global village," there have been proposals for a "globe of villages" (Nozick 1992, p. 39). The "persistence" of identity and place differentiation seems less an anomaly if spatial relations are seen to have always been produced and constructed through interconnections, not disjunctions, within which cultural identity and tradition are *in process*: constantly negotiated and reconstituted by actors operating within networks of political economy which span and interact within multiple geographic scales (Oakes 1993, p. 47). "Authentic" culture evolves from the collective memory of social experience over time: "It is a process of unfolding, of continuity - a process that grows out of *history* " (Nozick 1992, p. 183). Yet, this authenticity is not essential; like difference it is produced, not salvaged (Minh-ha 1987, p. 140). Confronting the assumed isomorphism of space, place and culture, the theoretical orientation presented here emphasises contemporary expressions of locality and of place as localised sites of this reconstitution of identity and tradition, which do not exist in opposition to the global but rather involves a dynamic cultural negotiation with changing structures of political economy. Cultural-historical tourism is one possible context in which these identities may be asserted and reconfigured.

In the relationship of cultural-historical tourism to place there is much ambiguity. There are the real and unavoidable detrimental effects of a tourist economy upon the geographic locations and communities which become caught up in it (for example, environmental effects, service sector wages, and so on). There are also the real conditions of living in a place that is caught within processes of de-industrialisation associated with a new international division of labour - processes which provoke many communities to turn to tourism instead of, say, the new rural growth industries of prisons and toxic waste disposal (see Filchen 1991). There is the seemingly modern face of tourism and its proliferation which has been associated with a shrinking, and increasingly homogeneous, consumption-oriented, "placeless," mobile world. And there is the undeniable conscious and memory-bound connections human beings still have with the places they live even in this age of mass transport, tourist sites or not; the enduring importance of the sense of belonging to a place.

The problem is how to talk about such things that because of their multi-dimensionality, traverse the gaps between defined abstract categories. Tourism as a modern, perhaps postmodern, context through which ethnic, cultural and place identities are recreated reflects the complexity noted by Andreas Huyssen with respect to postmodernism:

> ...my main point about contemporary postmodernism is that it operates in a field of tension between tradition and innovation, conservation and renewal, mass culture and high art, in which the second terms are no longer automatically privileged over the first; a field of tension which can no longer be grasped in categories such as progress vs. reaction, abstraction vs. representation, avantgarde vs. Kitsch.
> (Huyssen 1986, pp. 216-217)

The methodological implications are addressed by Feierman, "The difficult task in actual historical analysis is to create a method...which can capture the cultural categories as both continuous and in transformation, and actors as both creating a new language and speaking inherited words, all at the same time" (1990, p. 13 in Oakes 1993, p. 47).

This is a "difficult task" because it involves both, and at once, a pessimism and an optimism; the ability to allow disintegration of categories and assumptions about commodification and culture and a capacity to envision this disintegration not as the end

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point but as the vantage point from which to see building beyond in another direction. In this leap of faith at once backwards and forwards is the point from which it is possible to recognise variation in space, to deal with expressions of place identity not in terms of authenticity or inauthenticity but as at once inherited, regenerated and transformed through contemporary forms. It becomes possible to not simply discount but to deal with the world as it is lived in terms of varying shapes and manifestations of identity without demanding inter-nationalism, essence or sameness.

The beginnings of a vocabulary that is capable of grasping this potential for difference, for complexity, movement and interconnection, is tangible in the coming together of two complementary threads of recent theoretical discourse - cultural theory and cultural-humanistic geography. It is the retheorisation of the spatiality of social life that is occurring in this intersection that this paper is informed by and seeks to contribute to. These two separate spheres have been, in fact, often converging operations, with interwoven, juxtaposed and parallel elements. Central to both has been an interest in the mutually constitutive relationship of the social and the spatial. The reciprocal, constructive relationship between societal processes and spatial expression implies both the social production of space, places and environments as well as a spatial influence upon the work of cultural and identity differentiation. The idea of mutual constitutivity is summed up by Edward Soja: "social life is both space-forming and *space-contingent*, a double relationship...shaping a 'socio-spatial dialectic" (1985, p. 98).

In this interface emerges a conception of the political, ideological and constructed nature of space and of the activity and power struggles involved in seemingly neutral concepts of "location" and "place." For as Anthony Giddens has observed, "space is not an empty dimension along which social groupings become structured, but has to be considered in terms of its involvement in the constitution of systems of interaction" (1984, p. 368). "Imagined geographies" - the spatial configurations through which shifting relations of social power and identity are constituted - are constantly inherited, reworked, and transformed through cultural discourse. The phrase to "take place" gains new resonance, for events then don't *just* take place. Location and place involve the active construction, revision, positioning and re-presentation of identity, culture and

tradition, posing them both geographically and culturally within a dynamic of centres and margins.

This meeting ground of geographic and cultural theories will provide the heuristic tools to dig up, and into, a set of issues raised by contemporary manifestations of symbolic expression and constructions of place, of community and of cultural identity mediated through tourism. The theory of total manipulation and passive, deluded human subjects that characterises general critiques of the heritage industry as spectacle has been challenged on both fronts. In cultural theory, particularly in what is known as "cultural studies", the concept of hegemony has been central in the retheorisation of the oversimplified, unidirectional conception of power evident in mass culture approaches to cultural expression. Rather, as Martin Laba has acknowledged:

> The implication here is that there is a certain autonomy of processes in the cultural milieu, and that structural and economic determination occurs only through the mediating realm of the human and cultural...In this sense, the very word 'mass' becomes problematic. With the notion of 'mass' the social reality of the forms of popular culture is either generalized and trivialized or ignored completely.
>
> (1986, pp. 108-109)

Away from its identification with mass culture, the "popular" is attributed a critical social dimension and in entrenched in the "local", "in particular, the articulation of popular sentiment and social identity within limited contexts (region, community, class, for example), through the expressive, symbolic and popular processes of culture" (Laba 1988, pp. 82-83). Culture is asserted as process, as a form of active negotiation, allowing for oppositional elements.

The association of cultural practices with the realm of the local effectively frustrates assertions of a resignation to closure and of the disassociation of contemporary cultural forms from the political. This closure and proposed neutrality has also been undercut within recent conceptualisations of identity processes within feminist theories. Expressions of cultural identity will necessarily be dynamic as identity itself is understood as strategic, multiple and self-contradictory. Teresa de Lauretis writes:

> For it is not the fragmented, or intermittent, identity of a subject constructed in division by language alone, an 'I' continuously prefigured

and preempted in an unchangeable symbolic order. It is neither, in short, the imaginary identity of the individualist, bourgeois subject, which is male and white; nor the 'flickering' of the post-humanist Lacanian subject, which is too nearly white and at best (fe)male. What is emerging in feminist writings is, instead, the concept of a multiple, shifting, and often self-contradictory identity, a subject that is not divided in, but rather at odds with, language; an identity made up of heterogeneous and heteronomous representations of gender, race, and class, and often indeed across languages and cultures; an identity that one decides to reclaim from a history of multiple assimilations, and that one insists on as a strategy.

(de Lauretis 1986, p. 9)

Identity and culture are re-asserted as a fields that are inherently unstable and subject to reclamation and struggle. Chantal Mouffe has observed that identity is "constructed at the point of intersection of a multiplicity of subject-positions between which there exists no a priori or necessary relation and whose articulation is the result of hegemonic practices. Consequently, no identity is ever definitively established, there always being a certain degree of openness and ambiguity..." (1988, p. 35). The result, what Kobena Mercer has described as the sense of the "indeterminacy and ambivalence that inhabits the construction of every social identity," enables the examination of its ongoing construction, articulation and reconstitution (1992, p. 426). For as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has maintained, "one needs to be vigilant against simple notions of identity which overlap neatly with language or location" (Spivak 1990, p. 38). Essential categories of identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexuality, place and class are destabilised and reasserted as social relations within an interactive cultural field.

This sense of a dialectic between resistance and containment and of the active construction of identity has been paralleled in geography. In community and regional planning, studies of architecture, the built environment, public and urban space, there has been increasing attention to issues of place and identity, and the politics of space. Foregrounded is that "geography" is in no way simply a set of facts; the spatiality of social relations is reproduced and revised through cultural practice that is "spatial praxis" (see Soja 1985). Symbolic expression is directed towards the reproduction or reshaping of spatial relations of power; it is therefore, by definition, political. "The cultural process by which people construct their understandings of the world," write Kay Anderson and Fay Gale, "is inherently a geographic concern":

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In the course of generating new meanings and decoding existing ones, people construct spaces, places, landscapes, regions and environments.... In constructing cultures, therefore, people construct geographies. They arrange spaces in different ways; they fashion certain types of landscape, townscape and streetscape; they erect monuments and destroy others; they evaluate spaces and places and adapt them accordingly; they organise the relations between territories at a range of scales from the local to the international. In direct and indirect ways, both willful and unintentional, people construct environments, regions and places. However, geographies do not just exist 'out there' as inert reflections of cultures....Human geographies are under continuous invention and transformation by actions whose underlying fields of knowledge are themselves recreated through geographic arrangements. People's cultures and their geographies intersect and reciprocally inform each other, we argue, in process, in time.

(Anderson and Gale 1992, p. 4)

Landscapes, regions, spaces and places, as a result, are cultural forms "which upon interrogation reveals a human drama of ideas and ideologies, interest groups and power blocs nested within particular social and economic contexts" (Ley 1987, p. 41). Public art, graffiti, neighbourhood and regional protest, ethnic festivals, critical social movements - all indicate that space is not neutral but invariably contested, resisted and struggled over. In response to the a-historical and a-spatial pretensions of modern planning and architecture, a postmodern philosophical and epistemological reorientation to the local and to difference finds concrete expression in "sensitive urban place-making" (Jencks 1981, p. 82) and a "critical regionalism" in architecture (Frampton 1983) - marks of a shift from an "abstract universalism" to a "new particularism" (Rustin 1987).

In complementing the premise in cultural theory of culture as a complex field of interaction and negotiation with discussion in cultural geography that space and spatial relations are culturally produced and therefore inherently political, it becomes clear that the separation of the two spheres is arbitrary and misleading. Cultural politics are inevitably spatial politics. Within a conception of the spatial dynamics inherent in the social landscape, cultural forms and cultural technologies cannot be conceived outside of the production of spaces and cultural location. For implicit in cultural forms and objects of culture, are cultural and political practices - the actions of human subjects. This dimension of action is frequently, and regrettably, diminished through an over-emphasis on objects and artifacts of culture. Though virtually invisible in the predominating focus

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on objects for consumption and their reception, it is in this element of practice that the potential for a critical postmodern geography based on the active role of symbolic and discursive constructions of place and identity is tangible. "Postmodernism is not a mere morphology of artifacts," David Ley and Caroline Mills have argued, "but also the practices and activities by which artifacts are constructed. Such processes, although they may end in commodification - though this term, itself, is not unproblematic - encompass singular moments where it is possible to open up spaces for opposition, to conduct rituals of resistance" (1992, p. 256). The surface of social space, therefore, is not unparadoxical but etched with complex effects and inscriptions of such interaction.

Integrating a conception of the social production of space with a sense of cultural space as an interactive social construct, places and locations are re-positioned as constructed sites where cultural identity and place are actively localised and made meaningful not in opposition to structures of political economy but by consciously engaging them. Boundaries indicate both a distant and local capacity to influence sense of place and are constantly traversed and re-made. Cultural expression may then be seen as part of a self-conscious struggle for place, enabling the surfacing of other forms of knowledge, history and culture. Bridging what has been a formidable chasm, in this way it "is possible to experience one's self as a strong and coherent agent in the world, at the same time as understanding the extent to which identity... [is] socially constructed and represented" (Waugh 1989, p. 13).

Within the social production of space, then, cultural variations in territorial space do not represent evidence of false consciousness, a "residual," a "clinging" to local identities, or deviations from the norm as "backwaters" missed by the colonising flows of capitalism and modernity. These cultural spaces are produced through, and in, the process of the social organisation of space and the regionalisation of experience. Spaces, places, communities and localities are therefore not static, for within the social landscape identity is always, inevitably, indeterminate and contested. They are created and constructed in the interplay of material and discursive forces, in the interaction of representation "out there" and the internalisation and re-articulation of these representations. Making place and "taking place" are acts of constant imagining,

invention and expression. Cultural spaces and places do not exist outside of modernising forces, they are made, maintained and transformed through constant re-invention, re-articulation and dialogue, through relations, interactions and connections, not ruptures. Spatial differentiation is inherently and inescapably social. This very general principle, that a negotiated, dynamic social and historical process underlies spatial organisation, is the grounding point for this work and reinforces that, as Michael Mann has said, "societies are much *messier* than our theories of them" (1986, p. 4). Within this messiness, identity and the sites where it is asserted are not stable and inherited, but forged.

This element of "forging" is tangible in expressions of place which appear to be the "very embodiment of 'the condition of postmodernity'" (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 660). Here, Trevor Barnes and Roger Hayter are referring to expressions of place identity which are associated with cultural-historical tourism; expressions of peripheral local identity, local culture and local distinctiveness which draw on the past and tradition, constructing a promotional image in an effort to incorporate tourism into local development efforts.[5] The same dynamic of promotional culture and forging of identity is tangible in the microcosm of the area of east central Alberta. Moving beyond a framing of cultural production as resistant or conservative solely in terms of content, the ecomuseum as a form of cultural tourism is significant in its role in the continuous negotiation and reconstruction of a cultural place-based identity. As a tourism-oriented heritage practice, it can be seen as an attempt to explain origins, to establish a continuous narrative thread from the past into the present upon a landscape. Further, while the search for continuity is grounded in a connection to the past, the meaning abstracted from that past provides a coherence to a cultural location for the present and future.

As an "imagining" of a place, the landscape articulated in the form of the ecomuseum is intimately related to the historic "swirl" of culture, politics, and economics in a particular place at a particular time (Ley 1987, p. 41). When assailed in the terms of spectacle, superficiality, aestheticisation and commodification associated with critiques

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[5] Their focus is Chemainus, British Columbia, which they describe as "located on the periphery of a periphery" (1992 p. 660) and will be examined further in chapter two of this discussion.

of the culture industry and a landscape of mass culture, obscured is a deeper conceptualisation of the role of such images as popular, localised expression in the politics and production of space. Within the contemporary context of rural decline and increasingly symbolic ethnicity, the ecomuseum enables a centering of ongoing efforts to understand and invent what it means today to be place based in an agricultural past, as well as the "consistency" of being Ukrainian-Canadian as evolved in this site in Alberta. It entails not only a recording of place, but a practicing of place-creation.

Chapter Outline

It is to theoretical conceptualisations of the making of place and cultural difference that I turn in the first chapter, "Making Sense of Place Within the Social Landscape". Emphasised in these theoretical approaches is the political character of space and the centrality of symbolic and imaginative processes in the social construction of space.

Chapter Two, "Place and Nostalgia: A Postmodernism", examines current associations of expressions of place, particularly those which involve heritage practices, with nostalgia and inauthenticity. These approaches tend to focus on the ascendancy of the sign and a culture of consumption as necessarily extinguishing to cultural difference and cultural integrity. I argue that this perspective must be viewed within the broader rhetoric of decline associated with postmodernism which as a discursive apparatus tends to depoliticise the popular through an emphasis on the objects of culture rather than cultural practices.

Chapter Three, "Re-Collection and Geographic Presence", poses an alternative perspective which stresses the possibility for heritage practices and cultural-historical tourism activities to play a role in the imagining and "storying" of places and communities. The re-collection of words, narratives and images entailed in such expressions of place are viewed in terms of the ongoing reconstruction of place identity and the reinforcement of the unity of a past, present and future imagined community and place. These ideas are looked at in the context of the formation and reproduction of

place identity in the prairie west as well as in the more limited imagined geography of the Kalyna Country ecomuseum.

Such imaginative constructions of place, dwelling and memory are positioned within the context of the erosion of "place" and "community" as durably fixed, stable entities in Chapter Four, "Defining Place: Between Deterritorialisation and Regionalism". The ecomuseum is used as an example of a broader "struggle for place". As linkages between local and wider worlds are realigned and reshaped, identities are reinvented and redefined.

The concluding chapter returns to the question of postmodernism and brings the ideas developed in this thesis to the posing of a "postmodernism of resistance" against the predominant "postmodernism of decline". Resistance in this case lies not with consumption of cultural forms but in the practices by which cultural objects and landscapes are constructed; in making tangible boundaries and meanings of place produced and sedimented within the collective experience and memory of an imagined community.

Chapter One

Making Sense of Place Within the Social Landscape

No space disappears in the course of growth and development: the worldwide does not abolish the local.

(Lefebvre 1991, p. 86)

We therefore need to resolve an apparent paradox: people seem to be conscious of the existence of local cultures when meeting and talking to people from different areas, or traveling around the country, yet many social scientists have provided powerful theoretical arguments against their continued viability.

(Savage 1989, p. 246)

The "double meaning" in the title of this chapter is strategic: "making sense" or understanding place within the social landscape demands attention to the active making and construction of "sense of place." This sense of activity has been effectively obscured in the dominance of simplistic conceptions of the relationship of space and identity, where space becomes a neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory and societal organisation are inscribed (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). A pre-given world of ruptured and discrete "peoples and cultures," a unity of place and people defining "ourselves" and "others", masks the processes of *production* of difference in a world of culturally, socially, and economically interconnected and interdependent spaces. Gupta and Ferguson note, "The presumption that spaces are autonomous has enabled the power of topography to conceal successfully the topography of power" (1992, p. 8).

In this differentiation, place identity and the character of a location is not something that is stable and pre-political, but dynamic and constantly re-created within new contexts and new tensions. A twist on the recent proliferation of calls for the "local" and arguments for local autonomy and resistance, this conception allows for a more critical view; to see in the local and in place not an essence that is "strengthening" or "declining," but the complex interaction and negotiation of forces which all at once reinforce, undermine, limit and re-create the role, meaning and sense of place:

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But if anything is clear... it is that the local exists nowhere in a pure state. The local is only a fragmented set of possibilities that can be articulated into a momentary politics of time and place.... This is to take the local not as the end point but as the start.

(Probyn 1990, p. 187)

Challenging arguments that construction implies fabrication, brought to light are the complex, ambiguous processes of contemporary identity constitution and the production of space and place. Social space and places are made and, further, they are as much cultural constructs as economic constructs. Diversity and difference within the cultural landscape are the precipitate of the intimate binding of cultural construction and social imagination to economic processes, not cultural responses or reactions to alienating economic processes. Cultural spaces and senses of place are not essential but are constructed in an interaction of "distant" and "local" influences, as much from within as from without.

Making place involves both a regionalisation of experience and a localising of identity and tradition - an interplay that is the substance of geographies of power. Within this production, representations of social identity play constitutive roles, reproducing, shaping or reworking spatial configurations, reinforcing the idea of the creative dimension of place and the role of signifying practices in processes of place-creation. Cultural conceptions, everyday practices and social constructions effect and reflect spatialisations which are internalised, re-articulated and represented, precipitating sites within which identity and memory are brought to bear upon specific real conditions. Whereas the differentiation of identities and cultures was once considered increasingly anachronistic, today it is possible to discern two interdependent approaches to understanding its persistence: one emphasising the social production of space, the other the imagining of communities

Spatial and Cultural Difference: Beyond the Mass Culture Thesis

The politics of space are "old news" in Canadian literature and literary theory. This has made thinking in the terms postmodernism has provided - of localism, regionalism and difference - not very much of a challenge at all. Drawing upon Jean François Lyotard's assertion of postmodernism as "incredulity toward metanarratives...

the obsolescence of the meta-narrative apparatus of legitimation," poet-critic-novelist Robert Kroetsch writes, "I am suggesting that by Lyotard's definition, Canada is a postmodern country.... Canada is supremely a country of margins, beginning from the literal way in which every city borders on wilderness... The centre does not hold" (1989, p. 22-23). The prominence of regionalist impulses in the articulation of national identity and the unblended and uncoordinated character of Canadian cultural reality have made variation in regional and cultural identities and senses of place quite visible and tangible, leading to the frequent observations of regionalism and localism as the fundamental nature of the cultural process in Canada (Westfall 1988). "Our sense of region resists our national sense," writes Kroetsch (1989, p. 27).

In contrast to living in an "old country" where the layers, the acts of naming and the acts of power they entail are well disguised in the seeming permanence of the surroundings, a dialectic of movement and dwelling within place is still intelligible in Canada. In this context, the persistence of place and the making of its identity is not simply a matter of having a population rest for a period of time in a particular location; it is a matter of producing and recording that presence, inscribing it upon the spatial imagination. Human subjects and their expressive practices are at once products and producers of place. "Writers in a new place conceive of themselves profoundly as namers. They name in order to give focus and definition," Kroetsch writes, "They name to create boundaries. They name to establish identity" (1989, p. 41). This goes for not just writers and not just Canadians - the link between self-representation and retrieving and claiming space for cultural autonomy is the basis for the strategies of many marginalised cultural communities.

Expressive practices arising in limited contexts entail, ultimately, localised, lived social experience and the creation and use of symbolic expressive resources that at once inform and are informed by historical, economic and political conditions of locale (Laba 1988). These practices do not provide a mirror or window on place, but shape, re-create and reproduce the space itself. Expressions of place identity, whatever their form, are conceptualised as a manifestation of an ongoing transformation of place. Foregrounded in this understanding of geographic identity is the role of the symbolic and imaginative in

the making of distinct localised identities (see Westfall 1980 in Mandel and Taras 1988; Wallace 1990, Keith 1988). "In a sense," writes Robert Kroetsch, "we haven't got an identity until somebody tells our story. The fiction makes us real" (1989, p. 159).

This idea of place-creation in Canadian literary criticism is paralleled in geography. Assertions of the salience of identities of place and of region, of cultural identity emerging from limited contexts, have been based upon the very general premise of the social construction of the spatial. Within this there is an understanding of place, as David Ley has described it, as "a negotiated reality, a social construction by a purposeful set of actors" which at once has a reciprocating, legitimating effect upon the social group through which it has gained form and substance (in Gregory 1989b, p. 359). Beyond the static distribution of human beings in relation to each other, space and place are fictions, as in the original sense of *fictio* - "something made." Space is "political" because of this construction and the subsequent room for contestation for meanings, uses and boundaries of spaces. Through and through social and cultural, spatial orders and relations are not "pre-political" or pre-given but are constantly reconstituted and re-negotiated as representation and symbolic aspects of culture are enmeshed with actual lived conditions. There is an interaction of symbolic and the material as experience itself is bound to discourse and representation, and subsequently rearticulated. Space is not the domain of objective, neutral fact; as Sénécal has asserted "lieux et territoires sont avant tout des terrains à decrire et à comprendre" (1992, p. 41). Put in other ways, places and landscapes are made (Tuan 1991, Jencks 1981); tradition invented (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992); worlds are written (Barnes and Duncan 1992); country, nation, community, and landscape imagined (Short 1991, Anderson 1983, Gayton 1990).

Within this perspective, place and space are formed in the intertwining of material forces, human activity and signifying practice. Spatial differentiation is not simply tied to economic restructuring, the spatial division of labour and uneven development. Social production, cultural construction and an "imagined sphere of social relations" are added to the equation (S. Duncan 1989, p. 249). Places are not only localised moments of political economy but points within a landscape that is the result of the mediation of "real" space into social, cultural and political space through discourse,

representation and practice. Spatial entities such as place and region are thus in part the effects of a process of constitutive, performative cultural activity, constructed spaces which in turn give rise to practices that express what has been called, variously, "sense of place," "local identity," "and "local consciousness," foregrounding the focal role of human imaginative activity as the ground upon which spatial order is inscribed and reproduced - the "social imaginary" (Shields 1991). For though individuals are not the "authors" of ideology and spatial orders in the sense of producing it out of nothing from inside our heads, as Stuart Hall has noted, "ideologies must work *on* and *through* the subject, subject-ing us to their play, if they are to have force or effect" (Hall 1991, p. 62). Similarly, Henri Lefebvre has maintained ideology "also brings nations and nationalisms into being - hardly a *specular* effect" (1991, p. 326).

The argument that places are different from one another, it must be said, is not exceptional. The phrases "local knowledge," "local culture," "local resistance" and "local struggle" find frequent usage today to argue for spatial differentiation and for a potential for resistance to alienating forces in a modern, transnational, globalised world; to refer to the persistence of cultural difference. Until recently, however, the idea of "local culture" and the related concepts of place and place identity had largely been trivialised or ignored within modern cultures and approaches to modern cultures (see Agnew 1987). The vision of unity articulated in ideas such as "world economy," "global village," and "world order" has also implied a growing uniformity and a loss of spatial and cultural differentiation. In its emphasis on the pre-eminence of transnational markets and capital, the language of modernism expresses a shift away from place and local cultures, and their subordination, or incorporation into, a "larger" whole through the material engines of integrative technological advance and economic development. Sharon Zukin notes that "until the Iranian revolution, localism - a concept related to place - had no role in theories of social and economic modernization. It was assumed that traditional status systems and parochial loyalties would wither away in the course of economic growth" (1991, p. 12).

Most often this homogenisation argument has been tied to claims for Americanisation, commercialisation and "commodification" and a global political

economy as cultural diversity is seen to be dependent on cultural isolation and separation. As a result, there is a sense that an emphasis on local cultural identity today is a grasping at something manufactured and inauthentic in the face of the threat of the growing fluidity of global political economic forces and capitalist flexible accumulation. Contemporary cultural identities and expressions emerging from limited contexts are therefore romantic "hold overs" from the past or inauthentic reconstructions to be eradicated, for modernism, for some, "was bound to bury locality (its parochial politics and culture) within a flood of internationalist influences" (Harvey 1989, p. 265).

The local in this depiction approximates that of approaches associated with a mass society or mass culture perspective which has maintained that the affective ties which bound people together at local and regional social levels have been consistently undermined with modernisation which has entailed a shift towards greater individualisation and atomisation on the one hand, and homogenisation, on the other. Limited spatial contexts become less significant as a source of social identity with this general homogenisation and decline in salience of specifically local cultures. This perspective details the transition from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* - from intensely experienced communal life at the local level to impersonal involvement within a mass society. These terms were originated by sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies in 1887 and employed further by such sociological figures as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. There are also echoes of the Frankfurt School's condemnation of the culture industry, where "a homogeneous and tightly controlled public culture is projected unproblematically upon a passive citizenry" (Ley and Mills 1992, p. 257). Mass culture is seen to impose "airtight" social control where "the culture industry has molded men as a type unfailingly reproduced in every product" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972, p. 127).

Mike Savage has elaborated four types of change associated with the modern that have been of particular importance within the mass society thesis. He refers to first the development of a "world economy" where production extends beyond local markets to global ones. Also significant is the development of the nation-state which undermined local differences through administration, education, discipline and service provision. Thirdly, changes in the form and structure of communications and transportation have

enabled access to places and information globally, making the local area less pivotal. Finally, the development and growing dominance of the mass media or culture industries has had particular importance for localised cultural activities (1989, p. 261). John Clarke further points to three aspects of mass media as having been influential: the spread of the mass media to large proportions of households; its penetration to the centre of lifestyles and household life; and its content, which has tended to undermine traditional standards and values (Clarke 1984).

These changes are clearly of very great import. The hyper-mobility of people, objects and information has had a profound effect on a sense of territorial roots and the stability of place and identity. The impact of global electronic communications systems and consumer-oriented economies upon notions such as territoriality, place and identity has been taken up by Joshua Meyrowitz. His interest lies with the manner in which electronic media disrupt our sense of place through a merging of situational information, impacting behaviour. Defying limits formerly set by distance, spaces remain separate yet increasingly connected, enabling a collapse of time-space and propelling a technological "sense of place": "By altering the informational characteristics of place electronic media reshape social situations and social identities" (Meyrowitz 1985, p. 117). Stephen Kern has also dealt extensively with the "unique spatialities created by technology" (1983, p. 220), examining the shift towards technologies that were increasingly distance-binding at the turn of the twentieth century as laying a material foundation that had direct consequences for human thought and consciousness - there was a "new sense of world unity that became ever sharper in the decades that followed..." (1983, p. 13).

The implication of these developments for "local cultures" is far from straightforward, however. Cautioning that it cannot be assumed that cultural forms and practices are determined as an automatic reflex by "macro" determinations, Paul Willis has written, "Just because there are what we call structural and economic determinants it does not mean that people will automatically obey them" (1977, p. 171). Cultural and spatial difference have been particular victims of the theoretical model that has upheld such assumptions. Recent manifestations of decentralisation, border tensions, separatism and micro-nationalisms worldwide have served to indicate the extent to which place was

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repressed - like ethnicity and religion - in the "mass" notion of the modern (Zukin 1991). A global economy and modernising forces have not obliterated localised history or culture; neither has it hindered the agency of human subjects in making territory a site of contestation. Propelled by the forceful struggles of indigenous nations and marginalised cultural communities for self-identification, self-government, self-determination and self-representation, the potency of constructed ties between identity and place is tangible worldwide. This is perhaps most evident at present within the context of proliferating border wars, the altering geographies of former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, and the current tensions in Canada regarding Quebec and native communities with respect to self-determination.

These challenges indicate that the long-prophesied demise of the local has not occurred, undermining claims for the assimilative forces of industrialisation, modernisation and globalisation which have been alleged to have drained such differentiating forms of identification from existence. But neither is this local identity residual or primordial (see Agnew 1992), or a reactionary or traditional "space of places" which is separate from and lying in anachronistic contrast with pressures of a contemporary "space of flows." The "demise of the local" is, in fact, the right answer to the wrong question. There has been a change in the nature and type of local cultures based in the shift from primarily local to primarily extralocal ties achieved to a great extent through the unifying effects of mass electronic media and communication technologies. Challenging that this means a terminal decline of the local, however, is the understanding that the "local" has never been autonomous and unaffected by external forces, that what is "outside" is inseparable from the construction and production of what is "inside." As Homi Bhabha has pointed out, "The 'other' is never outside or beyond us; it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse, when we *think* we speak most intimately and indigenously 'between ourselves'" (1990, p. 4).

Place identity emerges within and as a part of processes associated with broader spatial configurations through which relations of power are constituted. Identities in these sites are negotiated and reconstituted by actors operating within a web of political economic relationships which span and interact within multiple geographic scales.

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Global political and economic systems therefore do not externally impact or impinge upon local, self-contained cultures, subjecting them to destructive forces; rather, they are always, and always have been, deep within the local. It would be naive and simplistic to assume otherwise. As James Clifford and George Marcus have asserted, "external systems have their thoroughly local definition and penetration, and are formative of the symbols and shared meanings within the most intimate life-worlds of ethnographic subjects" (1986, p. 43).

Obscured in the drive to discover what is new and what is "contemporary" has been the potential to rediscover what is enduring. Kathleen Neils Conzens writes, "But even when 'community' is cast loose from local ties, the local place at all of its various levels, from neighborhood, to city, to metropolitan region and even state, still retains a history and an influence over the lives of its residents" (1980, p. 289). Deterritorialisation is paralleled by a re-territorialised, or at least, differently territorialised, social space (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Attending to the consistency of "place" and "locality" at the level of the integral role of the "imaginary" and of symbolic expression within all material conditions also allows a glimpse of what is ongoing - the production of difference that has always characterised identity constructions and expressive practices, historic and contemporary. The interaction of discursive and material enables a conception of the integrity of contemporary identity constructions while acknowledging the impossibility of any return or a "turning back" to some fairy tale, pre-modern time and place when identity was seamless, pure and essential. And not because it is irretrievable, but because it never existed. As imaginings or re-imaginings, expressions of locality, of identity and of social memory are communicated today through a variety of cultural forms and practices.

The persistence of cultural and spatial difference has had the effect of foregrounding that the equation of the terms modernisation, homogenisation, globalisation and placelessness was problematic to begin with. Variation in place and identity and modernist deterritorialisation are not two confrontational arguments or opposing views of what being in the world is like today, but two constitutive trends of global reality: "The dualist centralized world of the double East-West hegemony is

fragmenting, politically and culturally, but the homogeneity of capitalism remains as intact and as systematic as ever" (Friedman 1990, p. 311). The tension between cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation means that struggles for emancipation and self-determination, border conflicts and the assertion and articulation of local cultural identities go hand in hand with the growing globalisation of the economy and multinationalisation of market products. The sense of interplay between the world market and cultural identity, between global and local processes, between consumption and cultural strategies, provides a way of approaching contemporary processes of culture, identity and place. "The intensive practice of identity," writes Jonathan Friedman, "is the hallmark of the present period" (1990, p. 312). Identity is practiced, not inherited. In the inevitable production of space rests the dynamic dimension of locality and place; "it is irreducibly political. Locality is not just produced, it is struggled over" (Cox and Mair 1989, p. 129).

The Social Construction of Space: Installing Place

> But place is not passive. The legacy of past roles and the forms of social
> relations that they engendered set the possibilities for the future.
> (Dicken and Lloyd 1990, p. 391)

The social construction or production of space has been the general premise underlying a conception of the processes by which a space gains a distinctive identity as a place and the political nature of spatial relations. Space is ordered and regionalised into "imaginary geographies". Through practices, representations and conceptions, geographic space is recoded and sites become associated with particular characters and identities built upon particular values or events. These socially constructed elements of space become guides, enabling and constraining action, behaviour and uses of spaces and places. There are two predominant frameworks for understanding this production: one aligned with an economic emphasis, the other accentuating the cultural dimensions of this construction.

The dominant paradigm for conceptualising this geographic structuring in terms of political economy has been Marxist social and economic theory - a historical-

geographical materialism which emphasises that capitalism produces not only history, but also geography. In the production of space by capitalism, each wave of capital accumulation, each round of settlement and investment, allocates spaces and places to different functions within the social relations of production: some taking controlling roles, others subordinate roles. Within Marxist analyses, where places are identified with the functions of capital, they achieve control; where they are closely associated with labour, they are subordinate (Dicken and Lloyd 1990 p. 391). Rejecting the argument that space simply reflects social relations, space is viewed as playing a role in production and re-production within the social sphere; space itself is a social relation and the sphere where relations are reproduced.

Canadian economic historian Harold Innis has provided one such materialist analysis of the production of space, focusing on the spatio-temporal dimensions of contemporary media and the bond between communication practices and monopolies of knowledge. According to Innis, different types of societies and civilizations and specific types of economic enterprise produce specific geographies. Boundaries do not pre-exist but are tied to the character of staple production. Accumulation under the organisation of production associated with capitalism occurs not by absolute expression but through the internal differentiation of space resulting in margin and centre relations associated with the extension of authority over space. Initially focusing specifically on a Canadian context, Innis approached experience through an examination of the evolution of trade and transportation networks, later extended to communications. Central to his "staples thesis" was the concept of "empire" and within this, the processes of the exploitation and management of hinterland area and character and the subsequent tension between the centralisation and decentralisation of monopolies of power: "...the economic history of Canada has been dominated by the discrepancy between the centre and the margin of Western civilization" (Innis in Melody, Salter and Heyer 1981, p. 95).[6]

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[6] Harold Innis' influence on discussions of the interrelationship of geography, history and culture cannot be underestimated. His ideas with respect to the construction of space and the interaction of margins and centres underlie much of my thought throughout this thesis. Due to my focus here, however, on developing and synthesising more recent perspectives on the production of space from both communications and geographical domains, I place more emphasis on extending these ideas and less on a

John Urry has extended this premise, proposing three interrelated circuits of social relations: the sphere of capitalist production, the sphere of state institutions and the sphere of "civil" society - relations of home and community which are perceived as somewhat autonomous of capitalist production and state forms (Urry 1981). These three spheres are bound in a constantly altering tension and the processes going on within and between them is spatially constituted: "it is this spatial constitution, with all the contingent effects involved, which in the first place creates local variations" (S. Duncan 1989, p. 249). Doreen Massey has proposed a geologic metaphor, stressing that the key aspects of the physical and social character of any local area is derived from the successive variety of roles played by that area within the evolving capitalist division of labour (Massey 1984).

This evolution of roles within the changing spatial division of labour interacts with parallel shifts in civil society and state spheres and places, and spaces emerge with social and cultural attributes. The separation between space and social process is removed, for as Massey has stated, "If the social is inextricably spatial and the spatial impossible to divorce from its social construction and content, it follows not only that social processes should be analysed as taking place spatially but also that what have been thought of as spatial patterns can be conceptualised in terms of social processes" (1984, p. 67). Place and space are conceived of as playing active roles. Within socially constructed portions of space - towns, cities, regions or nations - the built form is the imprint of rounds of investment and social formations, the product of successive roles in the spatial division of labour. These geographic outcomes not only reflect the constellation of social relations but represent an active force conditioning the evolution of that constellation of social relations (Dicken and Lloyd 1990, p. 368).

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review of Innis' thought. For a critical discussion of Innis' work on the relationship between communications and history see Paul Heyer's essay, "Innis and the History of Communication: Antecedents, Parallels, and Unsuspected Biases" in *Culture, Communication and Dependency* (Eds. Melody et al. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1981) and Chapter Eight of his book *Communications and History: Theories of Media, Knowledge, and Civilization* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988). Influential to my work have been Innis' books *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973) and *A Strategy of Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952).

It is here that the more culturally-oriented approaches to the construction of the spatial intervene. "The spatial," writes Rob Shields, "is thus an area of intense cultural activity" (1991, p. 30). In the process of the social production of space, the character of places and spaces takes on an autonomous quality. Outcomes "on the ground," the localised instances of global processes, are re-figured as distinct cultural locations in space with distinct cultural landscapes:

> By contrast with strong roles in economy and society, weak and dependent ones may leave much less to show, but if they follow previous periods of success and development, the downside features of decay and social deprivation may leave powerful marks in the physical landscape. Such roles also stamp the social character of places, their cultural forms, the nature of their class structures, and the shape and hierarchical ordering of civil society. The powerful role inevitably has its social and cultural effects, but so, in ways that lack of physical change may fail to reveal, does the weak and dependent. So much of what we understand by the concept of place and the identities of cities and regions is derived from these historical forces. They emanate from the evolution of their current physical and spatial form.
>
> (Dicken and Lloyd 1990, p. 370)

In the interplay of cultural and political economic forces, the symbolic shape and identity of places, regions and spaces becomes "indistinguishable from any basic empirical identity they might once have had" (Shields 1991, p. 3). Space is not an inert backdrop upon or before which activity takes place. Geographic space is continually and dynamically socially produced, constructed, constituted and mediated through cultural and social institutions, practices, activities, and constructions which simultaneously re-order behaviour, knowledge and assumptions. Space is discursively codified and recodified into imagined geographies as economic and political contours have symbol and metaphor bound to and through them.

This is the basis for the idea of space, location and place as political and inherently unstable. Space and places are constituted and reproduced through cultural practice and are therefore dynamic and contested. According to Henri Lefebvre, space is "fashioned, shaped and invested by social activities" (1991, p. 73) and cannot be examined or defined apart its users or from the larger spatial network - the relations and interrelations of spaces to one another, within and between various global geographic

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scales. As a result of their construction, social spaces interpenetrate: "the intertwinement of social spaces is also a law. Considered in isolation, such spaces are mere abstractions. As concrete abstractions, however, they attain 'real' existence by virtue of networks and pathways, by virtue of bunches or clusters of relationships" (Lefebvre 1991, p. 86). Within this production of space, places are not simply juxtaposed, they may be intercalated, combined and superimposed:

> Consequently the local (or 'punctual', in the sense of 'determined by a particular "point"') does not disappear, for it is never absorbed by the regional, national or even worldwide level. The national and regional levels take in innumerable 'places'; national space embraces the regions; and world space does not merely subsume national spaces, but even (for the time being at least) precipitates the formation of new national spaces through a remarkable process of fission. All these spaces, meanwhile, are traversed by myriad currents. The hypercomplexity of social space should be now apparent, embracing as it does individual entities and pecularities, relatively fixed points, movements, and flows and waves - some interpenetrating, others in conflict, and so on.
>
> (Lefebvre 1991, p. 88)

All of these social spaces emerge from and are made meaningful through the process of differentiation of interconnected, interacting spaces. A way of theorising this construction of space is through the idea of social spatialisation which, to borrow a definition from Rob Shields, is "the ongoing social construction of the spatial at the level of the social imaginary (collective mythologies, presuppositions) as well as interventions in the landscape (for example, the built environment)" (1991, p. 31). At the intersection of social constructions, cultural conceptions and practices, social space is "infinitely fine-grained, myth-laden, qualitatively inflected, and people-filled." (Shields 1992, p. 189).

Spatialisation is central to an understanding of contemporary regionalisation of experience. Regionalisation was proposed by Anthony Giddens to refer to the modes in which the time-space organisation of locales is ordered within more embracing social systems (1984). The social organisation of space becomes transposed into realm of the concrete: "partly through ongoing interaction, a site acquires its own history; partly through its relation with other sites it acquires connotations and symbolic meanings"

(Shields 1991, p. 60). The social construction of the spatial is a formation of both discursive and non-discursive elements, practices, and processes which enables:

> the transformation of purely discursive (i.e. ideational, symbolic, and linguistic) notions of space and of 'imaginary geographies' into empirically-specifiable everyday actions gestures of the living persons [sic], of the crowd-practices and emotional community of affective groups, of institutional policies and political-economic arrangements, right up to the scale of the territorial nation-state...and beyond to form geo-political alliances, rivalries, and spheres of influence. This over-arching order of space, is reproduced in concrete forms and re-affirms as well as reproduces 'discourses of space' which constitute it.
>
> (Shields 1991, p. 7)

Human subjects are posed as at once subjects and objects. Representations are enacted as they are internalised and therefore structure and are structured by social practice. Within the dialectical interaction of the social and the spatial it is understood that "to be alive is to participate in the social production of space, to shape and be shaped by a constantly evolving spatiality which constitutes and concretises social action and relationship" (Soja 1985, p. 90).

The making and installation of place and identity is therefore based in a tension between active agency and the societal constraints on that invention: "people make their own history [geography] - but only under definite circumstances and conditions" (Abrams 1980 in Gregory 1992, p. 464). As Michael Dear and Jennifer Wolch have recognised, "Any narrative about landscapes, regions or locales is necessarily an account of the reciprocal relationship between relatively long-term structural forces and the shorter term routine practices of individual human agents" (1987, p. 10). Processes of collective cultural identity and place-creation occur within this reciprocity; within a landscape or geography of power. The order of spatial relations is formed and re-formed "in *praxis* - in the practical activities carried out in the enactment of everyday life" (Giddens 1984, p. 242).

The interactive processes that go into the construction and creation of space as place have been approached at a practical level through a number of directions. It is possible to extract several distinct, though interrelated elements in recent examinations of the social construction of space. At one level, foregrounded are the material processes,

such as the concrete acquisition and settlement of land for agriculture or town-building, and the social forces that shape those decisions and the resulting evolution of a place. Paul Voisey, for instance, has explored the making of the prairie community of Vulcan, Alberta in terms of the interaction of settlement with the forces of tradition, frontier, environment, and metropolis - an interaction that was manifest in different ways in the formation of new communities in throughout the Canadian west (1988).

A second approach has emphasised the role of hegemonic institutional structures which organise and mediate experience and social relations within the social landscape in order to reproduce and justify relations of ascendancy. Kay Anderson's discussion of the "idea of Chinatown" stresses such formative processes:

> It is possible, however, to adopt a different point of departure to the study of Chinatown, one that does not rely upon a discrete 'Chineseness' as an implicit explanatory principle. 'Chinatown' is not 'Chinatown' only because the 'Chinese,' whether by choice or constraint live there. Rather, one might argue that Chinatown is a social construction with a cultural history and a tradition of imagery and institutional practice that has given it a cognitive and material reality in and for the West.
>
> (Anderson 1987, p. 581)

Thirdly, the material transformation of nature into place has been linked to language, and more broadly, discourse. Shields' work on the place-images and space-myths shaping the organisation of space and the identities of "places on the margin" indicates such an approach (1991). In a slightly different conceptualisation, naming, written texts, and conversation are posed as integral parts of the process of place construction. In the emphasis on the economic and material forces at work, writes Yi-Fu Tuan, "neglected is the explicit recognition of the crucial role of language":

> Speech is a component of the total force that transforms nature into a human place. But speech can be an effective force acting alone or almost alone....humans in general know the power of speech in ordinary, day-to-day experience. They know that although speech alone cannot materially transform nature, it can direct attention, organize insignificant entities into significant composite wholes, and in so doing, make things formerly overlooked - and hence invisible and non-existent - visible and real.
>
> (Tuan 1991, pp. 684-685)

Cumulatively, these approaches emphasise a socially constructed level of meaning to place. Also evident is that processes of the "structures of feeling" (Williams 1977) that pervade this meaning have internal as well as external sources. As a space takes on a "shape" it also develops a social and symbolic identity through layers of spatialising discourse and practice, which can be used to provide the basis for a symbolic unity through difference around which 'imagined communities" (Anderson 1983), and possibly resistance, can be built.

Imagined Communities, Imagined Places

> A measure of continuity in the rural Western Interior, therefore, is the extent to which the social geography of ethnic occupance has remained intact. After World War II, the boundaries between ethnic groups in rural areas blurred a little and social environments became homogenized by the assimilation of second and third generations into the mainstream of Canadian culture. But southern Alberta is still 'Mormon country;' southwestern Manitoba is Ontario-British; Manitoba's Interlake district is Icelandic and Ukrainian...
>
> (Barr and Lehr 1987, p. 317)

With more and more people living the dislocation and displacement generally associated with an experience of diaspora and dispersion, issues of collective cultural identity, solidarity and difference have been brought to the fore. The persistence of the character of place requires new conceptual tools. "Something like a transnational public sphere has certainly rendered any strictly bounded sense of community or locality obsolete," write Gupta and Ferguson, "At the same time, it has enabled the creation of forms of solidarity and identity that do not rest on an appropriation of space where contiguity and face-to-face contact are paramount. In the pulverized space of postmodernity, space has not become irrelevant: it has been *re* territorialized in a way that does not conform to the experience of space that characterized the era of high modernity" (1992, p. 9). Even where people have stayed relatively "fixed" in place, the general nature of people's connections and relations to place have changed, the illusion of an essential and natural connection between place and culture ruptured. It has become very clear that place and location - its character, its relative marginality or centrality - though produced and reinforced through power relations, are to a great extent matters of

attitude and of an imagined state of being, constructed products of history (Wallace 1990, p. 23).

Describing the contrasting rhythms and directions of cultural versus political or economic developments as apparent in regional literature, Northrop Frye observes:

> Politically and economically, the current of history is toward greater unity, and unity in this context includes uniformity. Technology is the most dramatic aspect of this development: one cannot take off in a jet plane and expect a radically different way of life in the place where the plane lands. *But culture has something vegetable about it, something that increasingly needs to grow from the roots, something that demands a small region and restricted locale.* The fifty states of the Union are not, in themselves a cultural entity: they are a political and economic entity that provides a social background for a great variety of cultural developments. We speak for convenience of American literature, but its real cultural context usually turns out to be something more like Mississippi or New England or Chicago or an expatriate group in Paris. Even in the much smaller Great Britain we have Thomas Hardy largely confined to 'Wessex,' Dylan Thomas to South Wales, D. H. Lawrence to the Midlands. Similarly in Canada: as the country has matured, more and more of its local areas have come to life imaginatively.
>
> (Frye 1988, p. 210; italics added)

What has been gradually revealed in this imaginative "coming to life" of local areas in literature is an enduring pluralism at the level of the imagined sphere of social relations, achieved within the persistent regionalisation of experience and remaking of limited identities. It is in expressions of sense of place, of region and of locality such as this that the imperfect "fit" - the momentary incongruity - between symbolic shape and territorial shape, between the spatial as a construct in its imposition and enactment upon the physical topography of the earth, becomes clear. In the traces of a human imaginative engagement with place, the spatial as a socially and culturally created, internalised and re-articulated construct is rendered visible and tangible. As well, it is within such expressions that it is clear that cultural processes are inherently spatial practices. The inextricability of the social and the spatial is made overt, foregrounding the central role of cultural practice in the (re)production of spaces and the legitimation or challenging of cultural location.

The mediation of physical space into social, cultural and political space occurs not at the level of overt physical and political boundary maintenance but at that of ideology and symbol. Regions, places, communities and localities then do exist not as objective, external geographic "facts" or as pre-given physical bounded spaces. As the "flimsy" threads binding people to place have become more visible with the erosion of national and local boundaries, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become even more salient, indicating that the delineated boundaries of region, locality and community are expressions of regions of the mind (Keith 1988) and "on the mind" (Stein 1987, p. 66). They are a part of constructed imagined or "imaginary" geographies. This does not mean they are ethereal or "fanciful", however, there is a necessarily dialectical relationship between the material and the human creative faculty; between the symbolic space and "ordinary life on a clearly defined spot of real earth" (Bentley 1941, p. 45 in Keith 1988). Sénécal has addressed this interaction of the social and the spatial as the "spatial imaginary":

> Les lieux, les trajets, les territoires se présentent ainsi impregnés de la conscience, de l'intentionnalité humaine, de l'identité. Parcourir l'espace, c'est devoir appréhender une réalité subjective, composée des fragments de différentes époques passées, assemblage de formes et d'habitus, formant l'enveloppe invisible des constructions structurelles et fonctionnelles actuelles. C'est devoir aussi affronter les aspects sensibles qui, par dela les évidences, marquent les diversités spatiales, les variations incessantes de formes, les changements de comportements et de genres de vie, puisqu'ils en constituent la profondeur culturelle, empreinte de mémoire et des traces de l'altérité.
>
> (1992, p. 28)

Experience of territoriality, place and space is inherently cultural; "there is nothing so social as our ideas about the physical environment" (Short 1991, p. xviii). The social and cultural nature of space is particularly highlighted in periods of transition, when shifts in the experience of space come to expression (Meyrowitz 1985, Kern 1983, Sack 1988). As Denis Cosgrove has argued, however, there is an influential tradition within geography which has subordinated the social and cultural, an oversight which has tended to diminish and exclude the significance of the role of the spatial imaginary and

its expression in symbol, meaning and image. He has postulated the assumptions which have underpinned and reinforced this gap:

(i) that the physical world, the natural environment is the domain of scientific physical geography...
(ii) that humans behave in a rational; fairly predictable manner, when viewed in aggregate, to achieve personal and social goals that are overwhelmingly practical. Rationality is tacitly agreed to mean economic maximization or satisfaction - other motivations are treated as 'irrational' and geographically interesting only as deviations from the model form.
(iii) that geographers should seek a practical or utilitarian outcome from their studies. Human geography should be 'relevant', its results applied to some 'real' world situation....
(iv) that human geography despite, or perhaps, because of, its elevated moral purpose should as far as possible avoid overt and contentious political, ideological and even philosophical questions. It should strive for objectivity by analyzing facts and ensuring that its statements are anchored securely to empirical warranty.

(Cosgrove 1989, pp. 119-120)

Nicholas Entrikin has noted that this kind of "geography as science" perspective is based in a particular interpretation of the degree of subjectivity involved in experience of space and in a narrow level of tolerance for subjective judgement in science (Entrikin 1989, p. 40). Even where attachment to place and the symbolic and discursive dimensions of the spatial has been noted there has been the tendency to characterise these elements of cultural experience as part of a private, personal realm, as part of the private world of individual subjectivity. Symbol, myth and metaphor are seen as extraneous from the rationality and logic of geography:

Their manifestation and their study are seen as a form of escape from the 'real world' of a rationalized and alienating social order, and from the explanations of this social order that are presented in terms of the technical rationality of social science. The elements of culture studied are judged to have little impact on the modern social system.

(Entrikin 1989, p. 40-41)

The opposition of the imaginal to the rational has not always lead to the diminishing of the sphere of imagination, however. It has also been the basis for the posing of the critical potential of the imagination. Here the imagination is regarded more positively. The opposition of creative imagination to the rational is, as Jöchen Schulte-

Sasse has noted, the dominant framework for arguing the imagination as "autonomous" and as the condition for the possibility of critique, of resistance, of agency and of subjectivity within contemporary oppressive forces, of which rationality is a part. Within this perspective the imagination is seen as a liberating, redemptive counterforce vis-à-vis modern civilization:

> Ever since the late eighteenth century the imagination has been hailed as a saviour from the perils of modern civilization. In the historical avant-garde of the 1920's, it was considered the only human power that 'can in no sense be domesticated'. But not only artists have tried to valorize the imagination as a critical and redemptive force; numerous philosophers and sociologists have placed a rethinking of the imagination at the center of their rethinking of the dialectical enlightenment.
>
> (Schulte-Sasse 1988, pp. 203-204)

The imagination as it has been conceived of in geography is based in a sense of the inevitability and significance of human imaginative, symbolic practices within the experience of the material. Imagination is posed not in opposition to what is "out there," for "inscape" and "landscape" are inherently bound.[7] The acknowledgment of the role of imaginative processes has emerged as an increased sensitivity and attention to relations of identity, belonging, symbolic boundaries and consciousness of place (Cohen 1982, 1985). Imaginative activity is conceived of as intrinsic to human functioning, human experience, and social action as the means by which individuals envision what they cannot see.[8] Imagination, broadly, is the human capacity to form mental pictures; to

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[7] These terms are drawn from Pierre Dansereau's 1972 Massey Lecture discussion of the inseparability of two levels of human engagement with physical geography - the inner vision and perception of landscape and the human impact on landscape. He writes:

> 'Inscape' may be an unfamiliar word in this context. It was coined by a poet, not an ecologist or a geographer. Gerard Manley Hopkins recorded his contemplation of anture in diaries, letters, poems, drawings, and even in music. This filtering inward from nature to man [sic], upward from the subconscious to the conscious, and from perception to design and implementation, is indeed what happens to the agriculturist, the forester, the engineer, the town planner. The pathway of sensorial impression to material interference is strewn with an imagery that makes the inscape a template for the reshaping of the landscape.
>
> (Introduction. *Inscape and Landscape.* Massey Lectures 1972. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1973)

[8] A discussion of the centrality of the imagination in human experience is provided by Mark Johnson in *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of

mentally create and invent, thereby extending the boundaries of experience beyond that which is externally tangible and immediately present to the senses. The object of imagining is absent from the externally lived or perceived realm. Imagination is therefore not "imitative", but is expressive and pro-creative: it makes things possible.[9] As a result of its inventive property, imagination has a central role to play in the articulation of collective experience, of belonging to social group and identification with place (Anderson 1983). As it lies between the inconceivable or the impossible, and the perceivable or the possible, it is also is a condition of social change, for change is contingent upon the articulation of the possibility of other ways of living in the world and other ways of being in the world.

The central relevance of imagination for geography has been located within the symbolic, metaphoric sphere of social relations and social identification; within the reinforcement of the perceived unity of social groups. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983) has been central in the theorising of such imagining in the context of nationhood. Proposing a perception of nation as "imagined community," he maintains this form of identification is constructed and made possible discursively. Nations are imagined "because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (1983, p. 15); nations are imagined as communities "because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (1983, p. 16). Samuel argues similarly, "The idea of nationality... belongs to the realm of the imaginary rather than - or

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Chicago Press, 1987). He focuses on imaginative structures of human understanding, particularly in the form of image schema and metaphorical projections.

[9] The distinction between imagination as imitative and imagination as expressive is made by Luiz Costa Lima in *Control of the Imaginary: Reason and Imagination in Modern Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988). This distinction is based on a return to the Aristotelian concept of *mimesis*, which Costa Lima argues has been displaced from its original, intended sphere of meaning and has been "controlled," coming to connote imitation, reproduction, and the copying of external reality by the imagination. He states that "Aristotelian mimesis presupposed a concept of *physis* (to simplify, let us say, of 'nature') that contained two aspects: *natura naturata* and *natura naturans*, respectively, the actual and the potential. Mimesis had relation only to the possible, the capable of being created - to *energia;* its limits were those of conceivability alone" (p. 22); the product of mimesis "is autonomous, assumes the mark of difference; mimesis is not reproduction, but the production of difference" (p. ix).

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as well as - the real; it depends on ideas of what we might be rather than what we are" (Samuel 1989, p. ix, in Bishop 1992, p. 8).

Such imaginative processes of identification, however, are not limited to a national scale. Imagination is implicated in the boundedness of a communities to particular spaces at multiple scales. The ties between an "imagined community" and space or territory are not natural or essential for communities are actively attached to "imagined places." "Keeping in mind that notions of locality or community refer to both a demarcated physical space *and* to clusters of interaction," note Gupta and Ferguson, "we can see that the identity of a place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality" (1992, p. 8).

Imagining in this context does not remain autonomous from the real, but is intrinsic to the real. These two dimensions - the imagined and the concrete dimensions of space - are inextricable. Sénécal notes, "L'observation relève d'une expérience qui opère à l'interface du sensible. Le point culminant de telles recherches demeure le dévoilement des images de toutes sortes qui structurent ce que nous appelons le réel, qui sont les décodeurs des formes sensibles et permettent de percevoir le paysage concret" (Sénécal 1992, p. 41). "Fictionalised" spaces and boundaries are embedded and reproduced through everyday practices, images, words, symbols and ideas and are therefore bound to particular historical contexts. They are always ground in specific political, social, cultural and economic conditions. This conception of imagining is in no way romantic or idealist. The assertion that communities, place, and relations in space, have an imagined basis undermines the conventionally defined opposition of imagination and fantasy to the real and "true." Invention is not to be assimilated to falsification and artificiality. Anderson argues: "All communities larger than the primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (1983, p. 15).

This conceptualisation of imagination provides the basis for the possibility of thinking about the relationship of geography and human activity in terms other than the

narrowly economic and rational. Imaginative practices, the sphere of imagined social relations and representation, are integral to the social construction of space with profoundly real effects and consequences. "Le territoire est une émulsion de l'identité collective: nation, région, quartier, pays se composent à même les mythes, non seulement pour se nommer, se reconnaître, mais pour se concrétiser," writes Sénécal (1992, p. 40). Imagined communities take upon concrete cultural locations in part through narration: through language and discourse (Bhabha 1990) and through the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm 1992). The narration of tradition and identity is integral to the process of construction, production, and the legitimation of space, indicating the centrality of a conception of the performativity of language to spatial imagining. This is not, however, to assume the priority of language over space,[10] but to argue for their inextricable interaction. The act of narrating and stating is at once an act of making materially, a point of translation where the imagined is given to the real. Social anthropologist Anthony Cohen has been a key figure in asserting the materiality of the symbolic:

> We should not confuse an increasing similarity in the machinery of people's lives with their responses to it. The response - interpretation, meaning - is not mechanical, and frequently is not overt. It belongs to that realm of phenomena which anthropologists label the 'symbolic'. It is in the symbolic that we now seek the boundaries of their worlds of identity and diversity.
>
> (Cohen 1986, p. 2)

From an acknowledgment of the interdependency of the imaginative and symbolic with the material, it is then possible to assert the contemporary "salience" of space, and limited contexts such as place, community and locality on a negotiated, constructed, dynamic basis. As such, they are inherently unstable and contested, differentiated, asserted and re-constituted within a complex mesh of relations of power which are constantly legitimised and undermined. As a result, even with the erosion of places as spatially bounded, clearly identifiable spots on a map and even as the very

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[10] See Henri Lefebvre *The Production of Space* (1991, p. 36) for his critique of this thesis as it is associated with Jacques Lacan.

notion of "home" as a durably fixed place is put in doubt, territoriality may be re-inscribed. The mapping of people to place is no longer a given, but a strategy of both the powerful and powerless.

The idea of place, locality and region as imagined, historical constructs emphasises an "annihilation of space" based not in territorial homogenisation, but in a new spatial politics - one characterised by the "politicization of location". Acknowledging that lives are lived locally within a globally interconnected world, John Agnew has proposed a vision of local identity or sense of place "as one dimension of a concept of place in which 'culture' is a dynamic phenomenon, a set of practices, interests and ideas subject to collective revision, changing or persisting as places and their populations change or persist in response to locally and externally generated challenges" (1992, p. 53). Despite (or perhaps because of, depending how one sees it) trans-nationalisation and globalisation, processes of the discursive construction of identity and place are significant and enduring. Historical memory of place is used to constantly imagine, reconstruct and re-invent culture, tradition and place within the demands of a global capitalist economy. In this way, "such conceptual processes of place making meet the changing global economic and political conditions of lived spaces" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 11). The durability of memory constructions and localised meanings of sites in this way calls into question the very ideas of the homogenisation, placelessness, and schizophrenia that have been associated with postmodernism, or at least one version of postmodernism.[11]

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[11] I would like here to acknowledge my indebtedness to my colleague Ken McQueen for it is through an ongoing dialogue with him that many of the ideas in this discussion of the imaginary came into concrete form and are still evolving. As a result, much of this thought still bears his fingerprints.

Chapter Two

Place and Nostalgia: A Postmodernism

> ...we note that they are memorials to places that *used* to be, not celebrations of ongoing places. They are nostalgic before history has taken its second step....From our very beginnings, and in the midst of our perpetual motion, we have been homesick for the old folks at home and the old oaken bucket. We have been forever bidding farewell to the last of the Mohicans, or the last of the old-time cattlemen, or the last of the pioneers with the bark on, or the vanishing wilderness.
>
> (Stegner 1992, p. 203)

> The past does not just exist. What we see of its presence, and the uses that we make of our ideas of it, are to a considerable extent contrived.
>
> (Fowler 1992, p. 81)

In *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*, Mike Featherstone writes, "There are therefore common features emerging between shopping centres, malls, museums, theme parks and tourism experiences in the contemporary city in which cultural disorder and stylistic eclecticism become common features of spaces in which consumption and leisure are meant to be constructed as 'experiences'" (1991, p. 103). Images of the past and of place have been the central currency in this construction of "experiences." The past is, in fact, more present than ever before as it becomes the core of identification for everything from breakfast cereal, clothing and new housing developments based on heritage themes. Further, the development which Featherstone identifies with the contemporary urban context has not left the contemporary non-urban, rural and small town context untouched. The rise of consumer culture, leisure and tourist forms is globally encompassing, problematising the very categories of 'rural' and 'urban' by identifying social processes common to both.

Over the last decade, a wide range of theorists and commentators have suggested that these elements are part of a fundamental restructuring of political, economic and cultural life that is underway in the Western capitalist system and the world it dominates (Kauffman, Robinson and Rosenthal 1991, p. 53). That familiar prefix -"post"- is relied upon frequently in the terminology that is used to describe these changes. Among these

terms, postmodernism is the category that has attracted the most interest, a concept referring to recently existing and emerging "centrifugal tendencies" in socio-cultural production, epistemological claims and methodological categories (Featherstone 1991). Postmodernism has been seen to parallel analogous alterations in economic domains, often captured in the terms "post-industrialism" and "post-Fordism" which describe the growing commodification of everyday life and the rise of the sphere of consumption over production in the context of "flexible accumulation." While such terms are presented as marking somewhat of an epochal shift, their use is also indicative of uncertainty, mainly intellectual. Expressing a sense of change, also evoked is a difficulty of ascertaining its precise nature and a resulting indecision over the consistency of the contemporary. In the wake of this uncertainty there is in no way a single postmodernism; "like the term 'modernism', 'postmodernism' is necessarily vague. Almost by definition, there can be no single theory of postmodernism," maintains Bishop (1992, p. 5). There are consequently multiple "postmodernisms" and multiple understandings of its connotations, the inevitable result of the engagement of a plurality of minds with the concept.

Within this struggle for definition, however, there are postmodernisms which have gained dominant positions. One which has been increasingly influential is that which has been brought to bear on expressions of place and local identity, emphasising the interplay of economic and cultural, foregrounding the local while linking it to an association of consumption, spectacle, nostalgia and the "mode retro." Within this postmodernism, expressions of place and localised identities, particularly those associated with heritage and tourism practices, are seen as quintessentially artificial and inauthentic postmodern landscapes and as evidence of spectacle, pastiche and simulacrum, simulations of identity disguising the alienations of commodification.

In such interpretations, however, absences are as strategic as presences (Ley and Mills 1992, p. 258). Any theoretical framework through which the world is seen has an inherent capacity to order that world, rendering some elements and patterns visible and others not. The overwhelmingly predominant emphasis on image, consumption and commercialisation that lie at the heart of many claims that contemporary cultures are moving in "postmodern" directions limit an examination of the dimension of the ongoing

production of "imagined communities" around identity, memory and place which is also evident in contemporary cultural practices.

Chemainus and East Central Alberta: Place and Postmodernism

An interpretation of the relationship of place to the economic and cultural processes associated with postmodernism is presented by Trevor Barnes and Roger Hayter, in their paper "'The Little Town That Did': Flexible Accumulation and Community Response in Chemainus, British Columbia." Arguing that different kinds of accumulation produce specific geographies, they link the shift from a single resource base of forestry to a leisure economy based in consumption in the area of Chemainus and propose this shift as exemplary of broader alterations within the international economy. The transformation in Chemainus in fact serves as a microcosm within which are tangible the geographical consequences of the shift from a Fordist economic regime to flexible accumulation associated with postmodernism.[12] After a loss of sawmill jobs during the early 1980s, first as a result of corporate restructuring and then as a result of automation, the town was transformed into a site of consumption as a series of murals depicting local historical events were painted, precipitating a quite successful tourism industry:

> By the end of the 1980s Chemainus was quite different from the way it had begun the decade. A much reduced core set of multi-skilled and multi-task workers produced as much lumber for a wider range of more value-added markets than the previous Fordist technology, while the murals now annually attracted half a million visitors, making Chemainus, according to its mayor, an 'internationally acclaimed tourist destination centre'.
>
> (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 648)

Based upon the initial success of the murals, the area was also developed as the site of the Cowichan and Chemainus Valleys Ecomuseum.

This same shift underscores the Kalyna Country ecomuseum which began development in east-central Alberta in 1992 (Fig. 2). As such, the region and its manifestation in this tourism form is an expression of a particular geography of

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[12] A special issue of *Socialist Review* (vol.21, no. 1 January-March 1991) is devoted to examining the intellectual and political consequences of this economic restructuring.
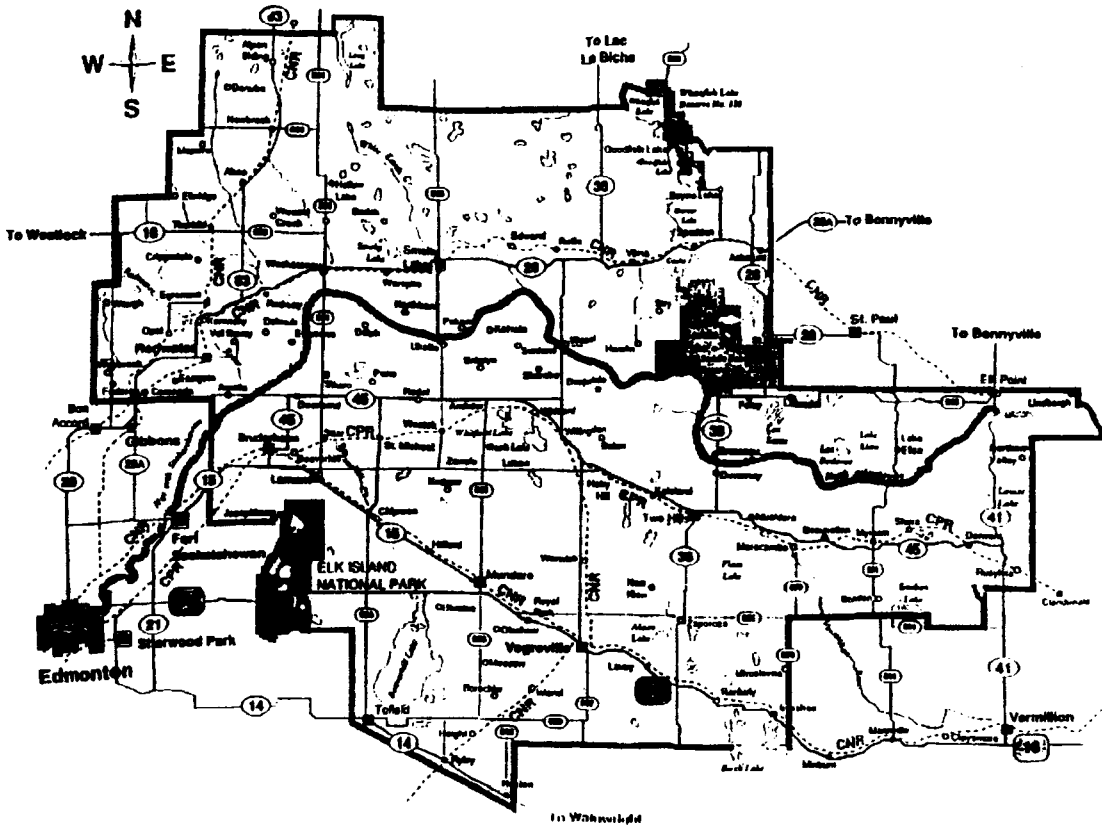
Fig. 2 - Delineated boundaries of the Ukrainian settlement bloc ecomuseum

Source: The Development Strategy for the Proposed Ukrainian Settlement Bloc Ecomuseum. Prepared by Jars Balan, 1992.

accumulation; a postmodern, post-industrial landscape. Like the area of Chemainus, this area is characterised by a single industry base and small settlements - towns and villages (Fig. 3). Agriculture and related industries comprise the chief economic activity of area residents. Across the Prairie Provinces, non-urban, rural areas such as this have been suffering from a series of economic and socio-cultural crises in recent years, as in non-urban areas throughout North America and the rest of the developed world (Everitt and Bessant 1992, p. 65). With economic restructuring, the vitality of communities and places in such areas are, more often than not, affected negatively. The features of rural transformation and its manifestations in outmigration or rural-urban migration, the decline of communities, the aging of the population, the reduction of services and infrastructure, are well documented and have highlighted the significant role and influence of external forces in the Canadian prairies (Everitt and Bessant 1992, p. 66). In such situations, tourism, often based on the selective appropriation and symbolic

transformation of the past and place identity, becomes a strategy for community survival. In the case of this area in Alberta, the range of alternatives available to entice outside capital are limited. This particular site is part of a global trend: as John Urry maintains, "there is hardly a village, town or city which does not have the promotion of tourism as one of its key objectives. And this is increasingly true worldwide" (Urry 1992, p. 10).

Towns and Villages of the Ecomuseum

Towns with a Population from 2,000 to 10,000

Vegreville	Redwater		

Towns with a Population from 1,000 to 2,000

Bruderheim	Elk point	Lamont	Smoky Lake
Tofield	Two Hills		

Villages with a Population from 2,500 to 1,000

Andrew	Chipman	Derwent	Hairy Hill
Holden	Innisfree	Lavoy	Mundare
Myrnam	Ryley	Thorhild	Vilna
Warspite	Waskatenau	Willingdon	

Villages still indicated on the 1991 Official Road Map

Abee	Ashmont	Beauvallon	Bellis
Brosseau	Duvernay	Egremont	Foisy
Hamlin	Hilliard	Josephburg	Lindberg
Morecambe	Musidora	Newbrook	Opal
Radway	Ranfurly	Spedden	Star
St. Brides	St. Michael	Warwick	Wostok

Villages Still Listed in the Atlas of Canada (1981)

Alpen Siding	Amelia	Barich	Beavehill
Boian	Boyne Lake	Crippsdale	Coronado
Dalebrook	Dalmuir	Danube	Delph
Desjarlais	Deerland	Eastgate	Edwand
Eldorena	Elk Island	Fedorah	Fitzallen
Hollow Lake	Ispas	Kahwin	Kaleland
Kerensky	Krakow	Lac Bellevue	Lake Eliza
Luzan	Muriel	New Kiev	Norma
Northbank	Northern Valley	Pakan	Peno
Poe	Rodef	Royal Park	Rusylva
Sandy Beach	Scotford	Shandro	Shonts
Skaro	Slawa	Snyiatyn	Stry
Sunland	Ukalta	Val Soucy	Waugh
Wasel	Waybrook	Whitford	Weasel Creek

Fig 3 - Towns and villages within the ecomuseum.

Source: The Development Strategy for the Proposed Ukrainian Settlement Bloc Ecomuseum. Prepared by Jars Balan, 1992.

Drawing upon the work of Harold Innis and David Harvey to show "that the fate of places such as Chemainus is bound up with particular geographies of accumulation," Barnes and Hayter provide a framework that is useful for examining situations as they are visible in the injection of cultural-historical tourism into the economies of Chemainus, east-central Alberta, and other similar sites:

> It displays the contraction of manufacturing employment and the consequent increase in service work; it evinces the shift towards computer-based production technology and a new form of labour market segmentation based upon functional flexibility; it represents the sometimes devastating effects of capital restructuring on local communities and the kinds of proactive, entrepreneurial responses that are undertaken as a palliative; and it reveals the attempts to recuperate local identity and distinctiveness, and the commercial uses to which that recuperation is often put.
>
> (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 648)

The de-industrialisation process and switch to places becoming centres of consumption built upon the previous layers of the social landscape is clearly visible in both cases. It that sense they may well be the very embodiment of the "condition of post-modernity" (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 660).

This "postmodernism," however, as it is represented by Barnes and Hayter is also characterised by the rampant nostalgia and commodification associated with spectacle. The "struggle for place" in a "placeless" postmodern geography is doomed:

> Being suffused with immemorial spatial memory, transcends Becoming....
> Is this the foundation for collective memory, for all those manifestations of place-bound nostalgias that infect our images of the country and the city, of region, milieu, and locality, of neighbourhood and community ?
>
> (Harvey 1989, p. 218)

For Barnes and Hayter, the expression of place identity and history through the medium of tourism exemplified in their research focus, Chemainus, represents the "accentuated clinging to local community in the face of such disarray"; an inauthentic local response to widespread geographical shifts in production and markets due to advances in production technology, transportation and communications (1992, p. 648). Laying the ground for such an interpretation is Harvey's work in capitalist flexible accumulation which stresses a postmodern spatiality as characterised by a constant tension between the fixity of place

and the malleability of space (see Harvey 1989, 1990). In capitalism's inherent tendency toward "creative destruction," space and place are bound dialectically: "space has its own historical geography, one where its very definition varies with political economic practices. Place, in contrast, becomes a site where both local identity is recouped, and novel capitalist ventures are undertaken involving fragile local coalitions" (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 650). This is the same contradictory relationship referred to by Jeffrey Henderson and Manuel Castells as that between "placeless power and powerless places" (1988, p. 7). In the instability associated with this maelstrom of change, many people attempt to find an identity by turning to place and locality (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 650). Harvey writes, "The more global interrelations become... and the more spatial barriers disintegrate, so more rather than less of the world's population clings to place and neighborhood... Such a quest for visible and tangible marks of identity is readily understandable in the midst of fierce space-time compression" (Harvey 1990, p. 427).

The constant tension between the inertia of place and the flux of space has led to Harvey's skepticism of the integrity of expressions of place identity:

> The assertion of any place-bound identity has to rest at some point on the motivational power of tradition. It is difficult, however, to maintain any sense of historical continuity in the face of all the flux and ephemerality of flexible accumulation. The irony is that tradition is now often preserved by being commodified and marketed as such. The search for roots ends up being produced and marketed as an image. The photograph, the document, the view, and the reproduction become history precisely because they are so overwhelmingly present. The problem, of course, is that none of these are immune from tampering or downright faking for present purposes. At best, historical tradition is re-organised as... local history, local production, of how things once upon a time were made, sold, consumed and integrated into a long-lost and often romanticized daily life (one from which all trace of oppressive social relations may be expunged). Through the presentation of a partially illusory past it becomes possible to signify something of a local identity and perhaps to do so profitably.
>
> (Harvey 1989, p. 303)

This argument, developed in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), is based in the presumption that a focus on place and the local is regressive, for "it is hard to stop the slide into parochialism, myopia, and self-referentiality in the face of the universalising

force of capital circulation" (Harvey 1989, p. 351). Much recent work on place identity as it is manifest in cultural-historical tourism and the heritage industry has shared Harvey's general understanding of the relationship of capitalist space and place. The shift from a resource-based industrial economy to a leisure, tourism-oriented economy plays a significant role in the production and reproduction of a "concretised," simulated identity in the form of a marketable place image. These 'visible and tangible marks of identity' are then cultivated and maintained through such events as community spectacle, the re-enactment of ancient rites and the reveling in local heritage and history (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 650).

While in important respects this interpretation rings true, postmodernism as it is posed in relation to place in this commentary seems to have two components which are conflated: (1) the argument that geographical change is bound to the alterations of accumulation which result in the changing nature and role of place, region and locality in the context of the changing spatiality of capitalism, and (2) as a capitalist space of flows reframes a space of places, any ground upon which local difference and identity can be discerned and asserted disappears, leading to the sense of the inevitable artificiality, inauthenticity and nostalgia of expressions of place and local and community identity associated with this postmodernism.[13]

Within the context of flexible accumulation, differentiation among places is accentuated as social and geographic peripheries are transformed and enveloped within the produced spaces of capitalist production. As a result of the current challenges experienced by single industry and rural areas, regional and local variations and disparities have been re-accentuated, if not exacerbated. As global economic interaction stimulates social differentiation, locality does not disappear in this "space of flows" but becomes more important. As John Urry notes, highly significant changes occurring with the time-space structuring of contemporary capitalist societies have had the "effect of heightening the socio-political salience of local systems of social stratification" (1984, p.

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[13] Parallel critiques of Harvey's argument are to be found in Rosalyn Deutsche's "Boy's Town" (*Society and Space* Vol. 9. 1991, pp. 5-31) and Doreen Massey's "Flexible Sexism" (*Society and Space* vol. 9. 1991, pp. 31-37). Harvey has recently responded to these critiques in "Postmodern Morality Plays" (*Antipode* 24:4, 1992. pp. 300-326).

45). Limited contexts become embedded in new economies and new interrelationships as the sites where the global is lived and experienced. Andrew Kirby writes, locality "is the scale at which reality is experienced. All events, however large in a global sense, are ultimately transformed into a local issue" (1989, p. 216).

This is not a novel development. Places, communities, and regions, have always been defined by the dialectical tension of those historical factors which define it at a local level as place, with those that dictated its changing role in the world order (Malone 1989, p. 424). The leap that equates local expression emerging from such sites with inevitably false and inauthentic 'postmodern' landscapes, however, is problematic and is part of a broader postmodern discourse of loss and of decline:

> As a resource town under a regime of flexible accumulation, Chemainus exemplifies both Harvey's dialectic between space and place, and Innis' tension between metropole and periphery. More broadly, such a tension raises the issue of ...the geographical imagination, the problem of representing the relationship between the local and the global. In this light, Chemainus has been overwhelmed by its geographical imagination over the last hundred years or so, although in the town's latest guise there may well be too much imagination, and not enough geography.
> (Barnes and Hayter 1992, p. 661)

Postmodernism: Rhetoric of Decline

> Indeed there is a sense in which, given the identification of the modern with the universalizing project of Western culture, the use of the term 'postmodern' can act to orientate us to the changing circumstances in which the world is seen as one place in which different competing images of the globe come to the fore.
> (Featherstone 1991, p. 128)

In spite of what many have argued as one of postmodernism's most basic and vital tenets - its anti-foundational stance and renunciation of totalising narratives and claims of universal authority - postmodernism has itself assumed the status of defining cultural narrative against which others are subordinated, framed and organised. "Suddenly," writes Andrew Ross, "postmodernism has become an epic production almost in spite of itself..." (1988, p. vii). In the frequency and consistency of its forms and functions, postmodernism has become one of our most consistent stories and cultural myths. While

postmodernism's "meaning" remains an object of contestation it cannot be denied that it has had concrete cultural and social effects. For the story is compelling and as with all theoretical endeavor, the activity has a "creative" component and plays a constitutive role: "theories create worlds rather than corresponding to them" (Barnes 1992, p. 134); "worlds" are in fact written.

Myth, in this context, is employed in a broad sense to describe a text which is not necessarily fictional, but fundamentally narrative and explanatory in nature; employed to explain, order, justify and legitimize contemporary cultural contradictions, developments and relationships in our world at a particular historical moment and location. A myth is "an intellectual construction which embodies beliefs, values and information, and which can influence events, behaviour and perception. Myths are (re)-presentations of reality which resonate across space and over time, which are widely used and reproduced, which are broad enough to encompass diverse experiences yet deep enough to anchor these experiences in a continuous medium of meaning" (Short 1991, p. xvi).[14] This myth of postmodernism has not been manifest in coherent, linear, consistent narrative form. The concept of postmodernism has been subject to extensive debate and discursive activity, which can be traced in the inevitable precipitate - a vast literature on postmodernism as well as its issues and associated phenomena. It is this ongoing, rather nebulous, discursive field of postmodernism that is significant, constituting its narrative trajectory - the narrative by which the concept of postmodernism has gained and claimed legitimacy, achieving authority and purpose. For critical discourse on postmodernism simultaneously enunciates and demarcates the theoretical systems we have utilised to understand and describe certain contemporary developments. Debates about post-modernism are shaping the way we think about the past as well as the present and future.

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[14] Within this range, those functions of myth which have the most analogical relevance to postmodernism are categorised by Anthony Cohen: myth as "charter" for social action - reaffirming the underlying principles of social organization (Malinowski); myth as mediating function - reconciling contradictions, resolving cognitive and evaluative tensions (Levi-Strauss); myth as cognitive map - a framework which constructs social reality in a particular way. Cumulatively the "effect of the use of myth is to produce support for a particular set of social principles and relationships" (Cohen 1975, pp. 12-14).

Today dated and almost exhausted after three decades of rhetorical "drift", the term "postmodernism" has been attached to an extensive array of ideas, phenomena and practices. And as the term has been displaced to increasingly varied spheres of application, postmodernism's commentary, analysis, and discursive boundaries have simultaneously been irritatingly slippery; there has been a noticeable tendency to shift the grounds of the debate in the process of pursuing it, catapulting postmodernism to "buzzword" status and its debates to high abstraction. The current range of phenomena associated with the category of postmodernism has also been noted by Dick Hebdige in the following, appropriately extensive passage from *Hiding in the Light* :

> When it becomes possible for people to describe as "postmodern" the decor of a room, the design of a building, the diagesis of a film, the construction of a record, or a "scratch" video, a television commercial, or an arts documentary, or the "intertextual" relations between them, the layout of a page in a fashion magazine or critical journal, an anti-teleogical tendency within epistemology, the attack on the "metaphysics of presence", a general attenuation of feeling, the collective chagrin and morbid projections of a post-War generation of baby-boomers confronting disillusioned middle age, the "predicament" of reflexivity, a group of rhetorical tropes, a proliferation of surfaces, a new phase of commodity fetishism, a fascination for images, codes and styles, a process of cultural, political. or existential fragmentation and/or crisis, the "decentering" of the subject, an incredulity towards metanarratives", the replacement of unitary power axes a plurality of power/discourse formations, the "implosion of meaning", the collapse of cultural hierarchies, the dread engendered by the threat of nuclear self-destruction, the decline of the university, the functioning and effects of miniaturized technologies, broad societal and economic shifts into a "media", "consumer" or "multinational" phase, a sense (depending on who you read) of "placelessness" or the abandonment of placelessness ("critical regionalism") or (even) a generalised substitution of spatial for temporal co-ordinates - when it becomes possible to describe all these things as "postmodern" (or more simply, using a current abbreviation, as "post" or "very post") then it's clear we are in the presence of a buzzword.
>
> (Hebdige 1988, pp. 181-182)

The trend articulated by Hebdige is problematic: inherent in the presence of post-modernism as a "buzzword" is the emptying of any substantive meaning or pragmatic dimension from the term as well as the absence of attention to specific political or oppositional aspects of postmodernism. In face of the heightening abstraction of the

term's usage, theoretical endeavor around postmodernism has followed suit becoming "de-dialecticised." Relentless theorisation has, in fact, effected a closure: "alas," comments Chantal Mouffe, "the debate all too quickly petrified around a set of simplistic and sterile positions" (Mouffe 1988, p. 31).

This state of closure is particularly evident in the predominant body of commentary surrounding postmodernism which reflects a rejection of political, productive dimensions of postmodernism as co-existing with its conservative dimensions. In postmodernism's narrative, its critics have found a very satisfying villain based in the primacy of the image, spectacle and consumption. This positioning is characterised by a rhetoric of loss and issues of heritage and place identity have often the subject to which the language of this rhetoric - superficial, schizophrenic, simulation, amnesia, staged difference - has often been brought to bear. Emphasised with regards to expressions of place, local history and cultural identity are postmodernism's associations of rampant nostalgia and a fading of the category of the "real." The postmodern is seen to be characterised by a particular spatial logic: the evacuation of depth in favour of simulation and simulacra, a fascination with a style of appropriation and the resulting pastiche, schizophrenia and a perceived tendency towards "universal abandon" (Ross 1988).

The growing centrality of image culture, the effacement of conventional boundaries and hierarchies, and indeterminacy of identity have been subsumed within a narrative of the supersession of modernism, couched in negative terms. The profusion of styles, the tendency to pastiche (in art as well as intellectual endeavors), has evoked accusations of imaginative and epistemological promiscuity and irrationalism (Foster 1983). Postmodernism has been characterised by some as immoral and destructive, for the valorisation of surface and image marks the regrettable death of the subject, a historical rupture and the onset of moral decay and decline of Western civilization. "For most commentators," acknowledge Simon Frith and Howard Horne in *Art Into Pop* "the intermingling and confusion of forms means the final *collapse* of traditional (or, rather, in this context, modernist) cultural values, the *reduction* of art to the *vacuous* routines of mechanical reproduction" (Frith and Horne 1987, p. 4; italics added). Dick Hebdige has

described postmodernism as a discourse is a "system with no positive terms," "modernity without the hopes and dreams which made modernity bearable" (1988, p. 185).

It is this postmodernism that frames much discussion of cultural-historical tourism and heritage practice commentary. Heritage practices, like other modern consumption practices, propelled by the drive to consume other spaces and other times, are seen to articulate an ideology of nostalgia. As such they represent a reactionary modernism that expresses the "dis-ease" of the present (Goss 1993) - a lamenting of the perceived loss of moral conviction, authenticity, spontaneity, and community of the past, accompanied by a profound disillusionment with the present and fear of the future. Exploited is a collective nostalgia for real places and real historic roots, fueling the cultural and historical tourist's search for an illusive, (pre-modern) authenticity (see MacCannell 1976).[15] "Now, of course," writes Ian Angus, "the subject is previously formed by the image-sets and is thereby confirmed in his or her cultural being by touristic pilgrimages to view originals" (1989, p. 100). Robert Hewison, author of *The Heritage Industry* (1987), has made the link between this postmodernism and heritage activities very directly. The primacy of the image entailed in contemporary heritage practices' reconstructions and re-presentations is evaluated as "conspiring to create a shallow screen that intervenes between our present lives and our history" (Hewison 1987 p. 135). Heritage endeavors do not only represent nostalgia for a false past but a loss of "faith in ourselves" and a "fatal loss of dynamism" (Hewison 1987, pp. 138, 142):

> ...but if museums are centres of production, what is it they produce? To those of *Marxisant* persuasion, the answer is that they are manufacturers of social and cultural meaning. And the commodity they produce has been described in a number of different ways:
> In 1967 the Situationist Guy Debord called this commodity *Spectacle*;
> In 1975 Umberto Eco called it *Hyperreality*;
> In 1984 Fredric Jameson called it *Historicism*.
>
> (Hewison 1989, p. 20)

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[15] Other sources on tourist motivations are Donald Horne *The Great Museum: The Re-presentation of History* (London: Pluto Press, 1984); Susan Stewart's *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984) and Philip Pearce *The Social Psychology of Tourist Behaviour* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982).

The Ascendency of Spectacle and Nostalgia for the Real

Drawing upon and slightly adjusting Hewison's genealogy, it is possible to evolve this postmodernism's association of image, consumption and nostalgia. The loss of the real is a mark of an age of "crisis." It is part of a postmodernism which Fredric Jameson has described as consistently marked by a "sense of the end of this or that... the hypothesis of some radical break or *coupure*, generally traced back to the end of the 1950's or early 1960's" (1984, p. 53):

> Aligned with the rise of multinational and consumer capitalism, it replaces determining machines of production with weightless machines of reproduction, dissolving any possible distinction between aesthetic and commodity production and proclaiming the end of meaning, the liquidation of the referential, and the dissolution of identity.
>
> (Joyrich 1988, p. 135)

The primacy of the image in the form of spectacle is intrinsic to capitalist modernity transformed by globalisation. The consumption of objects shifts into the consumption of signs, obscuring disparities of power. Susan Sontag in *On Photography*, writes:

> A capitalist society requires a culture based on images. It needs to furnish vast amounts of entertainment in order to stimulate buying and to anaesthetize the injuries of class, race and sex. And it needs to gather unlimited amounts of information, the better to exploit natural resources, increase productivity, keep order, make war, give jobs to bureaucrats...The narrowing of free political choice to free economic consumption requires the unlimited production and consumption of images.
>
> (1977, p. 178-9)

The implications of the growing predominance of such an image-based culture was approached early on by Daniel Boorstin in *The Image* (1962). In the flow of images associated with a consumer-oriented, mass-mediated society he saw emerging a reality that was inherently one of illusion, superficiality and unreality. This paradigm dominated modern representations and overtook social relations, subordinating experience of the real to an image of the real. Perspective and depth were lost as the distinction between real/imaginary; fact/fiction; original/copy were confused and erased. Boorstin wrote of the prominence of "pseudo-events" where experience is mediated at the

level of image and commodity. Surrounded by and embedded in image and representation, "experience becomes little more than interior decoration" (1962, p. 185).

The pervasiveness of the image and commodification of reality associated with mass media and mass communication technologies is taken further in Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*. Here emerge threads and themes of simulation and false consciousness which are echoed in number of theorists associated with postmodernism. "The spectacle is not a collection of images," he states, "but a social relation among people, mediated by images"; "the spectacle is the moment when the commodity has attained the *total occupation* of social life. Not only is the relation to the commodity visible but it is all one sees: the world one sees is its world" (1983, para. 4, para. 42). As "real experience" is extinguished in the "spectacular control" and hyper-organisation of territory, there is an inevitable rise of nostalgia as history is superseded with an image of history; difference replaced with images of difference. With the materiality of the world increasingly fabricated, what was once directly lived is now experienced as commodified or bureaucratically administered representation.

Debord's "society of the spectacle" is a new societal context where consumption dominates production and spectacle leads to a standardisation of consciousness and a passive, controlled mass market. As the symbolic subverts the material order it is no longer possible to make a distinction between real and the imaginary. Simulation simultaneously creates an "appetite" for that real in the form of nostalgia. The production of nostalgia is inseparable from the production of audiences associated with the mass media. It is only in the context of postmodernism with its associated global economy where information and capital can cross borders instantaneously that material and symbolic production occupy the same site. Productive activity is organised to produce simultaneously the objects of consumption and the social subjects to consume them (Sahlins 1976, p. 216). In fact, with the enhanced technical quality and capacity for quantitative reproduction of images, it is no longer clear whether the value of the commodity originates in the sphere of material or symbolic production (Goss 1993). What was once directly lived is now commodified image, neutralising resistance as "the sun which never sets over the empire of modern passivity" (Debord 1983, para. 13).

The metaphor of depthlessness and political groundlessness is echoed in Jean Baudrillard's world of the simulacrum, where the real has been completely replaced by the illusion. Postmodernism is "hyperrealism"; the world is not simply represented in commodifiable images - it consists of these images. The simulation has a more substantive effect than reality. Copies exist without originals, not bound to origin, reference or identity, undermining the "certainties" of rational discourse and meaningful history. As Lynne Joyrich observes, "Not only are objects and texts reproduced, their very production is governed by demands of reproducibility. In this case, the territory of real is no longer mapped onto a representation, but the map precedes the territory - events are already inscribed by the media in advance... " (Joyrich 1988, p. 137). The breakdown of the distinction between original and reproduction is accompanied by the collapse of a series of oppositional distinctions: subject-object, real-imaginary, true-false, cause-effect.

This for Baudrillard implies the undermining of Western logic, historical determination and meaningful identity as simulation replaces representation. He writes, "Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum" (Baudrillard 1983, p. 11). In this context, images of the past proliferate simultaneously reflecting and reinforcing an obsession with consuming signs of reality, tradition and lived experience:

> When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. There is an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative where the object and substance have disappeared. And there is a panic-stricken production of the real and referential, above and parallel to the panic of material production: this is how simulation appears in the phase that concerns us - a strategy of the real, neo-real and hyper[e]al whose universal double is a strategy of deterrence.
>
> (Baudrillard 1983, pp. 12-13).

Power rests in the mediascape as reality has been reduced to a play of surfaces, a "smooth operational surface of communication" (Baudrillard 1983, p. 127-128). Contemporary images do not obscure reality, they constitute a hyper-reality.

Umberto Eco has found a similar alignment of consumption and spectacle. The contemporary cultural environment is characterised by the overvaluation of the reproduction; the valorisation of absolute fakery for the only truth. Eco finds evidence of hyperreality in the logic of the wax museum, and even more so in Disneyland:

> In the sense Disneyland is more hyperrealistic than the wax museum, precisely because the latter still tries to make us believe that what we are seeing reproduces reality absolutely, whereas Disneyland makes it clear that within its magic enclosure it is fantasy that is absolutely reproduced. The Palace of Living arts presents its Venus de Milo as almost real, whereas Disneyland can permit itself to present its reconstructions as masterpieces of falsification, for what it sells is, indeed, goods, but genuine merchandise, not reproductions. What is falsified is our will to buy, which we take as real, and in this sense Disneyland is really the quintessence of consumer ideology.
>
> (Eco 1986, p. 43)

Hyperreality is posed as not just a trait of cultural products but a cultural complex which is the effect of the intersection of high consumerism and a nostalgic longing for tradition on the part of "historyless" people. The "completely real" becomes identified with the "completely fake". Absolute unreality is offered as real presence. Within this configuration of postmodernism, consumerism, and hyperreality "history, subjectivity and, reality itself flattens out into a[n]...image and we are left searching for signs of meaning thin and endless flow of images - a situation leading to a nostalgia for past traditions" (Joyrich 1988, p. 130).

Fredric Jameson has also seen in Disneyland "a new kind of superficiality in the most literal sense" (1984, p. 65) - a "hyperspace" which entails the "loss of our ability to position ourselves within this space and cognitively map it. This is then projected back on the emergence of a global, multinational culture that is decentered and cannot be visualized, a culture in which one cannot position oneself" (Jameson in Stephanson 1988, p. 7). In this decentered space, living is grounded through objects of nostalgia:

> ...effectively a way of satisfying a chemical craving for historicity using a product that substitutes for and blocks it...nostalgic art gives us the image of various generations of the past as fasio-plate images that entertain no determinable ideological relationship to the moments of time: they are not the outcome of anything, nor are they the antecedents of our present; they are simply images. This is the sense in which I describe them as

substitutes for any genuine historical consciousness rather than specific new forms of the latter

<div align="right">(Jameson in Stephanson 1988, p. 18)</div>

Cumulatively, these perspectives have been immensely influential in shaping an understanding of the way the present consumption-oriented postmodern epoch lives its relationship to the past and to place. Spectacle neutralises the past, simultaneously undermining critical resistance. This understanding of spectacle is embedded within a broader conceptualisation of the relationship of the subject to the means of production, a relationship characterised earlier this century by Walter Benjamin with respect to world exhibitions:

> The world exhibitions glorify the exchange value of commodities. They create a framework in which commodities' intrinsic value is eclipsed. They open up a phantasmagoria that people enter to be amused. The entertainment industry facilitates this by elevating people to the level of commodities. They submit to being manipulated while enjoying their alienation from themselves and others. The enthronment of merchandise, with the aura of amusement surrounding it, is the secret theme of Grandville's art.
>
> <div align="right">(Benjamin 1986, p. 152)</div>

Extending the ideas of hyperreality and the primacy of the image reproduction, Scott Lash has proposed a distinction between *discourse* and *figure*, aligning postmodernism as a cultural paradigm with a figural regime of signification based on its emphasis on primary processes or desire rather than secondary processes or the ego (1990, p. 174). The figural is associated with images rather than words; with the immersion of the spectator and investment of desire in the object as opposed to thought and the maintenance of critical distance. Drawing upon elements of Benjamin's conception of the "work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction," Lash describes the predominance of consumer culture as involving a "de-differentiation" on a range of fronts. The merging of the image and the real implies the "de-auraticization" of art, bringing to the fore an aesthetics of desire, the sensual, and the immediate. The self-perpetuation of contemporary mass consumer culture is based on the constant subordination of language-based discourse to signification based in image. Nostalgia is

best reproduced through the figural - through means which are wordless and therefore easily and swiftly consumed.

Dream Worlds and Amazing Spaces: Heritage Overexposed.

In this logic of the unreal and of the spectacle, culture industry forms such as tourism and heritage practices are fully implicated. Among the forms of public discourse where images of the past reside in the present, the contemporary museum and heritage practice are postmodern mnemonic technologies *par excellence.* As heritage has been increasingly linked to the needs and agendas of tourism globally, heritage practices do not exist outside of the contemporary environment of consumption of signs associated with postmodernism. Tourism has been one significant forum for drawing upon and stylising layers of the past, at once satiating and recreating nostalgic impulses. As imaging machines (Lash 1990, p. 187), or perhaps imaging "time machines," tourism practices are involved in a self-conscious reconstruction of images of identity, history and reality. As such, they are a significant source of signs of lived experience: "we need a visible past, a visible continuum, a visible myth of origin to reassure us as to our ends, since ultimately we have never believed in them" (Baudrillard 1983, p. 19-20). Well into the commercial phase of heritage, "heritage-in-the-service-of-tourism," the past is established as a commodity or resource, bought, sold and consumed. Simultaneously, a figural regime of signification (Lash 1990) comes to dominate place and cultural identities as heritage and re-structured history becomes the hub of urban and non-urban renewal whether in the form of tourist-oriented or redevelopment projects (Zukin 1988, 1991).

The intersection of market forces and place precipitate distinct landscapes based upon the foregrounding of the past in the present: "landscapes of nostalgia" (Lumley 1989) which are part of the broader de-differentiation occurring between tourism and other leisure social practices. The city, region or locality itself becomes a simulational environment using spectacular imagery paralleling that in malls, theme parks, and hotels:

> Here one can point to the increasing salience of forms of leisure consumption in which the emphasis is placed upon the consumption of experiences and pleasure (such as theme parks, tourist and recreational centres) and the ways in which more traditional forms of high cultural

consumption (such as museums, galleries) become revamped to cater to wider audiences through trading in the canonical, auratic art and educative formative pretensions for an emphasis upon the spectacular, the popular, the pleasurable, and the immediately accessible. In addition, it can be argued that there are further convergences between these two cultural forms and a third, the development of malls and shopping centres.

<div align="right">(Featherstone 1991, pp. 96-97)</div>

Place becomes a text, a work of art, carefully reconstructed and stylised in the growing sensitivity to image of place under conditions of intensified competition. Tied to the general expansion of the cultural sphere within contemporary Western societies, these practices indicate not only an enlarged market for goods but a shift from the purchase and consumption of commodities to the consumption of signs and the symbolic aspect of goods.

In this broader context, critiques of the contemporary heritage practices have tended to emphasise issues such as nostalgia, false history, inauthenticity, staged identity, the museumisation of culture, fetishism of the artifact and image, commercialism and so on. Coming to the fore in particular are questions of representation and power (Lumley 1989, Lowenthal 1981, Samuel 1989, Hewison 1987, Horne 1984). Tourism and heritage practices fundamentally involve display and therefore their images of history and place can be used as a political resource through which identities, national or local, may be constructed and forms of power and relations of privilege legitimised and celebrated. As Don Barry and Stephen Mueke write regarding the proliferation of reconstructions of the past in Australia:

> This immense simulacrum, the proliferation of the historical in the present, is not celebration...nor is it purely the product of a postmodern aesthetic, inevitable evolution from the past as modernism. It is rather the discovery and exploitation of a new market, or a new way of marketing products through and in nationalism (and vice versa), by way of renovation and recommercialisation of specific sites... and by way of organizing a particular politics of time such that the past is amenable both to marketing and to building a populist consensual nationalism suited to the present government.

<div align="right">(1988, p. 1)</div>

Reproducing "otherness" in time and place, these simulations simultaneously exploit two contemporary "dis-eases": not only longing and fascination in the form of

nostalgia, but in "*otherwheritis*, the spatial equivalent of nostalgia, a social condition in which a distant place is preferable to here and now" (Goss 1993, p. 40). Places injected with tourism or heritage practices become the sites for intoxicating "dream worlds" or "amazing spaces" (Featherstone 1991). Depth is evacuated in a flattening of the image for commodification and for tourist consumption and "gaze". As difference is produced and re-produced through the collections of images, cultural-historical tourism practices take on what Baudrillard speaks of as "the absolute proximity, the total instantaneity of things, the feeling of no defense, no retreat. It is the need of interiority and intimacy, the overexposure and transparence of the world" (Baudrillard 1983, p. 133).

The spatial logic of hyperspace and hyperreality associated with postmodern cultural production is thus seen to have its counterpart in a weightless relation to time, history and memory, a perspective coming to expression in discussions of museum practice and local heritage. Heritage practice serves to fill appetite and desire of the image in pursuit of the illusory "real thing" without the inherent danger of the real thing. As Jameson maintains, "Historicism effaces history":

> It is for such objects that we may reserve Plato's conception of the 'simulacrum' - the identical copy for which no original ever existed. Appropriately enough, the culture of the simulacrum comes to *life* in a society where exchange-value has been generalised to the point at which the very memory of use-value is effaced, a society of which Guy Debord has observed, in an extraordinary phrase, that in it 'the image has become the final form of commodity reification'.
>
> (Jameson 1984, p. 65-66)

The past is effaced by its own image; we are "condemned to seek History by way of our own pop images and simulacra of that history, which itself remains forever out of reach" (Jameson 1984, p. 71). In the dominance of the past within a figural regime of signification, there is also an apparent decline of the past as an ethical or political inspiration and basis for action and as a temporal domain known at any critical distance or in any critical depth. Cornelius Castoriadis observes:

> It is a matter of the co-existence of hyper-information with essential ignorance and indifference. The gathering of information and objects, never before practiced to this degree, goes hand in hand with the neutralization of the past; an object of knowledge for some, of tourist

curiosity or a *hobby* for others, the past is a source and root for no one.... Neither 'traditionalist', nor creative and revolutionary (despite the stories it tells on the subject), the epoch lives its relation to the past in a manner which does, as such, represent a historical innovation: of the most perfect exteriority.

<div align="right">(1982, pp. 26-27)</div>

Technique and image are seen to surmount understanding. Contemporary heritage practices are products and indications of a general "hyper-consciousness" and adeptness at image-crafting and manipulation for consumption tangible in postmodern landscapes. Historian J. H. Plumb has observed, "The more literate and sophisticated the society becomes, the more complex and powerful become the uses to which the past is put" (in Fowler 1992, p. 109). This agility at image construction extends beyond the vivid simulacra of theme parks, and historical reconstructions, but to place and community itself. In the de-differentiation of the postmodern cultural environment, the distinction between city, town, museum and theme park dissipates. The engineered space of the tourist site is living space as well. Dean MacCannell writes:

> A community becomes postmodern, then, when it develops consciousness of itself as a model and learns to profit from its image. The result of community self-consciousness is a whole new series of concerns, not all of them in themselves deleterious: community attractiveness, quality of community life, the impact of the community on the surrounding environment. It is no longer possible to think of community development as a matter of increasing population and dollars. 'Development' is now conceived as the production of a consistent, clean, and positive image of the community to the wider world. Older notions of 'economic self-interest' are now almost entirely a matter of maintaining 'folksy' aesthetics - such as a restored, traditional 'main street,' or *Sunset* magazine style landscaping - in order to preserve the resale value of the homes.
>
> <div align="right">(MacCannell 1992, p. 102)</div>

The past is not obliterated in these situations; it becomes a resource, albeit used selectively, in the reorganisation of place, locality, region as centres of consumption than production: "all towns and cities have thus become potential objects of the tourist gaze sensitized to 'quantification'" (Urry 1988, p. 53). Whether for gentrification or for tourism, this development involves image repositioning and reconstruction: "The attempt both denies a past with which it is stuck and uses selective pastness to help reshape a new projection, partly for self-pride but very much with an eye to visitors and a

place on the cognitive map of potential tourists." (Fowler 1992, p. 126). The past is engineered quite carefully in the creation of identity of place.

According to MacCannell, "this embedding of tradition" is a social characteristic of the postmodern community:

> Postmodern places are designed around a totemic exaltation of *the past* not as history. This is no longer merely a matter of political rhetoric in which there is a nostalgia for the past and for tradition, as for example when conservative candidates claim they 'stand for' or they will help us 'return to' the virtues of traditional community and family life. There are now new suburban places which are made on the model of the 'traditional' small town, and rural and urban re-development projects, once called 'gentrification,' in which shabby areas are not so much restored as they are transformed into ideal images of what they might have been.
>
> (1992, p. 95)

Historically "themed" places and community events proliferate as never before. "Where there was active historicity there is now decoration and display," declares Patrick Wright in *On Living In An Old Country*, "in the place of memory, amnesia swaggers out in historical fancy dress" (Wright 1985).

The production of everyday life, the past and of the environment as image for tourist consumption has been the focus of the work of John Urry on the "tourist gaze" and contemporary "holiday-making" (1988, 1992). He ties the visual consumption of the culture, history and identity of places and landscapes associated with postmodernism back to the broader changes in economic and social life in contemporary societies characterised as "time-space compression." The spatiality of capitalist production is associated with the suppression of difference as events and processes are increasingly interwoven and interdependent. Simultaneously however, as commercial electronic mass communications and transportation have unified space, produced are many "imagined, 'small' worlds" (Urry 1992, p. 6). The result of time-space compression is not a decrease in the significance of space, for as "spatial barriers diminish so we become much more sensitized to what the world's spaces contain" (Harvey 1989, p. 294):

> The specificity of place, of its workforce, the character of its entrepreneurialism, its administration, its buildings, its history, its environment and so on, become important as spatial barriers collapse. And it is in this context that further explains just why places seek to forge

a distinctive image and to create an atmosphere of environment, place and tradition that will prove attractive to capital, to highly skilled prospective employees and especially to visitors... Indeed, the heightened interest in the environment, both physical and built, partly stems from the fact that people, politicians and perspective employers are all concerned both to make places seem different from each other, and to make them consistent with particular contemporary images of environment and place, particularly those of nature.

<div align="right">(Urry 1992, p. 7)</div>

The result has been a shift in the emphasis in tourist endeavors, away from a tourism mass, or "mono-industry," to an emphasis instead on the local; on small-scale, local control, personal contact, local ecology, local heritage, and local culture. Cultural-historical tourism practices involve an attempt to preserve the illusion of "realistic" experience. They are bound increasingly to an image-economy where past and exotic objects, images, and ways of life are "now seen, looked at, predominantly if not exclusively, as potential mental souvenirs, as camera material, as memorable 'sights'" (Harvey 1989, p. 38). Losing attachments to the neighbourhood, work place, town and family one is developing an interest in the real life of others.

Heritage practices thus exist within a broader spectacle and consumption-oriented environment where culture is "the very element of consumer society itself; no society has ever been saturated with signs and images like this one" (Jameson 1984, p. 131). Functioning in terms of display within the same context as department stores, malls, advertising, tourist sites, theme parks and "Disneyworlds," contemporary museum practice are seen to work in similar fashion to Walter Benjamin's "dream worlds" of the department stores, arcades and world fairs as sites of constantly changing flows of commodities, images and bodies (Benjamin 1986). These consumer culture "dream worlds" were for Benjamin materialisations of the phantasmagoria which Marx discusses with respect to the fetishism of commodities: "the new department stores and arcades were temples in which goods were worshipped as fetishes" (Featherstone 1991, p. 75). As museum displays have experienced a vast broadening of what is deemed possible to display, mundane and everyday material and symbolic culture are infused with a sense of the exotic, strange, romantic and beautiful. Once restricted spaces for the educated and art-oriented, today museums become sites for "spectacles, sensation, illusion and

montage; places where one has experiences, rather than where knowledge of the canon and established hierarchies are inculcated" (Featherstone 1991, p. 70).

As museumised sites and times grow, the obsession with the past is seen as a response to, symptom of decline, a fascination with and desperate search for real people, real identities, and real values in face of a maelstrom of change. The recent growth in the heritage industry - the commercialised industry that developed through the 1980's - seems to confirm Peter Fowler's interpretation of the role of the past in contemporary society:

> As we approach AD 2000 and the end of the millennium, the 1990s will witness an increasing and increasingly morbid *fin-de-siècle* search for roots in the past, for meaning in what has happened in the twentieth century...nostalgia at a personal and local level will consequently be rampant; and doubtless various commercial provisions will grow to service it.
>
> (Fowler 1992, p. 161)

Varying approaches to the heritage industry consistently emphasise this falling of aesthetic and cultural field into the economic field, as culture is commodified and the fading of the real is paralleled by rise of flow of images the hyperreal. Museums are thus "amazing spaces" for the representation of spectacular imagery and simulations. Place-based identities are associated with this "overexposure" and viewed as commodities serving this fascination, longing and nostalgia for authenticity, the past and tradition. Local cultural and historical difference are seen upon a backdrop of depthlessness, hyperspace and hyperreality. As spectacle, place-based expressions of identity and history are seen as inherently illusory. They function as attempts to recapture the essence of tradition, to harness abstract space and exchange value in order to retrieve the essence of use value of social space (Lefebvre 1991).

Within this criticism there is a recurring distinction between true and false, real and unreal, authentic and inauthentic. As the artificial is seen to efface the real, the efflorescence of the resulting kind of history is perceived as a sign of malaise, regression, cultural decay and demoralisation; symptoms of widespread cultural "unhealth"; that "reveals a sense of hopelessness, decadence and pessimism" (Bishop 1992, p. 7). Much criticism has focused on the presence of artificiality as indicative of an inability to deal

with the present and future: "We cannot summon up the past to revive the present, for this obsession with heritage is ultimately entropic. It will lead to a state of inertia, where we are distracted from the present by ever-improving images of the past, and paralysed by the thought of the future which can only, by comparison with these simulacra, be worse than the way we never were" (Hewison 1989, p. 22). Hewison writes in his discussion of the British heritage activities:

> My objection is that Heritage is gradually effacing History, by substituting an image of the past for its reality: Our actual knowledge and understanding of history is weakening at all levels, from the universities to the primary schools. At a time when the country is obsessed with the past we have a fading sense of continuity and change, which is being replaced by a fragmented and piecemeal idea of the past constructed out of costume dramas on television, re-enactments of civil war battles and misleading celebrations of events such as the Glorious Revolution.
>
> (1989, p. 21)

This excessive interest in the past is a symptom of, or contributing factor to, decline of society, a search for security in context of rapid change: "The substitution of present-day culture by artefacts of the past should be seen as cultural decline... As far as I am concerned, the main reason for the boom of the past and heritage is to be sought in the moral, social, and identity crisis that we have experienced increasingly during the last decades" (Laenan 1989, p. 90). Heritage practices which emphasise historic place identities are seen as reactive, romanticising and idealising the past as they supply a simulated image to combat anxiety and loss of sense of place produced by a new order which no longer guarantee's the operation, and existence of stable, coherent "truths":

> A rose-tinted selection and presentation of the past responding to unfillable needs of dreams of power, comfort and prestige appears to be a matter of consumption rather than a cultural issue for making people aware of their identity. History in interpreted to stimulate nostalgia, idealize that past, and leads to a selective understanding of the past that has more to do with fantasy and fairy tales than veracity.
>
> (Laenan 1989, p. 89)

Representation of place and the past is seen as false manufacturing of tradition, manipulating and emptying history in favour of depth and conflict in favour of a glossy surface.

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In keeping with Lash's "figural" regime of postmodern signification, these expressions of the past produce a sense of intimacy and engagement, but at a level of surface and superficiality. As even the illusion of a full or authentic relation of lived experience to history dissolves, remaining is a random collection of images turned to in a frantic effort to appropriate a collective past: "History is constantly invoked as a reassuring anchor, but as it is dispersed in a pastiche of partial testimony and resituated in the flux of media production, it is deflated and eclipsed in a frame of eternal 'nowness'" (Joyrich 1988, p. 140). Capitalist postmodernity, with profit-making as its volatile core, in eroding much of the traditional sources of the stability of self - such as religion and family, also menaces any relationship (other than the casually exploitative) with the past and with place. Contemporary heritage practices and cultural-historical tourism reside within this core, providing images and momentarily fulfilling endless searches for sites where authenticity and difference define the way in which "things are done differently there" (Hartley 1957).

Where Seldom is Heard a Discouraging Word: Nostalgia and the Pioneer Myth

> Why the sudden interest in history? This is not confined to Alberta, but is a noticeable trend across the continent. More money, more leisure time, better educational facilities and a greater awareness of history that is slipping away from us - these are all factors which are involved. In some cases the incentive may be necessary to promote a tourist attraction. In other cases, an honest attempt is being made by citizens to enrich the life of the community.
>
> *(Alberta Historical Review* 1964, in Rasmussen 1990, p. 261)

Whereas Chemainus's murals depict the past of a forestry community, in western Canadian heritage practices an accessible "dream world" has been a generalised agrarian, pioneer, homesteading period. The concern with spectacle, nostalgia and the artificiality of historical and place representations has often been directed towards expressions of place and of local history reflecting this generalised "pioneer myth." The museum and tourism landscape of the west is overwhelmingly populated by images of pioneers - a result of a large-scale popular romanticisation of the homesteading era in the prairie provinces the decades since 1945. In this period there have been increasing efforts towards the recovery of history through historical societies, archaeological and

ethnographic work, archive-formation, the collecting of oral histories and the expansion of museums. Over the last century, "the pioneers" have taken on a particularly reverential status and "pioneerism" has become the predominant historical mode of community self-expression, and in fact continues as a dominant ethos of the prairie provinces: community history museums, museum re-creations, re-enactment and interpretation, community and local histories, historically "themed" community events and local festivals, theme parks, even urban re-developments, are frequently thematised around this homesteading period. Attending almost exclusively to the period of settlement, the past is an era of elemental industry and agriculture, mainly a rural, idealised, domestic place.

Subsuming local differences and conflict, the focus across the prairies on a single period as interpreted through material culture, and the production of descriptive narratives based on similar kinds of artifacts, has produced a certain kind of homogeneity in the presentation of the past. The invented pioneer past is bland, populist and neutral:

> Historic villages (which never existed) and historic houses are characterized by a defined timelessness, usually situated somewhere in the nineteenth century. These are cultural re-creations, synchronic and largely de-politicized studies, centred on artisanal and pre-industrial modes of production.... The metanarrative for museums with chronological galleries is the creation of civilization out of wildness, through local success and development, illustrated by improvements in material technology, the development of social institutions and the growth of the community.
>
> (Tivy 1993, p. 37).

This urge towards the preservation of material culture and desire and curiousity for "time travel" through the re-construction of past contexts has been linked with anti-modernist impulses:

> When visiting history museums, prompted by a sense of modern nostalgia, a need to escape or a feeling of civic pride, tourists pick destinations created by individuals with similar motivations. In the face of postwar immigration, urbanization, regionalization, and the disappearance of farms, homes, local businesses and traditional institutions, the building of museums was driven largely by fear of the loss of local character, and nostalgia for the idea of past values and past communities.
>
> (Tivy 1993, p. 36)

Though the pioneer experience is generally a white-washed, Protestant experience, it is not without its multicultural dimensions. In fact, the ideology of pioneerism has been useful in enabling the incorporation of non-Anglo-Saxon groups into a mythology of western identity to some extent. Immigrant cultures - Ukrainian, Scandinavian, French, German, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Finnish and others -were a key part of the settlement of the west and are therefore not excluded from these expressions of the rural pioneer past. These representations by and large reflect a symbolic, politically innocuous, cultural ethnicity. As Frances Swyripa writes regarding expressions of Ukrainian cultural identity, "selected primary synoptic symbols from the peasants' world constitute the essence of... identity. Enjoying the greatest staying power as best reflecting the unique shared experience of the group and most successfully bridging past and present are things like food, embroidery and Easter eggs - things visible and tangible" (1989, p.71). Combined with the increasingly commodified contexts for such representation, the homogenising potential is viewed to be problematic:

> ...[this] tendency can lead to a homogenized version of heritage and in a North America rather than a Canadian context. Heritage and tourism are traveling a yellow brick road together and it leads not to a greater understanding of each community's past but to the Golden Arches of theme park history, where pseudo-events replace real emotion and where the community's critical evaluation of itself is replaced by costume drama against a backdrop of historical façades.
> The heritage-tourism connection makes heritage not only a commodity but an entertainment commodity competing for leisure dollars." It becomes subject to changes in "leisure fashion" which makes the consumer primarily a spectator of his [sic] own collective memory. It is this final transformation which poses the greatest danger of all. The folk memory of *remembered history*, the search for truth of *recovered history* and the community's right to select its own past, could all lose their force before the onslaught of the North American entertainment industry.
>
> (Friesen 1990, p. 197)

This critique of tourism expressions of place and cultural identity is paralleled in Barnes and Hayter's discussion of heritage practices in Chemainus. "But what kind of golden age?" they write, "It is an age that both wants to forget its history... as well as to embrace it through the commercialization of heritage" (1992, p. 660).

While seemingly depoliticised, commodified and evidence of the "mode retro", also tangible in constructions of prairie place and past for the tourist gaze are cracks in the conception of the watertight hegemonic control of spectacle. The assumption of passive, deluded human subjects producing and consuming "bogus history" is undercut by the ways in which these representations have fulfilled social roles in the present. Tourism practices in western Canada, such as the Kalyna Country Ecomuseum, are themselves involved in the production of difference; processes of differentiation through which people and culture are mapped onto place. The emphasis on the past in the present in the form of the "good old days," a time of agricultural toil, strong moral values and prosperity is rooted in particular current historical, political and economic conditions. As it represents a nostalgia for a simpler time and place, it testifies to the urgency of establishing a sense of continuity and place within a world where rural prairie communities have been undermined and eroded.

Joanne Stiles, writing of the plethora of local histories emerging from agricultural Alberta over the past four decades, roots the pioneer and frontier myth in a tremendous anxiety about social change:

> Rural communities, much more than cities, are threatened by our highly mobile society. Mechanization and the concentration of land holdings are destroying an old way of life. The process is a confusing one for numbers of farm society. They welcome greater physical ease and comfort and have actively sought technological progress. At the same time, however, they are uncertain of the social side-effects.... The frontier period is presented as a stable, moral, and productive time in order to reinforce the basic values which seem to be under attack. Elements of a similar myth pervade our society generally; we all tend to believe our grandparents generation was more virtuous than our own. Rural Alberta is simply more articulate because its changes have been more dramatic.
>
> (1990, p. 43)

The current context of widespread, sustained challenges to the status of the agrarian tradition in the western Canadian provinces, as globally, has prompted from the rural, agrarian communities the articulation of a powerful and remarkably uniform myth of origins (see Stiles 1990). And this myth, by its nature, ignores certain features of a

subject while stressing and organising others, resulting in a depoliticised, selective memory of the settlement of the west.

Furthermore, these reconstructions and representations of the past based on the pioneer mythology are in no way distinctly "postmodern." The selective representation of place identity and local history can be seen as extensions of expressive practices which dominated the initial period of settlement in the early part of the twentieth century, efforts to propagate a myth of pioneer, rural and country life which came to define a region. Contemporary cultural-tourism and heritage practices are put to the ends of the re-creation of continuity, extending the role played by the western agrarian press, boosterism and education curriculum in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These representations of the past play necessarily contemporary roles: "In our own day it probably reflects a nostalgia for a dying way of life. It encompasses the ideals of independence, thrift, family solidarity and continuity - a secure sense of place but one overlaid with a rural romanticism which is still evident in many local versions of prairie heritage" (Friesen 1990, p. 194). Romanticised spectacle or not, the pioneer myth in the west in such forms has been one source of place-images and space-myths (Shields 1991), reinforcing the unity and definition of a place, environment and region which has formed a basis for regional consciousness, identity and action.

In its focus on the primacy of the image and the effacement of the real where expressions of place and of past are seen as spectacular indicators of a loss of and nostalgia for that "real", the predominant postmodern framework cannot grasp such nuances. Here it is possible to catch a glimpse of the limitations to a theoretical framework that poses expressions of place-based identities and remembered, restructured or "invented history" as inherently conservative, manufactured spectacle and a "clinging" to local difference. And here it is possible to view critically the attitude toward nostalgia that pervades this postmodernism. Within a postmodernism of decline, cultural productions within the wider cultural field will consistently be seen *in terms* of that rhetoric, as Bishop acknowledges: "The present political and moral climate is viewed by many as being unhealthy, and there is a prevalence of diagnostic-type readings of symptoms to discover what is wrong. For example, nostalgia is viewed as a 'response' to

decline', as a way of coping, or as a symptom of disdain for the present" (Bishop 1992, p. 7-8).

Perceptive as they may often be, widely shared critiques of history/place-as-commodity and nostalgia-as-ideology tread a fine line between critique and their own kind nostalgia - nostalgia for an "authentic" historicity, culture untouched by commodification, and a premodern state of un-selfconscious localised identity. As Jim Collins has declared, "the anti-Post-Modernist nostalgia appears to be for a Panopticon Lost, where societies were supposedly centralized and homogenous" (1989, p. 142). Criticism itself becomes ineffectual when it degenerates into a "nostalgia mode" for pure, authentic cultures lost. Further, these critiques of postmodernism and contemporary cultural practices also incur the risks of misdiagnosis, attributing to postmodernism patterns that extend much further back in time.

Confronting heritage industry and cultural-historical tourism critiques of a particularly contemporary situation of pastiched, "high-gloss" pasts and places, is, simply, the idea that places, like history, are made and re-made in always new political economic contexts. It is the nature of societies to attempt to identify and define themselves, placing themselves in time and in space. Understanding one's own life as a "coherent narrative" connected to the larger social story of "a people" and a space is a widely shared need. Place and memory, therefore, are thoroughly affairs of construction and will be supported by a mnemonic apparatus of which heritage practices and cultural-historical tourism are a part.

The counter to this postmodernism of decline then is perhaps not really a counter at all, but a complementary "filling out". The point must be to acknowledge the devastating effects of the systematic museumisation of culture and domestication of difference in a multicultural haze of images, while simultaneously attending carefully to the potential for such "postmodern arts of memory" and practices to foster community cohesiveness, economic viability and local autonomy within the social landscape. The "local pride" expressed by the residents of such places as Bell Island, Newfoundland is not incidental, extraneous or irrelevant to analysis, to be dismissed as "false illusions," nostalgia or a surrender to imposed stereotypes. Rather, it points to a need to re-orient an

existing theoretical perspective to grasp what is currently invisible. This way it is possible to remain sensitive to the profound "bi-focality" that characterises locally lived lives in a globally interconnected world (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 11). "Cultural analysis is truly in jeopardy," writes Collins, "if its treatment of contemporary culture (specifically in regard to popular culture and Post-Modernism) amounts to self-righteous dismissal" (1989, p. 142).

Chapter Three

Re-Collection and Geographic Presence

...we also have to think about the meaning of dwelling and to acknowledge, not only the dangers of reactionary forms of dwelling (for example, some types of 'community' or nationalism), but the legitimacy and value of people's struggles to create their own places and memories... .it is one [observation] that must be placed insistently alongside the rhetoric of movement that privileges detachment from place; we must do this in order to break down a new hierarchy of difference created through the seemingly fashionable mobility-dwelling duality.

(G. Pratt 1992, p. 243).

So I must believe that, at least to human perception, a place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known in it, died in it - have both experienced and shaped it, as individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities, over more than one generation... No place is a place until things that have happened in it are remembered in history, ballads, yarns, legends, or monuments. Fictions serve as well as facts... no place is a place until it has had a poet .

(Stegner 1992, pp. 201-205).

The sureness of 'I was' is a necessary component of the sureness of 'I am'.

(Wyatt 1963, p. 319)

The apparatus of contemporary commercial electronic mass communications dominates discourse and forms the backdrop for social relations. That they are powerful is a given. In the primacy of the consumption matrix discussed in the previous chapter, culture becomes commodity, uprooted from connections to place, undermining historical consciousness. Commercialised leisure is a manifestation of the resulting broader context of immediate sense gratification and atomized consumerism. In the pervasiveness of the mass media, origins and social ties are obscured and re-created in forms more easily disseminated and consumed. Time, the past, history and memory, like place, become qualitatively different concepts in this world mediated by mass communications. As Stephen Kern notes, with the development of the phonograph, the photograph and the cinema in the early twentieth century, the "objectivation" of memory became possible, allowing the preservation of sounds and images in solid, portable, re-viewable forms.

The past was separated from the individual's direct experience and could be exchanged and consumed. Developments like the telegraph and the newspaper exacerbated this "crisis of memory" as they were geared towards commerce and change rather than to the preservation of cultural memory. The personal past was separated from the historical past, paralleled by a shift from homogeneous public time to the varieties of private time (Kern 1983, p. 64).

In face of the separation of tradition, memory and experience, the erosion of local and regional identities appears imminent. Yet cultural technologies and forms of public discourse can have complex effects. For example, the advent of radio in Canada, particularly the CBC, bound disparate spaces and "solitudes" together. Introducing different regions to one another, radio helped to precipitate an intraregional unity: "On the prairies... the divided society outsiders had long noted was bridged as country met city through CBC's 50,000 watt 'provincial' stations, established in Manitoba (CBW) and Alberta (CBX) in 1945 and 1946 and as early as 1939 in Saskatchewan... " (Smith 1982, p. 48). Cultural technologies hold simultaneously the potential to multiply possibilities to express cultural and spatial distinctiveness and to mute them.

Today, instead of relating to the past through a constant, shared sense of place and ancestry, or in terms of a stable biological and geographical connection, visible symbols and narratives predominate in confronting fragmentation and forging and re-creating links between past and present, people and place. Within this, the capacity of electronic mass communication media to transcend time and space creates instability by disconnecting people from past traditions, while simultaneously opening up the field of images and narratives dramatically. In this context of "hyper"-mobility, the significance of place and of dwelling is not diffused. Cultural and spatial difference endure and have become to a great extent a matter of keeping identities and images alive and engaged. As a consequence, images have never had a greater significance and fill the public sphere and all its nooks and crannies:

> The dislocations of the past two centuries, the propaganda apparatuses of totalitarian powers, disillusionment with the paradigms of the Enlightenment, and popular culture itself have all served to make the search for a precious and communicable past one of the most pressing

problems of our time. But simply because historical inquiry has been reframed, it does not necessarily follow that it has been diluted, It is just that historical memories and historical evidence can no longer be found solely in archives and libraries; they pervade popular culture and public discourse as well.

(Lipsitz 1990, p. 36)

Providing one source of these historical memories and institutional support for access to the past in the present, extending the roles originally filled by photographic archives and preservation societies, are contemporary cultural-historical tourism and heritage practices. Author Wallace Stegner, above, has said elsewhere, "I really believe that places aren't places until they have stories - until they have even legends. I think that should happen to every place. I think it must". The social landscape is inherently "storied". Signifying, narrative practices have a key role in the making of place and space, in organising historical consciousness and the time-space coordinates of a cultural community. This production and circulation of pasts does not have its sole purpose in reflecting or reinforcing the economic or political dimensions of a community. The unity of cultural space itself at a range of spatial scales - local, regional, national and so on - requires the mapping onto one another of the *historicity of a territory and territorialisation of a history*," a process which is organised, institutionalised and materialised (Poulantzas 1980, in Bennett 1988, p. 12).

The ordering of space depends to a great extent on a somewhat "solidified" network of words, narratives and images through which a consistent set of memories of the past of place can be constructed and communicated, guiding action and behaviour. Further, reinforcing the unity of a space can be part of the deployment of power by the powerful or a component of strategic resistances among the relatively powerless. This construction of place and community identities, however, is not a recent and uniquely "postmodern" phenomenon. Precursors of "cultural-historical tourism" abound. Over the past century in Canada it is possible to see an ongoing interaction of localising and "exteriorising" in making sense of place. Place identities have not emerged autonomous from such commercial and promotional dimensions, but in an interaction of "outward" and "inward" facing images as is evident in early manifestations of promotional culture associated with constructing place and history. This revelation undermines contemporary

critiques of the "ransacking the past" and "confused" identities often assumed as uniquely postmodern, enabling instead the examination of the social and spatial dynamics associated with the localising of identity and memory in such a cultural-historical tourism form as the ecomuseum. In this light it is possible for sites of cultural-historical tourism to represent one point in the ongoing creation and transformation of place and region and an intervention into broader "imaginary geographies".

Storied Spaces and Postmodern Arts of Memory

> And what is the significance of imagining the past in these different ways? Cultural studies invariably ignore the *process* of memory and focus exclusively upon its content.
>
> (Bishop 1992 p. 15)

The title of this section is indebted to Michael Fischer's essay "Ethnicity and the Post-Modern Arts of Memory" (1986). Addressing several manifestations of ethnicity in recent autobiography, Fischer discusses this narrative form in terms of the role it plays in the reinvention and reinterpretation of ethnicity and ethnic memory. What emerges as his conclusion is "that ethnicity cannot be reduced to identical sociological functions, that ethnicity is a process of interference between two or more cultural traditions, and that these dynamics of intercultural knowledge provide reservoirs for renewing humane values. Ethnic memory is thus, or ought to be, future, not past, oriented" (Fischer 1986, p. 201). Ethnicity has never been simply a matter of group process, nor a straightforward matter of transition, transmission or salvage, but is constantly reinvented and recreated within the dialogue and contestation that is culture.

Expressions of place through cultural-historical tourism can be viewed in a similar, though slightly altered, way. These media for the expression of memory and identity, like expressions of ethnicity through new autobiographical forms, are exemplary of a more general pattern of cultural dynamics associated with the late twentieth century. Whereas ethnic autobiographical writing parallels and exemplifies "contemporary theories of textuality, of knowledge and of power" (Fischer 1986, p. 230), the cultural spaces of tourism as arts of memory add to these themes a paradoxical postmodernism - "a model that is profoundly implicated in, yet still capable of criticizing, that which it

seeks to describe" (Hutcheon 1986-1987, p. 11). While as commercialised leisure they have created frames of reception consistent with dominant ideology they may also work to hone and refine collective memory and work within the ongoing reinvention and recreation of place and cultural identity. Constructing images of place and cultural identity to forge a unity of place and people, these practices accentuate the illusion of a monolithic, fixed identity, a critique central to postmodernism:

> ... we are in fact always multiple and contradictory subjects, inhabitants of a diversity of communities (as many, really, as the social relations in which we participate and the subject-positions they define), constructed by a variety of discourses and precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those subject positions.
>
> (Mouffe 1988, p. 44)

As such, tourism expressions of identity evoke simultaneously the potential for a postmodern "hyper-management of difference" and a postmodern politics based on the regionalising and localising of identity and memory aimed at the creation of a greater measure of local self-sufficiency and self-determination.

The paradoxical and unstable tension within which these two dimensions are held has been noted by Fredric Jameson. He argues that the dominant culture can only presume to ease current anxieties like disconnection from the past by calling attention to them in the first place, therefore treading dangerously close to the line between easing and re-opening the very ruptures it seeks to close (Jameson 1984). Within a simultaneously de-territorialising and expanding field of spaces of consumption, tourism spaces may not only mirror or simulate but *be* the localised sites from which "new social movements speak in postmodern voices; they enter the national and international political arena speaking a language of localism and regionalism, a discourse that, although internationalist, does not appeal to traditional class solidarity as its primary line of attack; but addresses power itself as an antagonist" (Aronowitz 1988, p. 61).

Expression of the identity of place in heritage and tourist forms thus has meaning beyond the lure of nostalgia for vanished or dreamed places. As Gupta and Ferguson have maintained, "remembered places have often served as symbolic anchors of community" (1992, p. 11). Memory of place is used to imaginatively construct a lived

present. Though the past is often romanticised in recollection, there is necessarily a dialectical relationship between the lived experience and its representation; the lived past imposes certain constraints on remembering, and nostalgia cannot obliterate this connection (Davis 1979). Significations of the past simultaneously reconstitute that past. As a result, reconstructions do not purport a return to the past, but represent an incorporation of the past into current realities and a reconstitution of that reality. "Yearning for yesterday" is part of constant re-writing and re-articulation of the present:

> It should be kept in mind that nostalgic sentiment dwells as the very heart
> of a generation's identity; that without it, it is unlikely that a "generation"
> could come to conceive of itself as such or that "generations" in advance
> or arrears of it would accede to the distinctive historical identity it claims
> for itself. And in large part it is because human consciousness can forge
> "generations" from the raw materials of history that the generations come
> to speak to each other, as it were, each reminding the other of "precious
> things" about to be lost or forgotten. Thus, the dialogue of history is itself
> enriched and given dramatic form far beyond that which could be evoked
> from a mere chronology of places, persons, and events.
>
> (Davis 1979, p. 115)

What requires attention, as Bishop notes above, is not the content, but the *significance of imagining* the past in a certain way; the process by which it is recollected and the effects of this imagining in a living social context. The meaning of expressive cultural practices lies not in forms themselves but in how the forms are put into action at a given moment and place to re-articulate or dis-articulate dominant spatialisations and ideology. Place identity is reconstructed and recreated in and through cultural practices that are not part of a fixed inventory subject to approval or disapproval, but which are part of an ongoing dialogue responsive to the demands both of past and present (Lipsitz 1990). From this perspective, cultural-historical tourism does not fall into the polarised categories of oppositional or cooptive. Practices are innately social and historical and are seen instead in terms of their role in the production of space as "mnemonic cultural technologies"; how they arbitrate tensions between opposition and co-optation and mediate past and present within imaginary geographies at a given moment. Made visible are the "complex effects of emancipation and domination in the (re)formation of marginal political and cultural identities" (Berland 1992, p. 46).

Narrative and representation of the past is central to the endurance of places, to the achievement and perpetuation of the geographic "presence" of an imagined community, and in the creation and ongoing reconstitution of the character of a location and place identity. Words and images "have the general power to bring to light experiences that lie in the shadow or have receded into it, and the specific power to call places into being" (Tuan 1991, p. 686). Human experience and memory, both at an individual and social level, has a narrative character, and subsequently, so do most attempts to portray it.[17] The unity and coherence of a narrative of origins which mythologises a past for an invented present is necessary for the stability of that present. These narratives of place however, are constantly destabilised, rewritten and re-presented. Signifying practices are thus best regarded not in terms of authenticity or accuracy but in their role in the structuring of consciousness of place and of location in space; in the reconstitution of imagined places and an imagined sphere of social relations. Signifying practices are constitutive of space and not its reflection.

The role of heritage-for-tourism activities in the production of the past and the identity of place have not been overlooked in this regard (Bennett 1988, Friesen 1990, Smith 1982). Heritage and tourism activities have been part of the general growth of the historical public sphere and have been central as image producing practices in imagining and fixing the place, materially and mentally, of a prairie or western Canadian identity and of the communities and places within that broader region. As Rob Shields maintains, place-images, though often contradictory, "have determined its position, as a real place, within the social spatialisation of places and spaces within the social Imaginary" (1991, p. 118). These practices have been of a mixed variety ranging from monuments, mass media representations, historical fiction, commemorative events, museum exhibitions, local festivals, archives, visual art and photography, landscape and architectural preservation and so on, also indicating a spectrum of individual, community, media and government initiatives. The prairies in their seeming spatial emptiness have often been

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[17] I am following here the position of James Fentress and Chris Wickham: "Memories have their own specific grammars and can (must) be analysed as narratives; but they also have their functions, and can (must) also be analysed in a functionalist manner, as guides, whether uniform or contradictory, to social memory" (p. 88) in *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

viewed as a "history-less" place. They are not. The lack, or perhaps ephemerality, of tangible cultural and material records of the human habitation of this landscape simply means the "pro-creative" dimensions of narration of place and the struggles to situate memory and identity are more intelligible.[18]

Heritage opened to the tourist gaze is a particular way of imagining and narrating the past of a place. What is considered "heritage" is a tangible historiography that comes in what can be seen as three central, interrelated forms - in collective memory, in scholarship and in the restructuring of and selection from the past (Friesen 1990). Arising from and referring back to limited contexts, what is considered local heritage is part of local culture and gives shape to a space, reinforcing a sense of place. "Remembered history" is that which survives from folk memory, in material culture, in oral tradition, ballad, or popular festival. In western Canada such traditions are evident in the survival of Native ceremonials such as the sweat lodge as well as among the religious practices and in the folk traditions in the practice of ethnicity. "Recovered history" refers to the discovery, re-assessment and re-writing of the past through critical scholarship practices. In the prairie provinces, for example, archival and archaeological work has enabled the expansion of knowledge about native occupation of western Canada for thousands of years and reconstruction of extensive pasts for both first nations people and immigrant settlers. This scholarly work has resulted in monographs, biographies, provincial histories and prairie syntheses. Restructured or "invented" history is derived from the recovered past, informed by the remembered values and traditions with a contemporary purpose (Friesen 1990).

Heritage does not simply supply internal definition, however, it is constructed and refined within a consciousness of being watched. Monuments, festivals, historical reconstructions are at once acts of self-definition and invite a tourist gaze. Recording a history and a cultural space therefore involves not only inscribing identity but also location relative to other identities. The potency of the narration of these arts of memory lie in their creative capacity to establish continuities of geographical place and

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[18] "How do you write in a new country?" Robert Kroetsch asks, "...we talk ourselves into existence" (1989, p. 6).

boundaries; to give shape to, reinforce and revise storied spaces based on an articulated shared experience and shared past. Sense of identity and sense of place are directed at once outwards as well as inwards. This is not a recent development, however; these cultural forms associated today with "postmodern" spectacle extend much further back in time. The act of prompting and constructing memories for the tourist "gaze" through promotional culture and image, mediating interiority and exteriority through "cultural tourism" and travel, has been central in the constant reinvention of identities of, and within, the Canadian west for over a century. Identity and tradition are not, and never have been stable, unified and "pure," but are constantly re-created in the present in new contexts. Furthermore, a vast range of mnemonic technologies have been put to work in the process of localising identity and creating place. Of these, heritage practices have been only a part, working simultaneously with popular press, boosterism, government commemoration, landscape painting, fiction, poetry, and so on.

The Place of the West and the "Tourist Gaze"

> When you speak of culture, don't you think that monuments help to build up a tradition... ?
>
> (Massey Commission, Bruce Peel, Saskatoon
> Archaeological Society, Brief No. 368, Session 40)

A constant interaction of both local and distant forces in creating sense of place is clear in the ongoing reconstruction of the place identity of what is today considered the prairie provinces. The contemporary tourist gaze directed towards staged events and artifacts parallels earlier experiences of settlers, audiences in Europe, and travelers whose vision of this space was mediated by a body of public discourse - maps, drawings, paintings, guides, guidebooks and early commemorative practices - that delimited experience by marking the boundaries of significance and value of that place. The construction of a sense of heritage - the building of tradition and its promotion - through public discourse has mediated identity and a claim to this space for at least as long as non-native people were interested in settling the area. Though there is not the space here to detail the processes of the construction of space into the place of the west in the depth it deserves, what can be shown is that contemporary meanings and politics of space

associated with these areas in the west are bound to the layers of meaning given to the cultural space during and since this initial period of acquisition and settlement. Also evident, however, is that there is no simple, directly reflective relationship of outward-directed images and internal meaning or sense of place.

The settlement of the west was mediated through discourse. In the nineteenth century, newspapers, guidebooks and popular magazines extolled the attractions of western Canada. Its emerging identity was based on difference, coming to expression as the "other" to the civilised east (eastern Canada, Britain and Europe), whether as a site of adventure, of wilderness, or of romance. The perception of the space of the west, within and without, was by and large based in and shaped by the regionalisation inherent in these power relations. The potential for the promotion of this identity was not grasped immediately, however. Although there were occasional lobbyists for agricultural settlement of the North West previous to the 1850s, most saw the region as the perpetual hinterland for the fur trade. The area of the North West had been described as "dreary territory", "barren tracts", "desolate and barren" (Rees 1984, p.3, 8). Even as images became more positive, this hinterland characterisation persisted. R. Douglas Francis has written, "The prosperity following the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 and the optimism of the railroad age made it feasible for the first time for Canadians to consider acquiring an economic hinterland of their own" (Francis 1988, p. 343). There was suddenly tremendous pressure to acquire the area as a base for agricultural resources:

> Thus even before Canadians had an opportunity to assess the potential land in the North West in order to judge its intrinsic value for agricultural settlement, there existed in the mind of powerful eastern commercial, political and expansionist interests an image of the North West. They saw it as a great agricultural hinterland which one day would make the united colonies of British North America a great and powerful nation and indeed the vital link in a greater British Empire.
>
> (Francis 1988, p. 343)

The mythologising of the west as unfit wilderness had become outdated as it would not attract the settlers and immigrants needed to be the labour force in the opening of this "frontier". Expanding into the west would require the imaginative construction of place that would interest and draw people from outside to the area. The romantic

imagery of the West that then evolved in promotional material reflected the wider European romanticism of the period - a manifestation of a powerful ideology of exploration and empire building. The sense of the past and place constructed for audiences was one of the conquering of the wilderness and the taming of the frontier, obscuring from memory any prior presence on the land and the destructive effects of colonisation upon the native population. Most of the early information about the region was disseminated through "information technologies" in the form of written accounts, maps and pictures, the latter often illustrating reports and books of travel or, occasionally, published as a separate series. Early topographers, sketchers and photographers, artists such as Paul Kane and Frederick Verner, responded to the growing desire for information and images of this area, inscribing a romantic identity of place (Rees 1984). To encourage settlement, the CPR and the Dominion Government began advertising the North West through paintings and photographs displayed in government and CPR offices. Further, newspapers and magazines in eastern North America, Britain and the Continent were bombarded with promotional material, both pictorial and written (Rees 1984, p. 17).

These paintings, drawings and written descriptions of the region prior to settlement were intended exclusively for audiences in Europe and eastern North America. Francis notes that these greatly influenced subsequent perceptions and understandings of the west and were instrumental in establishing images, attitudes, and perceived uses of the region by these audiences (1988, p. 345). Immigration propaganda presenting a pastoral ideal of the west was accompanied by boosterism - the deliberate attempt by leaders in emerging settlements to present an "inflated image of their home town in hopes of an eventual self-fulfilling prophecy" (Francis 1988, p. 349).[19]

At the same time, however, these images also played a crucial role in mediating a place identity within the region. The relationship between image and inward sense of place was not straightforward, however. A localising role for discourse became more

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[19] For a discussion of the role of boosterism and its role in the settlement of a particular prairie community see Paul Voisey's *Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

explicit as settlers replaced trappers and primarily documentary records of experience turned increasingly inwards to reflect the condition of the settlers. Outward image was negotiated with the ongoing efforts of settlers to transplant tradition and survive in this new setting. While propaganda was still directed outwards by the CPR, special artists and travel writers, "a sense of homelessness is endemic to pioneer societies, and pioneer art naturally reflected the immigrants need for reassurance as well as his hopes for the future. With settlement, art became internal, in both a geographical and social sense" (Rees 1984, p. 27). Though the externally-oriented promotional material was reinforcing the basis for a unity of a social space, the sense of place evolving from within indicated a dimension of human mediation and negotiation of these images. Adam Shortt, writing in 1895, described "two quite distinct, and in some measure conflicting ideas answering to the name North-West":

> The one, corresponding to the great North-West with the retinue of superlatives, was obtained by reading Government pamphlets and settlers' guides, C.P.R. literature of a similar type, and articles on the territories and the railroads... .The other, a much less splendid, but withal more human idea, was derived mainly from conversations with persons who had lived in widely different parts of the North-West.
> (Shortt 1895, p. 183, in Rowlandson 1991, p. 21)

During this period the Canadian prairie underwent a major transition as its population jumped from 429,512 in 1901 to 1,328,121 in 1911 and 1,956,082 in 1921 (Jones 1982, p. 96). In those years the social and economic destiny of the west was established for the foreseeable future and that destiny was fundamentally rural and agrarian. Simultaneously, a rural myth and "country life" ideology was put in place, built through images directed internally as well as externally, reinforcing the region's hinterland "otherness" to the eastern context:

> In establishing simultaneously its essence and its antithesis the west also established, in concert with the cultural baggage of its inhabitants and the philosophy of rural contemporaries and precursors elsewhere, what I have identified earlier as the *Zeitgeist* of western Canadian settlement, a spirit of the times akin to a *Weltansicht*, or world view... . there were several aspects of life on the land in the western settlement period which combined to produce a rural myth, or a way of seeing the world. This myth was essentially positive and optimistic; those who believed felt

generally that the land being occupied was livable, that man with the aid of science could subdue nature and pave the way for an agrarian splendour. In that era the elemental industry, agriculture, would be seen for what it was - the mainspring of national greatness and the moulder of national and personal character.

(Jones 1982, p. 96)

At the same time that this rural mythology was disseminated and lived throughout the west, national identification and national sentiment began to be consciously fostered across the west by the federal government: "the orchestrated western visits of Governors General Dufferin and Lorne, the fostering of celebrations such as Dominion Day and Thanksgiving were all part of the invented pageantry which paralleled the extension of the railway and telegraph and which tied together a new nation" (Friesen 1990, p. 194). During World War I, Canadian regiments were formed in the Prairies, drawing upon aboriginal, Canadian-born and immigrant men. The lives lost in that war were commemorated throughout the west in almost every small town and community through formal monuments or community halls. This common experience and these common symbols served as a broad and powerful source of Canadian and British identification for small, scattered settlements.

Self-promotional activities within the west co-existed with these more national efforts. With the acceleration of technological and communication developments associated with World War I came changing experiences of space and time, provoking intensified efforts towards the preservation and recovery of history. Accompanying this re-orientation was a growing field of historical societies, archaeological and ethnographic work, the formation of archives, the collecting of oral histories and the expansion of museums. A tighter community consciousness of "westernness" was emerging. Expressions of place identity and history grew more self-conscious and more spectacular. The past of this west was "imaged" and narrated in various forms: "The shared fur trade past of the west was acknowledged in the HBC pageants in the western cities of the 1920s. Individual communities began to note the passing of generations and sought to commemorate the 'pioneers'" (Friesen 1990, p. 194). Public commemoration and narratives traced upward from the "pioneers to today" was a way of constructing a consistent set of collective "memories" of the past which were then popularised. In

Alberta, with the beginning of large-scale rodeo events with the arrival of cattle shortly after the turn of century, a regional identity grounded in ranching and "cowboy-ing" becoming part of the invented self-narrative and public presentations of what it was to be western.[20]

These images and narratives were transformed and negotiated into the emerging regional consciousness and built a stage upon which action could be based in the form of western regionalism and the struggle of the west to liberate itself from perceived eastern oppression. The promoted myth and identity of the west that lay at the basis of this regional consciousness is described by Gerald Friesen as rooted in:

> an emphasis upon the new society which would be created in an 'empty'
> land. Environmentalism, pastoral and agrarian myths, physiocratic
> beliefs, and elements now associated with the 'frontier' thesis - democracy,
> egalitarianism, individualism, virility, opportunity, innovation - were
> aspects of the new society in popular estimation.
> (in Francis 1988, p. 348-349)

After 1950, the west shared in the expansion of national cultural life which followed the Massey Commission (Friesen 1990). The activities of the National Historic Sites Board grew in span. Where previously their activity centred upon the marketing of battlefields and fur trade posts, efforts towards "interpretation" began at sites such as Fort Walsh, Batoche, and Lower Fort Garry. At the same time as this deepening of a sense of Canadian identity, provincial identities became increasingly refined. This was effected through education curriculum, provincial celebrations, a more widespread iconography of flags, provincial "orders," honours and awards, all aimed at creating a provincial particularism in former colonies and territories (Friesen 1990, Smith 1982). Much of this activity was of necessity of government origin and reflects the expansion of all levels of activity of Canadian governments since 1960 (Friesen 1990). The Centennial celebrations of 1967 which involved parallel commemorations in each province fueled

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[20] Marilyn Burgess provides a discussion of the significance of ranching in Western Canadian identity and the mechanisms by which it is discursively produced and destabilised in "'Meat Stinks': k.d. lang, outlaw cowgirls and western Canadian identity politics" (forthcoming in *Capital Questions: Approaches to the Study of Media and Culture*. Eds. Stuart Allan, Elizabeth Seaton and William Straw. Ottawa: Carleton University Press).

the expansion of state activities in heritage, reflecting not only the benevolent paternalism of the welfare state of the same period but also an "opening up" of heritage from private interests:

> It also reflects, however, a growing perception that "heritage" is a common inheritance and that no one group or individual should 'own the past.' And there is much to commend such a perspective. Free enterprise in 'heritage' expression tends obviously to favour the ideologies of those who are organized, have time to devote to such activities, and who have an acknowledged place in the wider society. In such situations, common until the 1970s, who spoke for the poor, the dispossessed, the outcast, the unorganized or the new Canadian? The role of the provincial governments led in the 1970s and 1980s to expanded provincial heritage departments, heritage legislation in each province.
>
> (Friesen 1990, p. 195)

Over the century, these activities played a role in the definition and reconstitution of collective cultural identity at a number of different levels - that of "nation", that of the prairie west, and that of the western provincial cultural spaces. Promotional practices, commemoration, and celebration of place all spawn the iconography that is the essence of "storied space". These practices also express a complexity to the construction of imaginary geographies beyond simply margin-centre relations. Social space is multi-tiered, overlapping and interconnected; meanings of places develop in relationship to other constructed spaces - through interconnection not disjunction. The evolution of place identities through such promotional and heritage-tourism practices serves to indicate that identity creation within such limited contexts was not myopic and simply inward looking. The place identity and history of the prairie region and the western provinces were constructed within a consciousness of being the object of a gaze, whether of England and Europe, eastern Canada or of other sites of the west itself, always with an eye towards that which could be memorialised and celebrated and which would make the site distinctive among interconnected spaces. It is clear that a premodern state of pure, pristine, uncommodified and uncomplicated identities is largely wishful thinking. The fragmented, selective approach to the past that has often associated with the postmodern therefore is evident in the drive for historical significance and geographic presence in much earlier practices.

Also clear is that the sense of place that evolved within these spaces did not derive directly or simply from these promotional practices for they were inevitably negotiated and interacted with, taken or left. The direct reflection of an essential place identity was not the point; creating place out of space was. For Homi Bhabha, citing Mikhail Bakhtin, the role of such narration is in the spatial expression of a unitary people - the "spatialization of historical time, 'a creative humanization of this locality, which transforms a part of terrestrial space into a place of historical life for people" (1990, pp. 294-295). The constructed territorial spaces which result from such narration thus take conscious attention and constrained effort to maintain, for they are constantly fractured by alternative imaginary geographies evolving from below. The coherence of cultural space demands the continual displacement of difference which challenges that unity (Bhabha 1990). A promotional means of self-representation was one way this unity was maintained. The social binding of time and space involves, as Rob Shields notes, "the fundamental coordination of perceptions and understandings which allows for the sociality of everyday interaction and the creation of durable social forms and institutions":

> The coordinating role of social spatialisation represents an often overlooked part of hegemonic systems of thought and supposition because spatialisation sets in motion more than an imaginary geography. As a fundamental system of spatial divisions (e.g. subject-object, inclusion-exclusion) and distinctions (e.g. near-far, present-absent, civilised-natural) spatialisation provides part of the necessary social coordination of perceptions to ground hegemonic systems of ideology and practice.
>
> (Shields 1991, p. 46)

This ordering is not uncontested however, these strategic organisations of space are filled with holes and gaps for tactics of autonomy. Re-collecting the past in the present within communities and places does not simply take place at the level of the powerful. The image-work entailed in historicising is also a strategy for empowerment of those in the margins. A localising of identity and tradition may make tangible other imagined communities within alternative boundaries or existing official borders, communities which make their own temporary or more permanent places within the space available. In these instances it is clear that 'otherness' can be used to provide the

basis for a symbolic unity through difference around which imagined communities may flourish. Expressions of place identity from these marginalised sites recenters and brings into geographic presence those spaces defined on maps by absence:

> Traversed by pathways and patterned by networks, natural space changes: one might say that practical activity writes upon nature, albeit in a scrawling hand, and this writing implies a particular representation of space. Places are marked, noted, named. Between them, within the 'holes in the net,' are blank and marginal spaces.
>
> (Lefebvre 1991, p. 118)

On the Map: The 'Other' and the Ecomuseum

> Without the homogenizing screen of universal discourse, revealed as fraudulent by both feminism and postmodernism, we are faced with the concrete world of people and events situated in particular times and places.
>
> (Bondi and Domosh 1992, p. 200)

Social marginality is often associated with geographic peripherality, whether in the form of remoteness, size, distance, isolation, rurality (often all at once), where being off the main highways, traveled routes, railway lines, main streets, rivers and flight patterns marks a location in terms of absence. Being located "off the beaten path" may be socially defined as well, as in the case of "inner" cities or the "wrong side of the tracks" where despite their proximity and nearness there are social barriers to accessibility and interaction. Remoteness, further, may be manifest in a temporal dimension, where attachment to tradition is a sign of difference, for, as noted previously, "the past is a foreign country". Peripherality is marked as absence and exclusion as well as outsider, foreign, exotic cultural status. This dichotomous opposition between geographic presence and absence has a pervasive ordering effect: "'being present' evokes notions of authenticity and being, nearness, comportment and composure, 'real experience', and truth. Absence by contrast evokes notions of lack, truancy, distance, abstraction, and meaninglessness" (Shields 1992, p. 187).

It is such peripheral sites which have become the settings for contemporary ecomuseums. The idea has been integrated into local development programmes in what

tend to be marginal, dependent, often declining, areas - the inner city, deindustrialising regions (Chemainus, Crowsnest Pass), cultural margins (Quebec), native communities (Ak-Chin Indian Community) and rural and ethnic settlements (Edna-Star bloc settlement). They are a part of the broader current politics of representation marked by the assertiveness of marginalised voices, experiences, and identity-constructions of the current historical period. These interventions have challenged the systems of cultural categorisation which have upheld the borders of inclusion and exclusion, and by extension, presence and absence, consequently having significant implications for "mapping". For "the map is not the territory," but involves a recording and an organising of experience. Presence and location are determined in relationship to the elusive, yet defining, centre; "to be" is "to be in presence".

Foucault affirmed this relationship of power and space in terms of a cartography of power. Maintaining that "discipline proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space," he proposed that relations of social, cultural, political and economic power are inscribed into the spatiality of living, effectively foregrounding the political and ideological grounding of geography (1979, p. 141). Following from this, those without the power to speak, to determine what constitutes knowledge, to determine their own histories, inevitably also inhabit peripheries and lack control over determining their own spaces and geographies. Similarly, Yi-Fu Tuan has maintained, "speech - the right to speak and be heard, the right to name and have that name 'stick' - is empowerment" (1991, p. 685). Contemporary politics of space, then, are to a large extent a politics of naming, a binding of identity to place. Seamus Deane writes, "The naming or renaming of a place, the naming or renaming of a race, a region, a person, is, like all acts of primordial nomination, an act of possession" (1990, p. 18).

Self-naming, naming and articulating one's own reality, forms the condition for the assertion of the "presence" - geographic, cultural, economic and political - of a community, simultaneously locating it (Kahn and Neumaier 1985). "In order for communities to exist in time and space," maintains Ivan Karp, "they must be imagined and represented by individuals as significant components of their identities" (1992, p. 21). And as the cultural field in which this imagining takes place is politicised and

negotiated, its maps are in no way unified and coherent. Place and identity are not characterised by a seamless unity but are contradictory and multiple. The holes, gaps, and interstices which contradict the argument that "capital always wins and, it seems, only capital can ever win" (Massey 1991, 278) mean that relationships which ground dominant orderings of space are profoundly unstable, plural, and interconnected. The abstract categorisation and regionalisation of experience which orders relationships among centres and peripheries is also experienced and lived as a material reality by both definers and defined. So while order is imposed, it may also be experienced as a "non-coherence" by those who are to internalise it, which enables reconstitution and resistance in a range of forms. The result of this schism are de-centred and re-centred imaginary geographies which bring, as Kobena Mercer acknowledges, "a whole range of experiences and identities into view for the first time" (1992, p. 424).

Strategies of autonomy and the assertion of the presence and integrity of other voices and identity constructions foreground "geographies of resistance," alternative geographies which propel to the level of consciousness the politicised nature of the boundedness of identity to place and the ideological underpinnings of space and location. These interventions effectively rupture the apparent inviolability and coherence of dominant spatialisations which as Shields maintains, "enters into and underscores the perceived unity of social groups, communities and nations" (1991, p. 263). The certainty which once structured relations of subject and object, centre and margin, insider and outsider, front and back spaces is no longer "natural", secure or even tenable. As explorations and questioning of relations of "self" to "others" proceed, it has become clear that our understanding of these "others" has become increasingly contingent and context-bound. Spatial relations and borders are socially produced and always fluctuating. Identity constructions based on "imagined communities", commonalty of experience, interest and concern may intersect irregularly with taxonomic geographical configurations. The configuration of communities and social forces that have emerged into focus today are not necessarily congruent to state-defined limits and borders such as census districts or provincial boundaries - in fact they are often multi-centred and surrounded or divided by institutional boundaries. The assertion of these symbolic

boundaries have had the effect of interrogating the notion that "state boundaries suffice to define a people and a nation" (Solo 1992, p. 1).

The Kalyna Country ecomuseum as a heritage practice constitutes one such exercise of self-naming; a practice of re-centring and asserting the presence of a cultural community in space through re-collection and "in-gathering". There are many definitions of the ecomuseum concept, but the best one is the simplest and most straightforward: an ecomuseum is for and about people at home. The word says it all. *Eco* is from the Greek word *oikos* meaning home (Quig 1987/1988 p. 27). It entails the conscious localising and articulating of a cultural identity and a cultural location in space. Numerous small communities are enclosed within symbolic boundaries forming the ground for the expression of a collective cultural identity, expression and place. This localising of identity is a strategy that goes quite comfortably with an increasingly globalising culture and economy. As Andrew Ross maintains, a "politics of the local and the particular and a politics of racial, sexual and ethnic difference are not only symptoms of, but essential strategies for coping with a postmodernist culture that advertises itself as decentered, transnational, and pluralistic" (1988, p. vii). This local cultural construction involves an active engagement with broader structures of political economic power. Cultural variations represent a negotiated interaction between people representing local interests and a national and international network of capital accumulation and commodity production. Distinctive cultural spaces are therefore maintained through interconnections at a range of geographic scales as "'the objects of the tourist's gaze'" are active participants in mediating a tension between commercial logic and cultural integrity (Oakes 1993).

On the basis that place is inherently culturally produced and constructed and a negotiated reality, what Nicholas Entrikin has called the "synthetic quality of place and region" (1991, p. 129), it is possible to look at the ecomuseum in terms of the interrelationship of symbolic processes and the social production of space. Developed in a blending of community, academic and government initiatives - an association of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the University of Alberta and the Heritage Sites and Archive Service of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism with the communities

involved - the prime objective is to put in place a structure that would enable regional self-definition and self-representation. The ecomuseum is a framework engaging the social, cultural and historical experiences of a particular geographic area - in this case mainly Ukrainian Canadian and agrarian cultural experiences - consciously localising them in an effort to develop and reinforce community identity, to make overt the layers in the evolution of place, as well as to further economic development through tourism. As a heritage activity, it is implicated as an effort of a cultural community to create a "usable past" (Friesen 1990). The heritage practice involves the foregrounding of a region and its promotion as a distinct cultural space based in a common geography, history and culture: a publication of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism states, "because of the region's diverse history, its wealth of surviving historic structures and many natural attractions, it has great potential for the development of such a museum" (*Alberta Past* 1991, p. 12).

The ecomuseum sits at an intersection of historic site, community history museum, "open air" heritage site, community cultural centre and cultural tourism site. Its fundamental premise, however, is simpler: it is the acknowledgment of the mutually constitutive thread binding cultural space and identity and past, present and future. Evoking a sense of this mutual interaction of cultural identity, landscape and place, the naming of the ecomuseum in east central Alberta "Kalyna Country" by the local communities involved draws upon the Ukrainian word for the high-bush cranberry that is part of the natural environment of the region, a word that has also powerful connotations throughout Ukrainian cultural history (Balan 1992).

Heritage Activities in Alberta

As a "postmodern art of memory", the ecomuseum must be contextualised within broader self-conscious recollections and reconstructions of identity and of the past through heritage-tourism practices in Alberta. Since the establishment of the spatial boundaries of Alberta by an act of Parliament in 1905, its inhabitants have worked - sometimes consciously, sometimes not - at defining and narrating that space. Attempts to narrate the regional space of Alberta through the production of symbols, narratives and

the creation of myths of origin through heritage practices over this century can be seen, by and large, in terms of a monologue, at least until recent decades when it has become increasingly "polyphonic". Over the last decades in Alberta, as throughout the western provinces, "multiculturalism has dethroned imperialism as the dominant heritage theology" (Friesen 1990, p. 199). The diversity of voices and forms of expression today can to a great extent be tied to several influxes of settlers which dramatically altered the composition of the population over the past hundred years. To the existing native presence was added the first influx of English-speaking Protestant and French-speaking Catholics from eastern Canada in the 1880's. The greatest diversity in population dates from 1896 to the beginning of World War I when a major wave of immigration brought tens of thousands of northern, central and eastern Europeans from a range of backgrounds into the area. Several smaller waves of immigration have followed.

The preservation and interpretation of the past has not always been so diverse in purpose or so broadly based in the community as it is today. Even now, a general perspective on heritage ideology in the province indicates a central theme concentrated around early exploration, fur trade, missionary, and mounted police activity. Until the 1960s there was little effort put into heritage conservation so what was represented remained fairly static: "until the 1960s the province's interest in local and private development, historic site preservation, archaeological and paleontological research, and associated resource management, appeared equally languid" (Rasmussen 1990, p. 235). Rasmussen ties the rapid growth in heritage practices since then to the amalgamation of several factors. In the late 1960's, public attitudes to heritage matured due to the loss of the first generation and its history as well as the growing concern for the built and natural environment. As well, by the 1980s, the link between heritage and profit potential was well established: politicians, businessmen and the general public "began to appreciate that historical resource development had not only cultural value, but could produce strong economic benefits as well" (Rasmussen 1990, p. 236).

It was during earlier heritage efforts that the general tone of Alberta's past was set. As early as 1884, Fort Macleod, Alberta's first North West Mounted Police post and the oldest white settlement in southern Alberta, was the object around which a historical

society was centred. In 1907, the province's first heritage-related legislation was passed. The Historical Society Act created the Historical Society of Alberta with the goal:

> to encourage the study of the history of Alberta and Canada, to rescue from oblivion the memories of its original inhabitants... to obtain and preserve narratives in print... to secure and preserve minerals, archaeological curiosities and objects generally illustrative of the civil, religious, literary and natural history of the country and to establish a museum and library.
>
> (*Alberta Historical Resources Review* 1960)

The first efforts toward historic site recognition and preservation in the 1920s through the newly formed Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (1919) were focused around fur trade posts. Through the 1930s and 1940s the government was urged to re-erect the fur trade post of Fort Edmonton as a monument to the early period of settlement. While place-based and ethnically associated communities were undoubtedly producing, communicating and recording their histories and experiences, this "authorised version" of the past overwhelmingly emphasised the white, male, "explorer," coloniser experience of Alberta. Later, the rancher, pioneer roles gained in significance.

The value of the native population and of the newly arriving Eastern European settlers in the new province of Alberta was reinforced in their absence from "protagonist" roles, in fact from any roles, in official versions of history; in what was to be remembered. They were regarded as apart from the wider society, at least until they successfully fulfilled the new roles assigned to them by the government and Anglo-Saxon segment of the population. Alberta's native population and past was incorporated into the official version of history in 1949 - not in living roles, however. An excavation initiated near Fort Macleod became a designated historic site and has become known as the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. More bones became part of the heritage experience of Alberta when a small museum of dinosaur artifacts was opened in the Red Deer River Valley in 1957 which became an exhibition, field research station and the heritage site of Dinosaur Provincial Park.

From 1955 on, Alberta's Golden Jubilee year, heritage activities expanded reflecting a general broadening of interest in heritage concerns within government and the population at large. In particular there was a discernible interest among ethnic groups

in commemorating their past. In the 1960s Alberta, as throughout Canada, the idea of Canada as a multicultural society gained currency. The conception of the social and spatial relations between cultural groups in Canada was reconfigured in the idea of Canada as a "community of communities". National self-statements of a multicultural and mosaic framework where members of different ethnic communities ideally co-exist and retain their ethnic identity and participate to the full in Canadian life was transposed into an ideology of heritage.[21] This version not only emphasised the history of exploration reflected a definition of provincial cultures, like a national culture, as an assemblage of folk cultures (Friesen 1990, p. 207). This was a part of the broadening of the narration of the cultural space of Alberta as "academically, a system of heritage sites was being developed representative of the province's entire history, not just particular eras" (Rasmussen 1990, p. 253)

Recollective Practices and Ukrainian Identity

> Whether slowly or suddenly, a historic site emerges from the commonplace, assuming values beyond mere landscape or real estate. A transition occurs. Historical qualities are perceived, causing changes in attitudes toward a site.
>
> <div align="right">(Sellars 1990, p. 16)</div>

It is in this context - heritage practices in Alberta - that the ecomuseum, as a heritage-tourism practice must be seen first. Every community is constantly inventing itself based on a conception of its inception, of its role in the larger world and of what it sees itself becoming. This was the same amongst Alberta's "numerically significant" groups in the period of the 1960s and into the 1970s. Amongst the Ukrainians in Alberta, as across Canada, there was a quite vocal movement to create and establish a place for

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[21] I will not deal with the politics and problems of the concept of multiculturalism in this thesis. Suffice it to say that ethnic minorities in Canada do not exist "comfortably" within a multicultural framework, but re-invent themselves around it, I think. As Arnold Harrichand Itwaru has observed "a social situation in which members of different ethnic communities are able to retain their ethnic identity, and yet participate to the full in national life" is an impossibility: "No ethnic group existing under the domination of a macrological cultural power different from itself maintains its traditional uniqueness for long. To participate to the full in national life necessitates a cultural transformation..." (1990, p. 16).

themselves in this emerging multicultural climate.[22] The bloc settlement that was centred in east central Alberta was the largest in Canada and by the 1960s the population in the area was still largely of Ukrainian background. This engagement with the past, however, was not simple or straightforward. The Ukrainian Canadian community has a double edged relationship to their history - at once a source of pride and a burden. Ukrainians, unlike many other immigrant groups were for many decades the target of institutional assimilation efforts as the focus of Canadian Protestant social agencies which attempted to "civilise" and "Canadianise" these new, largely peasant immigrants by divesting them of their language, religion and culture. Furthermore, the Ukrainian cultural tradition had been thoroughly demeaned and trivialised. As a result of the combined diasporic and colonisation experience, Ukrainians in Alberta are amongst those for whom "heritage" came to mean that which was lost. Coupled with this was the sense Ukrainians in Canada had of being "survivors" of Russian oppression, upon whom has been laid the burden of remembrance and the necessity of constantly rekindling the ideal (now achieved) of an independent Ukraine. From World War I onwards this was the focus of much effort of Ukrainians in Canada (Friesen 1990, p. 210):

> Not only was this New World entirely new, but here they encountered techniques of an organized forgetting which extended from the efforts and attitudes of those that administered this place at that time.
>
> The term "technics" refers not only to technology but to the knowledge required to make effective use of technology and the institutional capacity to realize both. Technics encompasses technology, techniques and infrastructure. The immigrants had entered a land that was part of the British empire. The Dominion of Canada already contained institutions and value structures inherited from the Imperial core-systems of meaning and organization. The "opening" of the West was impelled by an economic imagination and a profit motive. Wheat for export was the subject. Eastern European immigrants were the object imported for its realization. Cultural integration meant a reorientation of the culture of

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[22] As Friesen notes, "Ukrainians have been the single most important group in promoting and fostering the idea of Canada...as a multicultural society. The Ukrainian Canadian Committee, perhaps aware of the internal strife and divisions which its own existence masked, took care in the national deliberations of the 1960s and 1970s to always present itself as speaking for the 'third force'" (1990, p. 210). See for example *The Other Canadians* by Isadore Hlynka (Winnipeg: Trident Press, 1981) which is a collection of editorial columns from the *Ukrainian Voice* written between 1971 and 1979, dealing with issues around multiculturalism and inequality.

these immigrants. Much of this cultural reorientation - the "evolution" or "change" - necessitated a technics of forgetting.

<div align="right">(Onufrijchuk 1988, p. 3)</div>

Roman Onufrijchuk identifies a combination of factors that served to integrate the immigrant population into the mainstream: the change in spatial arrangements from Ukrainian village clusters to Canadian bloc settlements based on a isolating land grid, the change in the ways and conditions of passing on language and knowledge, and direct intervention and "institutional intimidation" with respect to the bilingual schools (1988). The Ukrainian community in Canada has historically been among those who are perceived in terms of "otherness" as a result of ethnicity. The central posture of the mainstream and dominant discourse in North America regarding such difference is now more a matter of denial of legitimacy; imperialism masked as indifference. The seeming passivity is misleading, however, for it extends from a clearly hostile historic attitude to Ukrainian cultural identity. Ukrainian settlers faced racist invective and were perceived as a threat as a typical editorial from the Winnipeg *Telegram* indicates:

> The Government is making a great mistake in establishing these exclusively foreign colonies. The proper policy is to mix the foreigners up with the rest of the population as much as possible. It is only in that way that they will be assimilated. The colony system tends to perpetuate their own language and peculiar customs. It prevents their observation of improved methods of cultivation, and keeps them out of touch with British institutions and ideas. The massing of foreigners in colonies in this fashion constitutes, also, a serious political danger.
>
> <div align="right">(in Lehr 1977, p.45)</div>

In an essay addressing Ukrainian settlement in Canada, Vladimir Kaye and Frances Swyripa note that "the Ukrainian immigrant was highly visible with his strange speech, unusual peasant garb, unfamiliar customs, and concentration in ethnically exclusive blocs":

> He encountered much hostility and suspicion from Anglo-Celtic Canada, which feared his 'questionable' moral standards, 'authoritarian and ritualistic' religion, and simple way of life... The bitterness engendered by this initial contact between widely divergent cultures and outlooks often persisted for decades in the memories of the Ukrainian pioneers.
>
> <div align="right">(1982, p. 44)</div>

In this context, for a community whose history is characterised by its denial, continuity becomes a matter of and for conscious effort (Onufrijchuk 1988). For some Ukrainians this continuity was to be achieved through organised political action and efforts to foster political consciousness among their community. Various national organisations emerged. One of the most significant, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee established in 1940 to unite Ukrainians behind the war effort, became a permanent co-ordinating superstructure with a range of political objectives. From this organised Ukrainian organisation emerged approximately 600 newspapers and periodicals, dealing predominantly with religious or political philosophy.

For the majority of the Ukrainian population, however, ethnic continuity is a matter of visible symbols, a matter of always recreating identity, drawing upon the material cultural symbols and practices from the past in always new contexts (Onufrijchuk 1984, Swyripa 1989). Often this particular thread of continuity has become entwined with place, whether as in the site a block settlement, such as Star, or as in northern Winnipeg, also a area of Ukrainian Canadian dwelling. This is not a neat "natural" correspondence of place and ethnic identity, however. The link between them is a human one and therefore place and cultural identity are invented and recreated together, inextricably intertwined through sociocultural practice. This boundedness of ethnicity and place is not rigid and static, but dynamic. As social marginality and forgetting are struggled against, retrieval, recollecting and presencing become inherently bound up with place.

For a community based in a diasporic experience, identity is contained in and emerges form the tension created between a social inheritance and its ongoing reconstitution in the new world: "the unique product of Old World influences and New World forces... A people's heritage, like its language, is ever-changing, and this is especially true of an ethnic groups' symbols" (Kloberdanz 1988, p. 4). The most tangible and material of the products of this tension between inheritance and contemporary project has been the inscription of the cultural encounter of the Ukrainian community with the physical space of the Canadian prairie. Ukrainians have had a marked impact on the built and material environment of Alberta, in both the general settlement pattern as

well as in the traces of agricultural practices and vernacular architecture that remains in these spaces (Lehr 1982). In sites of Ukrainian settlement, place identity is inseparable from cultural presence (Lehr 1985, Shortridge 1988, Kloberdanz 1988).

This built environment was the basis for the Ukrainian Canadian community in Alberta's earlier intervention into narrating the past of an immigrant group in Alberta in the form of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, initiated by a group of private citizens in 1971 to demonstrate the Ukrainian settlement experience and the place of this community in east-central Alberta prior to 1930. It was purchased by the province in 1975 and in the mid-1980s stood as about thirty restored complex buildings on 320 acres as a recreated village, presenting both rural and small-town lifestyles (Rasmussen 1990, p. 253). The village was seen as both a monument and memorial, articulating the geographic presence of a cultural community and the distinct sense of place that was the result of that presence: as "- an historic and research institution - is also a *pamiatnyk* to a people who passed this way some four generations ago. A *pamiatnyk* is a monument. *Pamiat* is the word for *memory*. This place is a place for memory, and perhaps for 'all of Baba's children' it may become a place of 'pilgrimage'"(Onufrijchuk 1988, p. 3).

The Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village now rests within the boundaries of the Kalyna Country Ecomuseum which broadens and deepens the placing, recollecting, narrating and presencing efforts of this imagined community. As it is "in place," it foregrounds the inseparability of the construction of the geographic from the symbolic realm: "places and spaces," writes Shields, "are hypostatised from the world of real space relations to the symbolic realm of cultural signification... These images connected with a place may even come to be held as signifiers of its essential character" (1991, p. 47). In the contemporary context of space-binding telecommunications and transportation oriented towards the dissemination of information and influence through space, the ecomuseum with its emphasis on collective memory represents what Harold Innis would call a "time-biased" medium, for memory is recentred in place and reconciled with motion in space.

Through the ecomuseum, the identity of the area is not defined in terms of essence or tradition "now absent," or in terms of deculturation. In contrast to the

staticising of marginal cultural identities characteristic of the traditional museum, the ecomuseum foregrounds ethnicity as fundamentally about contact, transformation and recreation. The place in which the visible symbols have been given meaning is left intact, emphasising that culture does not pre-exist in a static form but it, like identity, is actively localised. Place and identity are handed down, learned, lived, constituted, created and re-created. The Safeway and the shopping mall are as much a part of identity of place as abandoned folk houses and Ukrainian churches. There is an effort to move cultural identity into the present, narrative retrieval directly confronting the experience of "organised forgetting".[23] Series of maps developed as a part of the ecomuseum present a narrative of the loss of original place names, shifting town sites and changing borders due to external forces like the introduction of the railway; narratives found in architecture indicate the passage of time and experience of a range of different forces and changing value placed on culture and identity itself. Its emphasis is not the museum artifact but process. In the overlapping layers of presence - the material, social, and historical phenomena that appear as objects, practices and objectifications - on the landscape, a dynamic between continuity and change is apparent in place. It is an activity situated in the present which is at once consciously intro-verted and extra-verted, drawing upon an inheritance from past while orienting the community towards the future.

The ecomuseum as a heritage-tourism practice is therefore one manifestation of the creation of a "region of the mind," and as a "mnemonic cultural technology" plays not only a symbolic but a material role in establishing historical significance and geographic presence. In this context, the symbolic, imagined dimension of place identity that the ecomuseum draws upon and foregrounds is not "inauthentic", simulated or manufactured. It is a part of the ongoing re-creation of place identity that always involves both an interiority and exteriority, evident quite profoundly in the roles heritage-tourism practices and promotional culture have been shown to play in the formation and reproduction of

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[23] Roman Onufrijchuk has related Milan Kundera's conception of "organised forgetting" from *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* to the experience of institutional intimidation and cultural change within Ukrainian Canadian cultural evolution in "Immigration and Organised Forgetting: Continuity and Change in Systems of Meaning" in *Continuity and Change: The Cultural Life of Alberta's First Ukrainians*, ed. Manoly Lupul. (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988). pp. 2-8.

imaginary geographies. Contemporary expressions of place identity are not groundless or ethereal. The symbolic and imaginary are inherently part of a constructed place and region which is the centre of collective consciousness and sociospatial identities and which cannot, as Paasi writes, "be reduced (1) to given administrative units, (2) to one regional level or regional unit without taking into account wider sociospatial connections, or (3) to 'concrete' or empirical" (Paasi 1991, p. 243). Mediating past and present, local and global, the ecomuseum inscribes a sense of place, reconstructing a social space within the social landscape.

Chapter Four

Defining Place: Between Deterritorialisation and Regionalism

> But in order to take part in modern civilization, it is necessary at the same time to take part in scientific, technical, and political rationality, something which very often requires the pure and simple abandon of a whole cultural past. It is a fact: every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modernization. There is the paradox of how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization.
>
> (Ricoeur 1965, p. 276-77)

> At the same time, the industrial production of culture, entertainment and leisure that first achieved something approaching global distribution during the Fordist era led, paradoxically, to the invention of new forms of cultural difference and new forms of imagining community.
>
> (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 9)

Manifest in the ecomuseum are broader patterns associated with postmodernism. Processes accompanying economic restructuring such as the deindustrialisation of regions, the dislocation and relocation of rural populations, and the gentrification of inner-city communities are as much cultural as economic issues. "When forced displacement disrupts communities and breaks traditions," writes Lucy Lippard, "it is a violation of human rights, which include the right to cultural and religious autonomy" (1990, p. 117). This displacement and disjunction defines the ground of postmodernism: the erosion of communities as literal entities and of "home" as a durably fixed place has undermined and redefined what is meant by "roots" and therefore, how autonomy may be created and asserted. Conceptual processes of place creation - imaginative constructions of place, dwelling and memory - have been ways of responding to the challenge of placelessness and of a need for community in changing global economic and political conditions. Such imaginings of space have a political significance beyond their content as against modernist uniformity, territoriality is reinscribed upon a shifting ground mediating deterritorialisation and regionalism. As such an imagining the ecomuseum is part of a broader postmodern "struggle for place" (Ley 1989).

Signifying Boundaries of "Home Place"

> In the minds of most Canadian city dwellers, towns and villages are, at best, an anachronism and probably destined for demise. Not much thought has been given to the present situation of our small centers; even less to their future. Not much is known about our small communities, their conditions and trends, or their problems and aspirations.
>
> <div align="right">(Hodge and Quadeer 1983, p. 1)</div>

The construction of a meaningful, authentic image of "home place" is a central aim of much tourism practice. Producing literature, images, maps, and souvenir objects, tourism is a significant source of iconography and narratives, naturalising links between places and people, reinforcing a localising of identity and the construction of separate, distinct places. In Canada, a sense of rootedness in place and in a "landbase" dominates not only cultural-historical tourism practices but a range of cultural forms such as visual art, literature and film. Writing of Maritime literature, Gwendolyn Davies comments, "'place is a central image in any country's literature, and houses, buildings, villages dominate the imaginative landscape of much Canadian writing from Robertson Davies' Deptford and Margaret Laurence's Manawaka to Robert Kroetsch's 'home place' on the prairie farm of 'Seed Catalogue'" (1991, p. 193). Each of these imaginative evocations of place has its grounding in a particular socio-economic-political context. Similarly, the emergence of the image of "home place" in east-central Alberta in the form of the ecomuseum, it would seem, has its genesis in current social, economic, and cultural realities of the area.

Broader economic processes take on concrete form within limited contexts. As previously mentioned, the ecomuseum's imagining of place must be seen within the restructuring of the geography of capitalism which has had profound implications for sites within this spatial order. At the extremes, some places have experienced deindustrialisation to the point of being extinguished, while intense and rapid economic growth has been the experience of others (Cox and Mair 1988; Barnes and Hayter 1992). Sharon Zukin describes this dichotomy in terms of emerging landscapes of power:

> Place, moreover, is sharply divided between landscapes of consumption and devastation. Those places that remain part of a production economy, where men and women produce a physical product for a living, are losers.

To the extent they do survive in a service economy, they lack income and prestige, and owe their soul to bankers and politicians. By contrast, those places that thrive are connected to real estate development, financial exchanges, entertainment - the business of moving money and people - where consumer pleasures hide the reins of concentrated economic control. Some people identify these shifts as part of a process of decline and decentralization called deindustrialisation. Others accept them as evidence of a high-technology, postindustrial society. But neither of these terms captures the simultaneous advance and decline of economic forms, or the sense that as ground shifts under our feet, taller buildings continue to rise.

(Zukin 1991, p. 5)

Not surprisingly, these restructurings have been accompanied by a resurgence of local and regional economic planning as a means to assert control over space and assure survival and some future role for each locality (Cox and Mair 1988). In the process, regional entities have gained prominence over smaller socio-economic units.

As a rural region characterised by a single resource-based agricultural economy, this area of Alberta is implicated within this contemporary restructuring of the global space-economy, caught within a long and evolving decline (Palmer and Palmer 1982). The most constant feature of this context has been the post-World War II challenge to the primacy of farming within Alberta's provincial economy: "Alberta's twentieth-century experience has been characterized by rapid social, demographic and change. Within the scope of less than a century, it has undergone an accelerated transformation from a province in which most people led a pioneer rural existence to one in which the majority of people lead complex urban lives in rapidly growing cities" (Palmer and Palmer 1982, p. 20). Agriculture's share of the net value of production had fallen to less than one-third of its pre-war level by 1971 (Gibbens 1980). While Alberta saw prosperity in the 1970s and into the 1980s, this was largely due to the presence of oil and gas extraction and processing activities.

The result of these shifts has been the subordination of the rural Albertan population and places to the growing urban landscape centres around Edmonton and Calgary, socially, politically, economically and culturally. As Howard and Tamara Palmer have commented, "Alberta's steadily increasing urbanization is also shaping the lives of its residents into a pattern which is more like the pattern of life in metropolitan

centres across North America, and less like that of the small towns and cities which dominated Alberta in the past":

> Despite provincial government attempts at decentralization during the 1970s, fifty-six per cent of Albertans now reside in Edmonton and Calgary. While the astounding growth of these two cities over the past decade has brought many cultural advances - new art and drama centres, new theatre, musical, dance and artistic groups, new publishers and magazines, new professional sports teams - those developments have also contributed to the erosion of some of the factors which made Alberta distinctive in the past. Calgary's and Edmonton's cultural, social and economic links are increasingly with other major metropolitan centres in North America - Toronto, Ottawa, Denver, Houston, Dallas, New York - rather than with small-town Alberta. The sensitivity to rural Alberta, which is so apparent in the Calgary and Edmonton newspapers of the pre-World War II era, is now minimal.
>
> (Palmer and Palmer 1982, p. 25)

This diminishing of the profile of rural and small-town contexts in the mind set of contemporary urban societies has been paralleled in a scholarly neglect of rural life. The implicit assumption behind the virtual absence of attention to non-urban and rural contexts in academic spheres is that the rural and small town existence is largely an incongruity in the last decades of the twentieth century. "It is true that electricity and the automobile have virtually wiped out the boundary line between rural and urban communities, and the rural economy is intertwined with urban industry and commerce," writes Robert Swierenga, however "even at the present time, non metropolitan communities, which contain one-third of the total United States population and 90 percent of the land area, remain an important national force, politically and socially" (1981, p. 211). Similar patterns are apparent in Canada. Towns, villages, and small centres have consistently been an important part of the settlement fabric of Canada:

> Today, the cities and metropolises comprise two-thirds of our population; the towns and villages only one-fifth. The problems as well as the problems of cities attract and hold much of our attention, consume much of our resources, and generate the culture and ideas that promote Canada as an *urban* society.
> Yet, today, nearly five million Canadians live in small towns and villages across the length and breadth of the country, one million more than lived there only twenty years ago. Many small centres have lost commercial establishments; a mobile society passes them by for the lure

of the city's, or even just the larger town's, stores. Yet people continue to live in towns and villages, build their homes there, raise their children there, retire there, and seemingly, treasure the habitat of the small centre.

(Hodge and Quadeer 1983, p. 1)

Within this context - challenges to small-town and agricultural existence - the place-making entailed in the Kalyna Country ecomuseum is implicated as an effort to reconstitute and re-construct the role of an agricultural region, culturally as well as economically, framing the agrarian, rural sense of place in order to bring outside capital into the area. It is a coalition of communities involved in joint economic and cultural projects in an effort to ensure cultural and economic survival.

It is also part of the wider "heritage boom" in Alberta which developed as government cultural programming became interested in heritage resource developments:

> Economically, heritage resource developments became a major thrust of government cultural programming. Developed heritage resources not only possessed historical and cultural values, but they were something tangible, and capable of generating substantial economic returns across the province. The returns were not direct, but based on stimulating the regional economies involved, and for long term. As an investment, the province has expected regional economies normally to recapture, from increased tourist dollars, amounts equal to its expenditure on such developments normally within a three- to seven-year period.
>
> (Rasmussen 1990, p. 255)

Reflecting the growing role of regions in a global economy, this heritage boom was also characterised by a greater interest in "historic districts" and regional-based tourism. In 1990 the Department of Tourism in Alberta developed a Community and Regional Tourism Action Plan which emphasised the benefits of planning and acting on a regional basis. These proposed benefits included:

> - There are numerous economies of scale which can be achieved by working together on things such as: development of tourism facilities, delivery of training programs, and production of promotional materials.
> - Regional resources are more fully utilized by selecting sites and services which provide maximum benefits to users.
> -Greater results are achieved by identifying and developing regional themes which will attract more tourists and encourage them to stay longer and spend more money in the region.

- As the benefits of regional tourism activities become clear, more people within the region will get involved in tourism related activities as volunteers or in part-time and full-time tourism businesses.
- By developing and promoting a greater number and variety of attractions and businesses, a "critical mass" will be achieved which will increase the region's attractiveness as a tourist destination.
- As communities develop patterns of cooperation and coordination and see the positive results of such actions, they will be encouraged to address other concerns on a regional basis.

(Kalyna Country Regional Tourism Action Plan, draft 1993)

Although the ecomuseum began independently of this tourism action plan, it became involved in September 1992, through the same committee of community representatives previously established for the development of the ecomuseum.

The ecomuseum reflects a new direction on historic preservation which has seen parallel shifts in philosophy and practice to that of tourism. In the growing awareness of the loss of artifacts and sites, the concern with preservation has expanded from the preservation of individual buildings to entire areas and regions. Walter Jamieson has been involved in the defining of historic districts in Alberta:

... the adoption of a district approach was prompted by a growing recognition of the heritage value of the district as an historic resource itself. This view of preservation accepts that more modest buildings of architectural, historical and community significance are necessary to support our understanding of the past. Many buildings in western Canada are modest in their use of materials, do not represent an important architectural style, and form a historical perspective of minor significance. However, as an ensemble they represent an important part of a city or town's development. Moreover, a district approach allows the relationship between features and other environmental aspects to be maintained, since very often it is these features that distinguish an area. The task in area approaches is to capture the essence and flavour of the district rather than attempting to freeze the entire area.

(Jamieson 1990, p. 223)

Expressing a commonalty of experience and reinforcing a regional mind set, the ecomuseum illustrates such an emphasis on local consciousness and control. Practically, the board of directors is comprised of twelve people, representative of the entire area encompassed by the ecomuseum. There is an intent to make the region "cohere" by integrating and sharing resources through, for example, the organisation of all of the

community, private and government museums found within the area into a regional association, and through the coordination of support for local initiatives, such as restoration. Further, a central resource centre for the ecomuseum is to be established at the Two Hills museum, where local histories, newspapers and archival material will be deposited to create a central research facility for the region (Balan 1992).

These elements are not simply part of an economic "disembedding" effort; they represent the conscious localising of identity and action associated with the ecomuseum form. As place is not a geographic certainty or an absolute and "real," pre-existing site on a map, but is contingent, this tourism-based cultural form and landscape reflects a recording and inventing a "home place" - a symbol of cultural continuity and psychological identification in the face of social fragmentation, outmigration, and declining economy. Writing about the development of ecomuseum as a vehicle for community empowerment in the case of the Ak-Chin Indian Community Ecomuseum project in Arizona, Nancy Fuller notes that the framework is based on an acknowledgment of the interdependency of knowledge, culture, space and power (Fuller 1992). Community autonomy and identity are engaged through what Audre Lorde has called the "sharpening of self-definition" (Lorde 1990, p. 287); through the self-conscious attention to cultural and geographical location, and to the dynamics of power relations that are manifest in past and present objects, practices, landscapes and objectifications. There is a "doubleness" to its character as it serves not only as centre for tourism, but as cultural centre. Re-connecting knowledge with action, it "seeks to put in place those conditions that enable communities to learn about themselves and their needs, and to act upon that knowledge" (Fuller 1992):

> But more importantly, the residents of east central Alberta will play a major role in the preservation of their history and culture as well as showcasing their own way of life. As they will be most affected, the community will make a significant contribution in planning and in implementing the plans which are eventually chosen for the Ecomuseum.
> *(Alberta Past* 1991, p. 12)

This image of "home place" as the nurturer of local tradition as well as mediating force within the wider social context runs counter to critical charges by commentaries on

the "heritage industry" who emphasis such commercialised constructions of place as nostalgic idealisations of a pastoral golden age. Ian McKay, writing of the invention of Peggy's Cove as an icon of regional identity, has condemned such constructions as clinging to the memory of a golden age and indicative of the inability to face the future. In an absence of viable political and economic alternatives to outmigration and financial decline, a negative stereotype is transformed into a positive one: "Communities lacking modern amenities and precariously dependent upon natural resources" are consciously reinvented "as unspoiled hamlets, havens of authenticity in an artificial world" (McKay 1988, in Davies 1991, p. 195).

Such a perception offers an appealing way to conceptualise imaginings of "home place" in tourism forms, for to some extent they are nostalgic and pastoral in sentiment. But to essentialise and dismiss all such expressions as static romanticisations of the past would be a mistake. There is more to them than that. To reject them as spectacle is to overlook what they also indicate about marginalised cultures and places today and what they mean as interventions upon a shifting, constantly displacing ground. The essential issue of the ecomuseum is clear: how to establish the conditions for naming, speaking and representation and the relation of these to place, identity and autonomy. Power is located at a local level through community participation to enable self-consciousness and community empowerment. Cultural-historical tourism form becomes medium, and local autonomy is supported rather than overcome by distant ideas, cultural technologies and capital. This idea is no way naive or novel for the Canadian experience is filled with such examples of the use of communication technologies and media to enhance local knowledge, action and control, as in the case of the National Film Board's "Challenge for Change" efforts in the 1960s. *Fogo Island Process,* for example, was the product of the NFB's working with isolated Newfoundland outports threatened by displacement by the provincial government to facilitate joint social and economic action. Similarly and more recently, distance education networks incorporating broadcast, satellite telecommunications, fax, telephone and transportation technologies have been made to "fit" the local contexts of remote northern communities, allowing them to determine basic opportunities for themselves (Rowlandson 1992).

The ecomuseum is part of a broader extension and democratisation of museum practice arising in Europe in the post W.W.II period. It is a "musée ethnographique présentant une collectivitée humaine dans son contexte géographique, social et culturel" (*Le Petit Robert*) which has its roots in the Scandinavian and Western European open air museum of the 19th century, functioning "as a means of interpreting, preserving and revitalising large areas of historic interest" (*Alberta Past* 1991, p. 12).[24] The initial premise of this form of museum was quite radical; the interest in folk culture was a part of "a movement of revolt against the centre by the cultural periphery of Europe; part of a movement, among intellectuals, towards self-definition and liberation in regional and national terms" (Burke 1977, in Bennett 1988, p. 70). Community involvement is stressed, drawing individuals with their personal memories, private collections into contact and communication in order to create a local community awareness of an area's history, historic role and definition. This self-consciousness was perceived as the condition for resistance and revolt. The end of the 19th century saw the degeneration of the form as with growing industrialisation, mass production and growing domain of leisure activities, open air museums became forums for romanticism, focusing on waning rural and craft traditions and their transposition into American contexts (Bennett 1988, p. 71).

After W.W.II, these earlier open air museum efforts inspired French museologist G.H. Rivière, creator of Paris' Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions, to undertake a major study of rural architecture, out of which he began to shape the ecomuseum concept: "an ecomuseum," maintained Rivière, "is something conceived, built, and run by local authorities. It is a mirror used by the local population to reflect its own life. It is also a mirror held up to visitors to help them understand themselves better. It is a museum of human kind and nature" (in Tremaine 1991, p. 3). He created and defined the

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[24] The concept of ecomuseum is developed in other sources: René Rivard's *Opening Up the Museum* (Quebec City: n.p., 1984) and an issue of *Museum* 148 (1985). For an elaborated discussion of the development of an ecomuseum in particular area from inception, planning, training, development, results, see Nancy J. Fuller's "The Museum and Community Empowerment: the Ak-Chin Indian Community Ecomuseum Project" in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Cultures.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1992).

interdisciplinary museological approach emphasising the importance of place, developing a series of decentralised museums in historically and environmentally unique regions which were designed to preserve economic vitality and facilitate the recording of the areas' histories and community meetings and dialogue (Fuller 1992, pp. 328-329).

A new museum ethic emerged based on the integration of the museum with the society around it. Responding to the need for cultural relevancy these nontraditional museums challenged existing practices. Whereas the traditional museum is confined to a specific building, the ecomuseum is inseparable from the geographic area and the audience it serves. Collections are organised around the community's interrelationship with its culture and physical environment. In addition to object artifacts, collections consist of physical sites, practices, oral history, documentation:

> Ecomuseums are based on the belief that museums and communities should be related to the whole of life. They are concerned with integrating the family home with other aspects of the community, such as the natural environment, economics, and social relationships. Ecomuseums are community learning centers that link the past with the present as a strategy to deal with the future needs of that particular society. Their activities and collections reflect what is important to the community, not necessarily conforming to mainstream values and interpretations.
>
> (Fuller 1992, p. 328)

Its "poetic" difference from the traditional museum lies in its "mapping," its spatial organisation, which does not remove artifacts from their contexts, freezing them in time. The ecomuseum framework thus challenges the decontextualisation that is characteristic of the traditional museum and anthropological context:

> We decontextualize cultural practices that are embedded in a set of mutually constituting historically and geographically specific social relations, and mask our own position and agency in constructing these practices rather than others as significant. In the process we aestheticise certain cultural forms and practices, removing every trace of agency and co-eval presence from those we study... The anthropological canon of cultures deemed particularly noteworthy for their elaborate cultural practices or extreme alterity provide the high art for this museum. Other more mundane cultural forms are documented and catalogued, preserved and reified in a 'curiousity room' for 'the world' (completely 'unworlded',

without place or time) to witness for all time (again, a time completely outside of history).

<div align="right">(Katz 1992, p. 499)</div>

In contrast, the ecomuseum challenges the defusing and depoliticisation of contemporary expressions and practices which is characteristic of the imperialist museum context (McLoughlin 1991).

The ecomuseum's form is directly related to its fundamental role as mediator in the process of cultural transition. Based in emancipatory philosophy, its aim is to develop community and identity, bringing that identity to self-expression through self-knowledge of a community's history and its needs, and more importantly, to act upon that knowledge. Expression of place is meant to link past with the present as a strategy to meet present challenges and negotiate changing conditions. René Rivard, a proponent of the approach has stated that it is a process that "begins with what is known by the people - the collective memory - and sees what events and objects are linked to these ideas" (in Fuller 1992, p. 328). This self-conscious examination is a precondition for reconstitution of the role of place in the changing present.

The extent to which putting the structures in place will bring about the desired effects of social change is another issue. Some parallel endeavors have been shown to be effective, as in Fuller's subject - the Ak-Chin Indian Community Ecomuseum project - and other efforts to create "dialogic" museums. As in similar "community development" projects, a central issue revolves around the role of academics, government officials, and so on, in mediating change. As a resident of the Haute Beauce region of Quebec, another ecomuseum site, said, "An ecomuseum? I'd never heard the word before. We didn't know the know the word and we didn't know the people, either. They were from the city. University people" (in Quig 1987/1988, p. 27). Life (versus government documents) has show quite clearly that if something - regeneration, change - is going to occur, there is only one way it can: without outside intervention. Walter Benjamin perhaps said it best, "What emerges is this: events are alterable not at their climaxes, not by virtue and resolution, but only in their strictly habitual course, by reason and action" (Benjamin 1986, p. 236).

That aside, it is not the overt, articulated goal of the ecomuseum that is significant but the "by-product" states it engenders. In Bell Island, Haute Beauce, Chemainus and east-central Alberta, cultural-historical tourism practices have been shown to have an immeasurable influence for "pride of place". Where the value of such practices does lie then is in the delineation of boundaries, which becomes a way of making a place and its identity tangible and visible while allowing for a consciousness of the meaning of place and how it has come to be. Highlighted in the conscious invention of place is "the more general principle that a negotiated social and historical process lies behind the apparently neutral-looking taxonomic systems of census districts" (Anderson 1987, p. 594). In the ecomuseum there is an emphasis on attending to the process by which a place is made, the past negotiations of place identity, and layers of sedimented history. Jars Balan, coordinator of the ecomuseum writes:

> It is perhaps easiest to think of the proposed Ukrainian Settlement Block Ecomusee in archaeological terms, namely as consisting of various distinct historical layers... These might be summarized as being comprised of the following strata: 1)geological and glacial history, as expressed in modern topographical features; 2) the natural environment, past and present, as reflected in the fossil record and in the contemporary flora and fauna; 3) aboriginal history and culture, and modern native life; 4) the period of European exploration, and the fur trade economy; 5) early agricultural settlement, the pioneering experience; and 6) the evolution of the modern communities within the ecomuseum district, and the social, economic, and cultural life of today's residents. It is within these broad categories that a development strategy will need to be implemented in creating the proposed ecomuseum for the settlement block area.
>
> (Balan 1992, p. 5)

This "human siltation" - the layers of loss and retrieval in the evolution of place - are to be "recollected" and addressed through a series of maps depicting the toponymic history of the region:

> i) a map showing all of the Athapaskan and Cree names for places and geographical features of the ecomusee.
> ii) a map showing the trail route system throughout the ecomuseum, the routes taken by the first European explorers, and the location of forts and fur-trading posts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

iii) a map showing all of the earliest names given to the physical features of the ecomusee by the first surveyors, as well as the progress of their work over several decades.

iv) a map identifying former rural postal stations and schools

v) a map of no-longer extant hamlets and villages, including the dates of their existence

vi) a map depicting all of the places in Europe that inspired the names of settlements, schools, and postal stations in the ecomusee

vii) a religious map of the ecomusee, showing the oldest missions, churches and cemeteries

viii) a transportation map showing former riverboat routes, rail lines, the first roads, and ferry sites.

(Balan 1992, p. 19)

This attention to layers and patterns in the production of space foregrounds the reconstitution and reconstruction inherent within dwelling and place identity. The landscape of the Ukrainian bloc settlement evolved over time in an interaction with external forces. The introduction of the railway, for example, resulted in the relocation and extinguishing of communities (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5), paralleled by changing communication patterns, altering relationships among settled sites. Similarly, through this transformation, place names often changed, reflecting the play of forces at a particular moment. The "objective" facts of this archival and museological knowledge becomes linked to the lives, actions and practices of human beings, reinforcing the role of internal and external forces in defining memory and creating place:

> The Ukrainian pioneer was in a powerless position in Canadian society. He was manipulated; seldom did he manipulate. Even the place names in Ukrainian settlements were established by English-speaking administrators, surveyors, and railway builders. The immigrant's position is reflected in the paucity of Ukrainian toponyms in their area of settlement. They gave Ukrainian names to a few schools, some school districts, and some small settlements on the outer fringes of the ecumene. Most service centres were the products of the railway companies; it was only in later years that Ukrainians drifted off their homesteads into the towns and villages along the railway lines. For this reason, even in small urban centers in the heart of bloc settlements, such as Vegreville in the Alberta block... there is little evidence in the form of architecture or place names that the communities have long been predominantly Ukrainian.
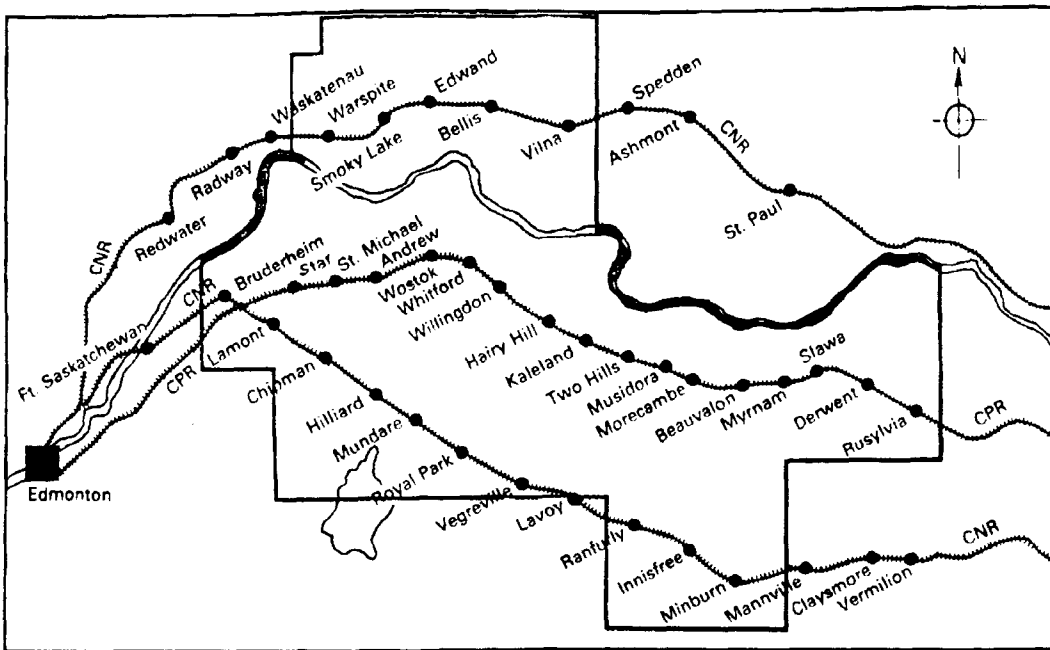>
> (Lehr 1982, p. 103)

Fig. 4 - Railroad towns of east central Alberta, 1931.

Boundaries of place etched within historical memory are made concrete. As Tony Wilden has maintained, "We cannot know who we are unless we know what our domestic and external relations actually were at different times in our history - the record of our social memory - and how these relations changed over time" (Wilden 1980, p. 2). The importance of these "imaginative geographies" cannot be underestimated for as is evident in this expression of place identity, the boundaries of a cultural space and the myths and narratives that reinforce and reproduce a unity of place within those boundaries, simultaneously organise social action, cultural expression and political practice: "For those who, with the inhabitants, are behind the curtains, landmarks are no longer geographic but biographic and personal" (Berger and Mohr 1967, in Cosgrove 1984, p. 271).

Defining "home place" then involves perceiving and grasping the interweaving of imagined space and real space; the ability to "*conceptualize, make* and *use* images of place," an ability that has been generally lost for "in our consumer society, mapping has become an activity primarily reserved for those in power, used to delineate 'property' of

Legend

[———————————————] miles

0   1   2   3   4   5

Schools

1 Boian   Church

2 Boian Mares   Cemetery

3 Shepenge   Farmyard

4 Hairy Hill   – – – Trail

5 Szypenitz   ——— Road

6 Two Hills   ←——→ Railway Line

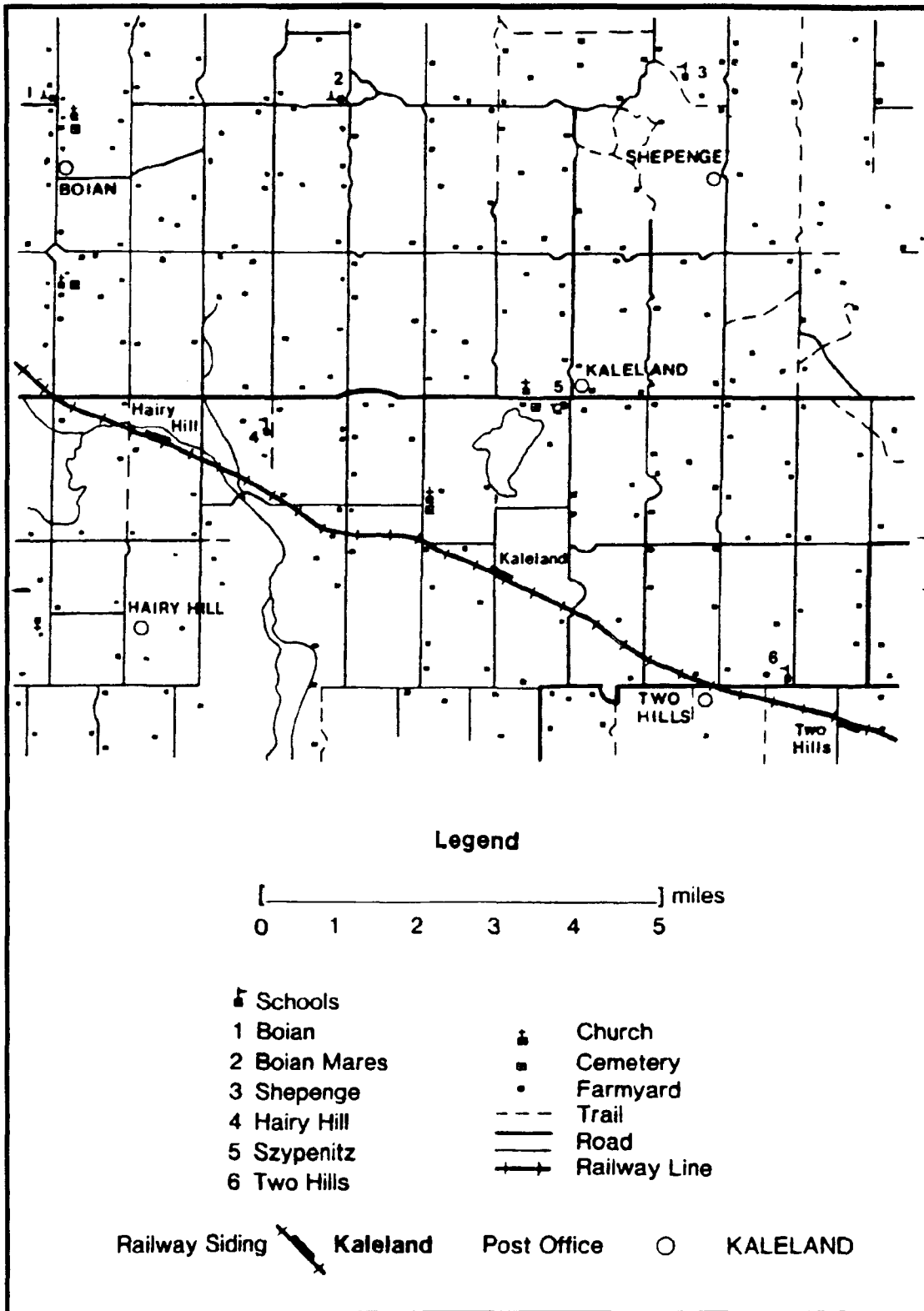Railway Siding   **Kaleland**   Post Office   O   KALELAND

Fig 5. - Displacement of Ukrainian rural communities.

The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway through east central Alberta in 1927 - 28 led to the displacement of existing communities along the railway line. Note the duplicate place-names at different locations.

Source: Manoly Lupul, ed. *Continuity and Change: The Cultural Life of Alberta's First Ukrainians*. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies and Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, 1988.

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nation states and multinational companies" (Aberly 1993, p. 1). The central effect of such recollective, "mapping" practice is that it enables a place or community to avoid "losing itself in the world"; to maintain self-definition. The potential for recollection to do this is exemplified not so much in the product as in the process, as Benjamin has noted:

> the true measure of life is remembrance. Retrospectively, it traverses life with the speed of lightning. As quickly as one turns back a few pages, it has gone back from the next village to the point where the rider decided to set off. He whose life has turned into writing, like old people's, likes to read this writing only backward. Only so does he meet himself, and only so - in flight from the present - can his life be understood.
>
> <div align="right">(Benjamin 1986, pp. 209-210)</div>

The reconstitution of tradition in the form of the ecomuseum involves a recording of past and present experience of place within wider social landscape of Alberta and the prairie provinces, reiterating presence and significance on the landscape in new form. Establishing symbolic boundaries, the ecomuseum provides a source of communal identity and marks a space of belonging. Rather than significant of an essence or reflective of a more basic reality, these boundaries give shape to the reality they implicate. As Jars Balan, coordinator of the project writes:

> However, the chief factor in the demarcation of boundaries was the need to provide a focal point and a distinctive identity for the ecomusee - something that could effectively unite a broad range of communities and histories in a viable organizational entity. For without a conceptual "frame" or cohesive glue, the Ukrainian Settlement Block Ecomuseum would simply be an administrative construct, rather than an expression of the region's unique historical legacy.
>
> <div align="right">(Balan 1992, p. 2)</div>

Form and content become inseparable. The ecomuseum is not only based in commodifiable image; it is laid over and emerges from a historically produced, transforming cultural region, and enables through this, an expression of the evolving, negotiated cultural experience and place identity. It makes tangible not only visible symbols of identity, but the construction of the place for that identity itself, from which it

emerges. The time-space coordinates of a community as well as the role and evolution of the relationship of parts to whole character of place are paramount:

> In this type of museum, absolutely everything in a given locality, the forests and fields, the churches, schools, farmyards and townsites are part of the exhibit. It is truly a living museum, and the area's population plays a vital role in the enterprise. By involving the citizens in its development and operation, the Ecomuseum serves to link the present with the past through the celebration of all cultural resources, including the people themselves.
>
> <div align="right">(Alberta Past 1991, p. 12)</div>

As such, it entails what John Warkentin has described as "the expression of people in an area, taking into account natural conditions, the spatial ordering of towns and communications as they developed over time, economic activities, social life, and values of people... .the synthesis of natural conditions, cultural traditions, patters of making a living, geographical momentum, landscape, bonds of community, and long-established values" (1990, p. 5).

The ecomuseum at once draws upon and rearticulates the meaning given to this particular space. Sense of place emerges dialectically with the delineation of symbolic boundaries which mark "belonging" - "how people experience and express their sense of difference from others, and how their sense of difference becomes incorporated into and informs the nature of their social organisation and process" (Cohen 1982, p. 2). Collective cultural representations reaffirm the symbolic, imagined status of place and region, the dimension of place that is put in service and reinforced by cultural-historical tourism. The resulting symbolic spaces are not illusions or indicative of false consciousness, but serve as significant constituents of human action, and are formed, reproduced and institutionalised in everyday practice through the shared experiences and memories of human subjects. "During its institutionalisation," writes Paasi, "a region achieves a specific *identity*, which cannot be reduced, as humanistic geographers tend to do, to the regional consciousness (regional identity) of the people living there":

> Instead, it is more useful to link it to the institutionalisation process, which includes the production and reproduction of regional consciousness in the inhabitants (and people outside the region) and material and symbolic features of the region as parts of the ongoing process of social

reproduction. The formation of social identity and process of social reproduction are... 'one and the same'

(Paasi 1991, p. 244)

Collective representations play a key role in the production and reproduction of space, creating a material and mental spatial fix which is part of mapping a people and a culture onto a space. These representations may take a range of forms. Paasi proposes a continuum in meshing of symbolic shape to the territorial shape of region. While a region may be "highly symbolised" as in ideal or "represented" communities, they are nonetheless real with real effects for "culture is action" (1991, p. 244).

The ecomuseum, as a symbolic expression, then does not simply "iterate" a past place, but is part of the making of place. That regions and communities have an imagined dimension in interaction with a material dimension means that they are fluid and constantly in transformation. Conscious localising and construction of identity of place acts in concrete ways to define or redefine this territorial/symbolic shape and the collective identity of a territorial unit, which may not conform to existing spatial organisations and is always altering:

> The boundaries of the proposed ecomuseum embrace the counties of Smoky Lake, Thorhild, Two Hills and Lamont in their entirety; Minburn, Beaver, and St. Paul counties in part; and small tracts within the county of Strathcona and the municiple districts of Sturgeon and Westlock. Two Indian reserves are also incorporated in the ecomuseum as presently define: Saddle Lake Reserve No. 125, and Whitefish Lake Reserve No. 128. On the basis of the latest available census figures, it is estimated that the population of the above region is approximately 42, 500... .
> Of course, adjustments have also had to be made to take into account former and current patterns of communication, and thus the essentially historical border has on occasion been modified for practical reasons to follow county lines and roadways. Ultimately, membership in the ecomuseum will be determined by the level of commitment shown by the affected communities themselves, and consequently it may be necessary to refine the boundaries as the proposed ecomusee evolves over time.
>
> (Balan 1992, p. 2-3)

The dynamism of symbolic boundaries of a territorial shape brings to the fore the centrality of imagination in the boundedness of place, history and identity. As Paasi notes, the formation of the symbolic shape establishes specific structures of the territorial symbols for a region, which are often abstract expressions of collective solidarity

embodying the actions of political, economic, and cultural institutions in the continual reproduction and legitimation of the system of practices that characterise the territorial space:

> Symbolic orderings of space and time provide a framework for experience through which we learn who or what we are in society... The increasing number and use of territorial symbols is crucial for creating the symbolic significance of a region. One essential symbol is the name of the region, which connects its image with the regional consciousness. The production and reproduction of the symbolic significance of regions depends crucially on the communication-based involvement of individuals in various practices. Part of the symbolic shape, however, may manifest itself in static articulations of space - through physical signs usually expressing 'arrested' historical practices. Thus the symbolic sphere carries with it a history and traditions and promotes the reproduction of social consciousness. The formation of the symbolic shape of a specific region also canonises an apparatus for distinguishing it from all others.
>
> (Paasi 1991, p. 245)

Reflecting the idea of place as a socially produced centre for collective consciousness, identity and memory, the ecomuseum brings to expression and recreates the symbolic significance of this location. In this way then, the "pride of place" that is associated with such expressions of "home place," buried past and memory is not false or simulated but instead conveys an "intensified realization of *self*" (Davies 1991, p. 199).

Between Deterritorialisation and Regionalism: A Politics of Space

> Recuperation of the past is not merely nostalgic, not merely a surrender to 'anther's' view of 'us.' It is a filling-in of the parts... Wholeness need not be intrinsically static or dangerously generalizing, for all its distortions from New Age to fascism. The dialectic between place and change is the creative crossroads. Even when nationalism dissolves, place persists, in the back of the mind, in the weight of the footstep.
>
> (Lippard 1990, pp. 147-148)

The expression of "home place" in the Kalyna Country Ecomuseum frames elements in the "becoming of place" in the Canadian prairie region and province of Alberta under historically specific circumstances and in tension between dominating forces and local expressive practices. These spatial politics have been explained through a number of conceptions of regional imbalance, including metropolitan-hinterland

disparities, dependency theory and capitalist accumulation approaches (Brodie 1990, p. 61). As is evident in the ecomuseum, what such approaches fail miserably at grasping is the necessarily interactive cultural field through which these economic processes are mediated and the complex geography of power in which places and their identities are invented and installed. The countervailing factors in this invention - factors of human practice and of the local "customisation" of processes and practices - undermine proposals of any simple domination-dependency model. Rather than a static primordial or residual identity, what is expressed in the ecomuseum is the fluid, constantly re-worked culture and memory of a particular place.

This region of east central Alberta is a particular cultural production - a material landscape in which can be read layers of power relations, from a bloc settlement put in place through the interplay of government management efforts and Ukrainian interaction with this control to create conditions more amenable to their interests and values, to a contemporary rural area mediating and dealing with pressures of a global economy. This same negotiation is apparent in its current incarnation as a landscape of consumption, as the conventional opposition of "powerful forces" and "powerless people" generally associated with consumerism and tourism is confounded by adding a competing dimension of popular, local cultural expression and construction (Ley and Mills 1992, Laba 1988). The potential for such expression "serves as a crucial mitigating factor in the control of those interests of dominance. 'Resistance' through the symbolic nature of popular expression constitutes a fundamental principle of popular culture" (Laba 1988, p. 83). Retrieving a past and signifying and symbolising the boundaries of a "home place," the ecomuseum represents a cultural (re)production in that it reproduces the meaning of belonging to a community in this particular geographic site. Evident in this expression is a contemporary "struggle for place" - a localised power to make place of space. For place, like culture and local identity, is never simply possessed or a natural given, but contested, lost and retrieved.

This contemporary place-making occurs as the very idea of a distinct place is called into question. The deterritorialisation that characterises the current spatiality of capitalism is so pervasive that questions of the saliency of place - its presence and its

absence - mark a central polarity within postmodern geographies. Each perspective relies upon a specific interpretation of the relationship of globalisation and homogenisation. The globalisation of culture is not the same as its homogenisation, but globalisation involves "the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization (armaments, advertising techniques, language hegemonies, clothing styles and the like" (Appadurai 1990, p. 307). On the one hand, the decentering associated with the constant motion of populations, products and images has been envisioned as a general state of sameness and placelessness; on the other, it is seen to provoke an increase in "the individual subject's need to create new forms of attachment, as a means for gaining at least a 'borrowed' sense of centeredness" (Entrikin 1991, p. 63) so that "global decentralisation is tantamount to a cultural renaissance" (Friedman 1990, p. 312). These two points are held in tension. As Arjun Appadurai writes, "Thus the central feature of global culture today is the politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another and thus to proclaim their succesful [sic] hijacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of the triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular" (1990, p. 308).

The ecomuseum does not in any way resolve this tension. Etched instead on its surface is the uncertain landscape that characterises contemporary expressions of place - the precipitate of these co-existing globalising processes of a world market and localising identity practices. Gupta and Ferguson have advised that when people and cultures are no longer conceived as automatically and naturally anchored in space we "need to pay particular attention to the way spaces and places are made, imagined, contested, and enforced" (1992, p. 18). On a deterritorialised ground, the ecomuseum marks one point in an historical process of such construction of difference. It is not imposed upon a "naturally existing", distinct regional entity, but is an effort at reterritorialising, redifferentiating a space, re-creating a region and place in a different way; one that challenges the contemporary rhetoric describing contemporary experience that poses mobility and detachment in opposition to dwelling (G. Pratt 1992, p. 241).

Deterritorialisation is the term originally used by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to describe a complexity of contemporary experience expressed in literature which "travels, moves between centres and margins" (1986, p. 17). The term has also

been used to "stress difference and oscillation of margin and centre in the construction of personal and political identities" (Kaplan 1987, p. 189 in Lippard 1990, p. 124). The resulting politics of community, identity and difference have been conceived most often in terms of interstitiality and hybridity, generally focusing on lives lived in motion: that of refugees, migrants, displaced and stateless people, for these are perhaps the first to live out these realities (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 9). The construction demanded on this unstable ground, however, applies not only to those voluntarily or involuntarily uprooted and decentred whether by exile, travel, political or economic upheaval. It has altered the existence of contemporary identities that were relatively fixed in place, as well. Economic and political shifts globally and domestically mean that most places exist and lives are lived in a constant dynamic of limited stasis and displacement. As a result, the spatialisation of what was "inside" and "outside," "present" and "absent" is constantly undermined.

This does not mean, however, that "home" and place are obsolesced:

> ... the decentering process that has provided a *modus vivendi* for much progressive theory in the last decade is an important antidote to the exaggerated centrality and power of urban art hubs with all their ethnocentric trappings. But taken to the extreme, it excludes entirely the need for community, for the centred world on which mythologies have been based for eons.
>
> (Lippard 1990, p. 148)

John Agnew has maintained, "*all* people live in cultural worlds that are made and remade through their everyday activities... and cultural words are grounded geographically in the experience of place. Culture, therefore, is *inherently* geographical, defined in places and through local identity" (1992, p. 69). Expressions of regionalism and localism - practices arising from and rooted in place - in this context are not a turning back to pre-given pure, essential regional identity. It is precisely *out of* the experience of a decentering that these identities are created anew. Groundedness in place and history become more important as both terms become a matter of creation, invention, and reconstruction. But place and locality are simply contingent expressions of ongoing cultural construction. The Conscious localising of identity creates sites from which "individuals, communities, religions, even nations, narrate themselves into existence" (Kroetsch 1989, p. 179).

Furthermore, articulating location becomes a matter of mediating these tensions between autonomy and integration, past and present, local and global, inside and outside, stasis and motion.

The "intensified realisation of self", self-consciousness and "pride of place" that seem to go with this construction reflect the positive self-identity that is the product of the assertion of independent traditions. Autonomy and independent tradition themselves, however, are refigured in this context. Authenticity and tradition are not left at the margins to disappear with the inevitable, destructive fall into the world. Defined not simply in terms of opposition but with its own traditions and values, localised cultural difference is a matter of invention. This identity does not emerge from the absolute separation of spaces, cultures and people, but is constructed out of interconnected space. Pure spaces are scarce these days (if they ever existed); "perhaps now," writes Russell Ferguson, "it is only the impure which might claim any kind of authenticity" (1990, p. 12). For bell hooks, the context of postmodernism thus requires finding "ways to construct self and identity that are oppositional and liberatory" with the result that "postmodern culture with its decentered subject can be the space where ties are severed or it can provide the occasion for new and varied forms of bonding" (hooks 1990, p. 29, 31).

Nowhere is this dynamic more evident than in cultural-historical tourism practices such as the ecomuseum which in constructing bounded spaces indicate at once local autonomy and an engagement with broader forces of the fluid global economy. A conception of the construction of place provides another way of looking at the exchange between localised expression and commercial forces beyond exploitation and the inevitable colonisation of the marginal by dominant discourse of culture. As Lucy Lippard notes at the beginning of this section, expressions of the past of place are not necessarily nostalgic and static, nor evidence of false consciousness. In such practices what is engaged are not essential identities, but the conscious localising and "filling in" of identity with tradition sedimented within collective memory and experience. Cultural space is foregrounded as an interactive social construct:

> The space in which cultures 'grow' need not be remote, bounded, and self-contained in order to achieve some quality of 'authenticity'... . Culture from this perspective is constructed through connection and interaction along many geographical axes and scales. Its construction mediates the deterministic features of tradition - what is 'given' - with the necessities and possibilities of contemporary structures of political economy.
> (Oakes 1993, p. 48).

Providing narratives and images which are the socially created elements of the spatial, these practices involve what Bishop has called historicising: "a form of image work... a way of imagistic spatialising" (1992, p. 17). There is never one essential, stable reality to a place or a history. It is rather more like, as Graham Swift says in *Waterland*, a constant narrative retrieval; a human siltation. Or as Wolf maintains:

> Once we locate the reality of society in historically changing, imperfectly bounded, multiple and branching social alignments... the concept of a fixed, unitary and bounded culture must give way to a sense of the fluidity and permeability of cultural sets. In the rough-and-tumble of social interaction, groups are known to exploit the ambiguities of inherited forms, to impart new evaluations or valences to them, to borrow forms more expressive of their interests, or to create wholly new forms to answer changed circumstances. Furthermore, if we think of such interaction not [only] as causative in its own terms but as responsive to larger economic and political forces, the explanation of cultural forms must take account of the larger context, that wider field of force.
> (Wolf 1982, p. 387 cited in Gregory 1989, p. 89)

Such is the consistency of contemporary struggles for place. Self-conscious attempts to create attachment to local, place-based communities are political - part of the "recovery of the vernacular and attention to issues of place and identity" associated with the contestation of modernist impersonal, functionalist and oppressive space (Ley and Mills 1992, p. 265). Opposition focused around the nexus of place, conserving a space and creating a popular consciousness of place and its history, does not present a face of passivity. Rather, in the foregrounding of local context and culture is a contestation over the meaning of place and struggle to maintain lived, "cherished places" that is also visible in neighbourhood protest, social movements, conservation and heritage preservation efforts (Ley and Olds 1988, p. 195). Place-based struggle involves engaging with and within the symbolic and therefore provides an opportunity to nurture alternative realities,

reviving and engaging local histories, as well as the expression and reinforcement of cultural distinctiveness.

In the Kalyna Country ecomuseum, the museum form mediates this struggle for place and indicates that at issue is a question of definition and therefore, power. Local engagement with meaning construction functions as an attempt to create place representation from "within" rather than from "without" and is therefore aligned with attempts to overcome and replace colonial experience with something self-defined. In general, public discourse such as the museum "is not simply an exchange of knowledge, but a recognition, a legitimation of objects and cultures... " (McLoughlin 1991, p. 7). The ecomuseum in its expression of localised identity and history re-centres a history that has been situated outside the wider Canadian collective memory. In the mainstream museum setting, the contemporary complexities of rural as well as Ukrainian-Canadian experience remain distanced as a-historical "Others", if present at all:

> What is emphasised in this construction of distance is the space not between the centre (so often impossible to identify and locate and so often impossible to penetrate) and a population with its own history, but the space between ourselves and 'not us'. This barrier, erected between exhibited and exhibitor, defines cultural boundaries and determines who exists within and who 'without'.
>
> (McLoughlin 1991, p. 9)

Through the ecomuseum, an element of self-representation is possible. Control over boundaries within which the received object and recovered history is situated guarantees an amount of control over the message that is disseminated, allowing the representation of another social subject.

Within the ecomuseum is tangible the contemporary efforts of a cultural community to negotiate and maintain a geographic presence in tension between localism and deterritorialisation. It emphasises the symbolic significance of a region, simultaneously reconstituting that region. Presenting a population with its own "visible" history, it simultaneously recognises and elevates that history. The history and place that is articulated, however, is not pure and essential or situated as a stable hinterland to an equally stable centre. Local identity, local culture do not simply exist, but are actively and consciously localised and retrieved within new contexts. Expressed instead is a

situatedness and a location which refers not only to a politics of identity but to a politics of position: "The possibility of transformation is immanent to ... situated knowledge. At this juncture we must recognize that in the fact of diverse and articulated structures of dominance, exploitation, and oppression there are multiple and connected positionings from which to confront and potentially transform these structures" (Katz 1992, p. 505).

The word that perhaps describes the sense of place and of identity expressed through this medium is not as straightforward as "margin," rather, it is "border". "Border" is a geographical term that crops up ever more frequently in cultural commentary to describe a particular cultural location: one of continuity, contact, and transformation. Whereas the conventional museum tends to maintain distances in space and time between cultural traditions, presenting marginal cultures as essential, fixed in the past and having no points of contact or common history or future with dominant traditions, the space marked by the Kalyna Country ecomuseum is fundamentally one of contact, integration and change. There is no attempt to portray a pure agrarian or ethnic essence. The Ukrainian experience within this space is one of rupture and resettlement associated with a diasporic history. Similarly, the area's rural character emerged out of contact between old world and new world, influenced over the century by numerous modernising, urbanising and assimilating forces. Further, within the traditional museum context, agrarian tradition is generally positioned as one early step within the "progress" of Western cultures, an anomaly in the present. Similarly "the Ukrainians" are fixed in time along with other immigrant cultures at the moment of arrival in the New World, now vanished, or lumped together within a static image of multiculturalism. The denial of co-evalness - of co-existence in time - with the dominant culture is a tactic in the deployment of power indicating the denial of shared space.

In its emphasis on the contemporary existence of the region, in the ecomuseum what is Ukrainian, non-Ukrainian and rural Canadian become virtually indistinguishable and are all pushed into the modern present. The result is the articulation of the experience of contemporary rurality, reflecting the pressures and conditions of contemporary small settlements:

It may be pointed out that equally important are our findings as to what contemporary towns and villages are not. They are not folk communities or tribal settlements unspoiled by industrialism, where simplicity, solidarity and love of nature reign. They are milltowns, minetowns, and railtowns, and often single-industry communities. They are also frontier settlements, farm-service centers, retirement and resort villages, and ex-urban bedroom communities. Though peripheral to the loci of power, they are economically and culturally integrated into national and regional systems... a territorial community cannot help being drawn into the economic and cultural mainstream. The distinctive way of life bred in relatively isolated villages of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries have not survived in full force in modern times. Contemporary villages and towns are microcosms of modern Canada...

(Hodge and Quadeer 1983, p.220)

The ecomuseum also must be seen in terms of the relationship of contemporary Ukrainian Canadians to culture and to place. With the recent achievement of an independent Ukraine, the imagined, distant homeland that has centred identities and practices for those of Ukrainian background, in often ambiguous ways, is is now accessible - the gap between the Ukrainian experience in Canada and that in Ukraine made more visible. Intensified is the already existing questioning of what it means to be Ukrainian Canadian today and a sense of the extent to which ethnicity is constructed and contingent. The questioning is made explicit by Myrna Kostash in *All of Baba's Children* who asks "How, then, is the 'Ukrainian fact' to be discerned in the likes of us?":

For many of us, our Ukrainian-Canadian origins do describe our personality and lifestyle, however sentimentally or abstractly, and condition for us the nature of our family ties, some of our social activities, where some of our money is spent, and our reactions to the symbols of our ethnicity - an anthem, a prairie church, a flag. Like it or not, there does seem to be still an emotional significance in our continued attachment to the ethnic group.

Less abstractly, in these times of multiculturalism, it occurs to us that there is also political significance in the attachment: the ethnic group is now an interest group, a 'lobby' as it were for those who cannot press their demands fully through class or regional or sex groupings. Ethnic consciousness is one of the ways in which we may understand our status, our legacy of wealth or poverty, our material and psychological security vis a vis other ethnic groups as well as the dominant group, our 'place.'

(Kostash 1992, pp. 418, 421-422)

The narrated presence emerging from this place therefore articulates a culture and a community defined by transformation that is familiar both to the Ukrainian and rural dimensions of place; an identity evolved in both domestic and external relations, through contact and connections, exemplifying both continuity and change. The imagined community that emerges is not one that is characterised by "sameness" or one "quantified" and defined by loss, but one which accepts identity and difference as inevitably invented, complicated and rebuilt from what is at hand. The absence of essence and seeming "confused" identities is the condition of contemporary imagined communities:

> The imperatives of adopting to dominant cultures while not being allowed full entry into them leads to complex and creative cultural negotiations that foreground marginal and alienated states of consciousness. Unable to experience either simple assimilation or complete separation from dominant groups, ethnic cultures accustom themselves to a bifocality reflective of both the ways that they view themselves and the ways that they are viewed by others. In a world that constantly undermines the importance and influence of traditions, ethnic cultures remain tied to their pasts in order to explain and arbitrate the problems of the present.
>
> (Lipsitz 1990, p. 135)

Sense of place, then, as it comes to expression in the contemporary cultural forms, as reflected in the ecomuseum, has been "made" through cultural relations and points of contact between distant and local, and is therefore "messy" as in the case of all diasporic identities:

> The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through, not despite, difference, by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference.
>
> (Hall 1990, cited in McLoughlin 1991)

Authenticity in this case lies not in a fossilized purity; instead authenticity of place and place identity consists not only of the artifact itself, but also of its meaning to the variety of people to whom it has come to have significance, as well as the added meanings that

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have come about as a result of its varied representations (Jonaitis and Inglis 1992, p. 206).

So what does it mean to put a place into the social landscape in this way - messy with all its wrappings, its "aura" resulting from the layers of involvement of people past and present in creating place? One thing it does not mean is the transformation of oppressive power structures. The "struggle for place" does not imply a mythologising romanticism about re-empowering the "natives". Localised cultural expression, even combined with economic development as in the ecomuseum, cannot result in true equality, no matter how vocal, successful and well-intentioned. Larger social change involving the complete redesigning of an un-egalitarian social landscape and production of space would be necessary. Until then, however, there are still marginalised communities - rural, native, inner city, transient - inhabiting towns, cities, fields and borders - engaged in activities and strategies to retrieve and assert identities within existing unequal relationships between regions, cultures and economies.

What the ecomuseum does suggest is the possibility for a recentring of place within this landscape. Within the space bounded by the ecomuseum lie small prairie towns with dusty buildings with boarded up windows, several grain elevators, a mall or two, a shiny Massey Ferguson dealership sporadically interrupting the landscape. Laid over this is a "story-map," a narrative thread intertwining rural and ethnic traditions, making visible, tangible and present a place produced through the activities, practices and memories of human beings. Confronting invisibility and stereotyped characterisations (a particular kind of visibility), "an alternative geography begins to emerge from the margins which challenges the self-definition of 'centres'... " (Shields 1991, p. 278). Historicity is engaged, unifying a past, present and future imagined community and place.

Also indicated is the potential for unexpected cultural forms such as cultural-historical tourism to facilitate a localised control over political economic interaction and its role in creating and reinforcing a space for identity. This blending of tradition and consumer culture is not "nostalgic," "inauthentic" or "manufactured tradition" but an expression of an ongoing negotiation within the diversity, ambiguity and complexity of

modern cultural identities that occurs within an engagement with broader forces of political economy. Highlighted is that the forms which may play a role in cultural survival strategies need not be those generally considered "alternative" and autonomous of commercial forces. Where the emancipatory potential of contemporary cultural forms lies is not so much with the medium itself as the way it is practiced; how it is engaged within a lived social situation. The negotiation and the holding in balance of various elements - Ukrainian and rural experiences, deterritorialisation and regionalism, tradition and contemporary project - inevitably results in the synthesis of something new and particular. In this way, the construction of place parallels the creation of ethnic identities as Fischer describes it:

> What is discovered and reinvented in the new works about ethnicity is, perhaps, increasingly something new: to be Chinese-American is not the same thing as being as being Chinese in America. In this sense there is no role model for becoming Chinese American. *It is a matter of finding a voice or a style that does not violate one's several components of identity.* In part, such a process of assuming an ethnic identity is a insistence on a pluralist, multidimensional, or multifaceted concept of self: one can be many things, and this personal sense can be a crucible for a wider ethos of pluralism.
>
> (Fischer 1986, p. 196; italics added)

It is in this point of re-creation that it is clear what is at stake in such contemporary imaginings of place. Expressed is a cultural form that includes a cultural politics of historic local memory and contemporary community struggle against decline, scarcity and cultural invisibility. The "anguish of invisibility" and its political, cultural and economic implications is all too familiar to minority ethnic communities and non-urban settlements around the globe: "everywhere, cultural domination by metropolitan elites eviscerates and obliterates traditional cultures rooted in... shared experience" (Lipsitz 1990, p. 133). Against the perceived uniformity and plasticity associated with such metropolitan dominance, cultural-historical tourism in the form of the Kalyna Country ecomuseum is engaged in the re-invention of place and tradition to maintain a specificity of place identity - an identity that has as many components as the ways of life of the current residents.

In so doing, the ecomuseum reflects the insight associated with post-colonialism that autonomy today means to recognise an endless series of interpenetrations while at the same time resisting dissolution into the dominant culture. To create a local identity is to do so not only in reaction to the deterritorialised landscape but to record and re-invent a presence on that landscape through shared experience and memory. For even as the ground destabilises undermining the fixity of place, the people living "ordinary life on a clearly defined spot of real earth" (Bentley 1941, p. 45 in Keith 1988) are not released, floating, into the atmosphere. "The locations that people choose to congregate their homes and shops and institutions are remarkably persistent," write Hodge and Quadeer, "Economic functions and social roles may change for a place... but once established a human settlement has an identity that is seldom ever lost" (1983, p. 3). Imagined places are persistent places.

Expressing place identity in contemporary cultural forms is a means to lay claim to that place. As a cultural construction engaging the integrative nature of commodity production that is at the same time part of an ongoing reconstitution and reassertion of place identity, the ecomuseum represents one way by which distinctive cultural spaces may potentially be retrieved, re-built and maintained. Such construction cannot be extracted from the contemporary social setting. Over the last century and particularly the last several decades, there have been continuing challenges to the pre-eminence of the agrarian tradition as well as to the viability of ethnic cultural identities within Alberta, as worldwide. In an article addressing contemporary non-urban experiences, John Everitt and Kenneth Bessant write:

> These towns and villages have been 'the mainstay of the prairie farm society' for most of their existence... but many of these 'central places' are currently experiencing serious difficulties. For instance, 40-50 per cent of the incorporated settlements in each of the Prairies Provinces are currently declining in numbers... This largely reflects a decrease in rural population in general, and farm population in particular, and although population decline does not necessarily lead to an economic decline... in this instance it does appear to be one facet of the major transformation that is occurring due to the new economics of agriculture in this region. One often overlooked consequence of this transformation is that the rural areas are becoming less 'sustainable', their present quality of life (social as well as

economic) is diminishing, and the potential lifestyle for future generations is being threatened.

(Everitt and Bessant 1992, p. 66)

The dynamic that is inherent in these pressures is double-edged: "failure to assimilate into dominant cultures can bring exclusion from vital economic and political resources, but successful assimilation can annihilate prized traditions and customs essential to individual and collective identity" (Lipsitz 1990, p. 134). Drawing upon cultural-historical tourism, the ecomuseum represents a way of explaining origins, imagining a unity of community, inscribing a past and a present identity in shifting ground. The object is not nostalgia, but cultural survival. The inhabitants of this area are laying a claim to their place in the province, in the prairie west, in the country - within broader spatialisations and a variety of contending forces - demanding recognition of the continuing importance of both rural and ethnic dimensions of place identity and trying to shore up their declining communities. In an age of mass culture, "just-in-time-production" and an emphasis on the immediate, emphasising continuity is quite a sane strategy.

As is evident in this cultural intersection with the political economy of tourism, the struggle for place does not necessarily set itself in opposition to broader structures of control, but engages those structures and makes them meaningful while building a stage for local identity and action (Oakes 1993). Because sense of place and community identity are socially produced and reconstituted, they may be refigured. The production of difference by discourses of power does not preclude the building of a symbolic unity and community around this difference. As Robert Wallace has noted, "Marginality can be viewed not only as an attitude, but as a historical condition constructed by the dominant culture and upheld by those who fail to question and resist its efficacy. Ironically, once this understanding is achieved, marginality can cease to be regarded as liability and be reconstituted as a value - can be 'reformed' as a strength that can prefigure historical change" (1990, p 30).

If this local and particular instance of the Kalyna Country ecomuseum is any indication, there is little reason to assume that meaningful localised communities, "cherished places," and the struggles for such communities and places will cease to exist.

The decentred, deterritorialised contemporary world is not the end of authentic and significant attachments to place in itself. Instead, what seems to be happening is an ongoing process whereby place identities are redefined, reinvented and *made* meaningful as linkages between local and wider worlds are realigned and reshaped. In the expression of these identities is evident a conscious cultural and spatial politics engaging memory to build place.

Conclusion

A Postmodernism of Resistance?

> No time, no power ever can dissolve
> Created form that living will evolve
>
> Goethe

"Part of our process of endarkenment," writes William Irwin Thompson, "is to pose problems that are projections of an inappropriate geometry" (1989, p. xviii). In other words, one has to ask another question. In this paper I have tried to do just that. Recent discussions of place and localised community identity have overwhelmingly envisioned either their decline in the face of the onrush of a globalised, mass mediated world and its postindustrial landscapes or their perpetuation as inauthentic spectacle and a clinging to a false and illusory safe refuge. What is at stake in postmodernism shows nowhere more clearly than here, in the polarisation of attitudes towards "significant place" - its presence or its absence (Lippard 1990, p. 105). Evident is postmodernism's central tension: the simultaneous possibility for the deepening of cultural politics and for its neutralisation.

The "geometry" that requires development, as I hope to have shown, holds in tension movement and dwelling, noting the motion *in* dwelling: the forging, the creating, the making, the naming. Place does not exist in a pure state. Rather it is a social construct, constantly reconstituted and reasserted through the practices, words and images of individuals. Within the shifting forces that characterise the contemporary cultural environment, any stasis is limited. The expression of place identity then is a matter of reterritorialising; of recording and inventing, fixing and establishing presence each moment, for the next. Graham Swift's metaphor of "simultaneous accretion and erosion" is apt:

> But you do not reclaim a land overnight. You do not reclaim a land
> without ceaseless effort and vigilance... they are never reclaimed, only
> being reclaimed.
>
> (Swift 1983, p. 10)

This work has been a preliminary examination of these issues. Addressing an expression of place identity in the form of cultural-historical tourism, it is clear that current ways of thinking about place and consumption-oriented practices which simply emphasise the nostalgia and the commodification associated with spectacle are lacking. The increased salience of forms of leisure consumption is, however, an undeniably pervasive contemporary phenomenon. Tourism has been linked to the homogenising of the world. The harnessing of place identity to tourism expressions may result in a designed strategic space for the display of commodities and for the organisation of consumption around "myths of elsewhere". These expressions can therefore be seen, like the mall or the theme park, as equally part of the consciousness industry.

There is also room here, however, for such expressions to play a significant cultural and social role within imagined communities, inscribing a sense of place and reconstructing a social space. Focusing primarily on the primacy of the image and its consumption, obscured in a postmodernism of nostalgia is any sense of the role these expressions might play within broader spatial politics. But theory follows practice, and so it is perhaps inevitable then that in a society dominated by a consumer culture and consumer activities, the spaces of consumption also predominate in theory. As Jody Berland has noted with respect to cultural studies in general, "the topography of consumption is increasingly identified as (and thus expanded to stand in for) the map of the social" (Berland 1992, p. 42). This map of the social, however, is also one of cultural practice and spatial practice entailed in cultural forms (Ley and Mills 1992). Contemporary forms of expression also require attention in terms of how they are put into play within broader geographies of power. It is in such expressive practices that a glimmer of opposition and resistance is discernible.

Andreas Huyssen writes, "No matter how troubling it may be, the landscape of the postmodern surrounds us. It simultaneously delimits and opens our horizons. It's our problem and our hope" (1985, p. 221). The potential for an oppositional or critical moment in this landscape should not be surprising. Coexisting progressive and conservative elements of postmodernism have not been completely overlooked in theoretical endeavor. In cultural studies there has been acknowledgment that within the

field of hegemony there is a certain scope for creativity and this has generally been associated in the act of consumption. As Stuart Hall notes, popular culture "is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is engaged: it is also the stake to be won or lost *in* that struggle. It is the arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is secured" (Hall 1981, p. 239).

The resistance I have been interested in, however, lies not in consumption but in the cultural-political practice by which objects and landscapes are constructed. Contemporary tourism forms and cultural opposition seem an unlikely pairing, and yet I hope to have demonstrated at least a momentary comfortable fit. This is not to deny the powerful role mass media and cultural institutions involved in tourism and heritage industries may play in the exploitation of marginal communities and the denial of social power that historically these public forms have represented. The transformation of historical traditions and cultures into superficial images and icons and the potential for the aetheticisation and museumisation of culture are real and powerful problems, characteristic of the contemporary context of mass production and mass communication:

> As Walter Benjamin points out, the production of art under conditions of mechanical reproduction and commodity form lead to an alienated world in which cultural objects are received outside of the communities and traditions that initially gave them shape and meaning. Created artifacts from diverse cultures blend together into a seeming contextless homogenized mass, encountered independently from the communities that gave birth to them. Mass communications and culture rely on an ever-expanding supply of free-floating symbols only loosely connected to social life. Experience and traditions seem to have no binding claims on the present.
>
> (Lipsitz 1991, p. 134)

At the same time, the potency and pervasiveness of these images and forms has meant that cultural discourse is at once a site of contestation and struggle. Postmodernism is also the context for the proliferation of cultural creations and identity constructions associated with an expanding field of social and political subjects, subcultures and social movements which has meant challenges to established canons, "master narratives," and traditions. The polyphonic cultural field that is now in view indicates that images and representations may also be produced from and engaged within

a community or place posing a degree of resistance, offsetting dominant biases towards the alienation inherent in the immediate, temporary and figural with a continuity of symbols and narratives.

The ecomuseum is implicated in such practice. In an emphasis on the encounter with cultural objects and images *within* the community and place that first gave them shape and meaning, tying them together through a thread of historical narrative, lies the potential for re-centring and empowerment. Such a tourism form is a source of images, artifacts, maps, and stories that build and reinforce a spatialisation, helping to assemble cognitively a place and a region, a people and a topography which at once enables and reinforces the inventing and imagining of community (Shields 1991). For cultural production in these contemporary forms enters into and under-scores not only the unity of those in power, but of imagined places and communities which may want to maneuvre and move that power.

My attention to one particular level of such expression and imagining within broader spatialisations - that of the ecomuseum - inevitably overlooks the alternative spatialisations which may in fact also be fracturing that imagining from underneath, contesting the definition of place from within. Resistance invariably takes place at multiple points in a cultural field characterised by connections, contact, and shifting margins and centres. Potentially, at every level, "one man's imagined community is another man's political prison" (Appadurai 1990, p. 295). Such is the character of a postmodernism of resistance - the fragmentation and decentering that characterises the contemporary world also opens wide the potential for alternative geographies challenging multiple centres, "deconstructing cultural sovereignty and remapping the universalised and homogeneous spatialisation of Western Modernity to reveal heterogeneous places, a cartography of fractures which emphasises the relations between differently valorised sites and spaces sutured together under masks of unity such as the nation-state" (Shields 1991, p. 278). Obscured by claims of the impermeability of spectacular, schizophrenic culture which portray an "unusually claustrophobic world, where a homogeneous and tightly controlled public culture is projected unproblematically upon a passive citizenry"

(Ley and Mills 1992, p. 257) are the rhythms of human cultural practice that poses such a capacity for creativity and opposition.

The ecomuseum is one local and particular case, though it has wider implications as communities across Canada, in fact worldwide, face similar challenges and options as this area in Alberta. The meshing of tourism and place will inevitably not always be played out the same way. A fundamental issue is the extent to which localised communities can maintain sufficient agency to influence the shape tourism will take and the interactions that result from it. The extent to which they can will determine whether an altering political economy can be effectively appropriated in constructing a meaningful, localised 'space of autonomy' (Oakes 1993). My point is simply to add a dimension to contemporary approaches to the expression of place identity; to grasp potential depths and nuances obscured by predominating theoretical approaches.

This brings me full circle. In the first paragraph of this paper I posed an opposition of "flying apart" and "coming together". It is clear that both are at work. The consistency of contemporary places and localised identities is lived and invented within and between globalising and localising tendencies. Resistance on this ground means more than attacking and deconstructing the power of a centre. Legitimacy and power emerge in the historical process of living and struggling through this terrain. Derek Gregory has suggested that in order to proceed beyond "notions of social totality which are plainly discreditable" and a "'politics of the fragment or conjuncture' which is largely ineffectual", we need, "in part, to go back to the question of areal differentiation: but armed with new theoretical sensitivity towards the world in which we live... " (1989a, p. 92). That spatial and cultural differences are produced and constructed implies the need to look at the processes and effects of lifting a place to expression. Making tangible the boundaries and meanings of place produced and sedimented within the collective experience and memory of an imagined community, is the core of a postmodernism of resistance. In the fragmentation and forgetfulness of the modern world, the etching of a landscape, a history and a place for identity on the shifting ground is a conscious cultural politics of remembering and a strategy of retrieval and reconstruction.

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