

Vancouver's Night Markets: Intercultural Encounters in
Urban and Suburban Chinatowns

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

(Geography)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

September 2013

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Abstract

This study compares two Chinese-themed night markets in Vancouver, Canada. The Chinatown Night Market is held in the City's downtown historic Chinatown, while the Summer Night Market is held in the suburb of Richmond. Night markets are iconic elements in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and have a specific sensorial design created by tightly packed crowds, loud music, dim sum, and vendors selling pop culture goods.

The central question of this research concerns the role of the everyday for intercultural understanding and engagement. As such, it places the night markets at the centre of three inter-related debates in the literature: the role of space in everyday encounters with difference; the interplay of structure and agency in the construction and representation of Chinatown; and the role of marketplaces specifically in fostering meaningful intercultural exchange in plural societies. This thesis compares Vancouverites' experiences with difference in the two marketplaces, drawing on 88 interviews with consumers and vendors, ten in-depth key informant interviews (with market administrators and city officials), and hours of participant observation over the course of two years.

The overarching contribution of this research is to demonstrate that the night markets, as everyday spaces, foster intercultural interaction and engagement. These everyday encounters with difference, however, do not occur in a vacuum. This research makes three inter-related arguments. First, the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver is a project in re-writing both the City landscape and the suburban landscape in a way that challenges imposed notions of "Chineseness" by city

governments and multicultural planning discourses. As such, these cases reveal the struggle between structure and agency in the representation of Chinatown. Second, the different trajectories of the two marketplaces reveal a shift in the scale of diversity management planning discourses, from mosaic to micro-scale. Third, the night markets both reveal and contribute to the social normalization of ethno-cultural diversity in Metro Vancouver's public realm.

Preface

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia.

Prior to conducting research, the author received ethical approval from the University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board, under certificate H10-01611: The Night Markets of Vancouver (Dr. Daniel Hiebert, PI).

Chapter 4 of this dissertation is a modified version of a working paper, ‘Markets and Diversity: An Overview’, published by the author as Metropolis British Columbia Working Paper 01-11 (also published by the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity as Working Paper 11-03).

Parts of Chapter 7 have been published as a co-authored book chapter with Dr. Rima Wilkes: ‘Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Canada’ in *Anti-Immigrant Sentiments, Actions, and Policies in North American and the European Union*, by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2012). This thesis also draws broadly from research conducted for an ongoing research project on attitudes towards immigration with Dr. Rima Wilkes.

Findings from this research have also been accepted for publication in *Urban Studies*, as ‘Authenticity with a Bang: Exploring Suburban Culture and Migration through the new Phenomenon of the Richmond Night Market’ (Pottie-Sherman and Hiebert forthcoming). The author conducted all of the interviews and wrote most of the manuscript.

Check the first pages of these chapters to see footnotes with similar information.

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Abbreviations

BCMA – British Columbia Multiculturalism Act

CBIA – (Vancouver) Chinatown Business Improvement Association

CNM – (Vancouver) Chinatown Night Market

CRP – (Vancouver) Chinatown Revitalization Program

CCER – (Richmond) Coordinating Committee of Ethnic Relations

DTES – (Vancouver) Downtown Eastside

EEO – (Vancouver) Equal Employment Opportunity Office

RIAC – Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee

PRC – People’s Republic of China

RNM – Richmond Night Market

RSNM – Richmond Summer Night Market

VCMA – Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dan Hiebert for his work as a supervisor, and especially for always asking the best questions and seeing the big picture.

I would also like to thank Rima Wilkes for her guidance and encouragement. I am also grateful for the support of Dr. Steve Vertovec at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen, Germany.

The feedback I received at the following conferences was crucial to the development of this research: the Markets and Diversity International Working Group meetings, held at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity (Göttingen, Germany, 2009) and the University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam, 2010); the Canadian Association of Geographers Conference (Regina, 2010); the Association of American Geographers Conference (Seattle, 2011); and the Pacific Worlds in Motion Conference (Singapore, 2012).

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and love of my family and friends. My parents encouraged me to keep going with the dissertation, even when it seemed like there would be no light at the end of the tunnel! They also encouraged me to begin the PhD even though it meant moving to the West coast, far away from them. But, I was in good hands. Babita Bains, then a complete stranger, responded to my Craigslist posting searching for a roommate in Vancouver. Five years later, our friendship is so important to me and has truly changed me for the better.

I am also deeply grateful for the opportunity to meet and make new friendships within the department of geography at UBC: Lachlan Barber, Ben Crawford, Katie Kinsley, Scott Krayenhoff, Markus Moos, and Justin Tse. I would also like to thank my extended geography “family” from my time at McGill and Queen’s University, Angie Theilmann, Claire Halpern, and Nathaniel Lewis. I would also like to thank Matt Lynch for being a brother to me, and for his absolute generosity. Last but not least, I would like to thank my partner, Nick Lynch, for showing me the path through this entire process.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

“We sing to make people happy.” This is the motto of the Chinatown Happy Singer’s Group, tonight’s entertainment at the Chinatown Night Market. The seated audience (there are roughly 100 chairs) is entirely Asian and the vast majority are seniors. The MC addresses the audience in Cantonese. The standing crowd is also mainly Asian. A man leans against a post, mouthing the words to the song. An elderly Chinese man with a walker is standing off to one side. As the song comes to an end, a middle-aged man gets up on stage and begins singing an English ballad...“I’ll find my way one day.” When he finishes, the MC returns to the stage and announces in English “Now we change to Mandarin song.” He sings a duet with a beautiful Asian woman who looks to be in her early 20s. Another singer takes the stage. “I am going to sing a song I wrote for Vancouver. I hope you enjoy,” he announces in English, and then begins to sing in Cantonese in a style reminiscent of Frank Sinatra. Mechanical toy poodles, the shouts of food vendors, the sizzle of grilled meats, the trill of Cantonese opera, and the buzz of adjacent outdoor patio lounges compete for monopoly of this soundscape.

Meanwhile, a group of young white women in their mid-20s walk through the market, enjoying the social atmosphere created by the smell of frying food, steam, and the crowds of people. The street is lined with vendors on both sides, who occupy tables set up underneath red-tented booths. Beginning at the corner of Main and Keefer St., one passes various booths selling cheap, mostly overstock, clothing imported from Asia, toys, cheap jade jewelry, and underwear. Food vendors sell “easy” and recognizable Chinese

food: bubble tea and Chow Mein. Some of the stranger merchandise includes knives with Nazi insignia or T-shirts emblazoned with LED lights. When the women reach the end of the vendor's row, they stop abruptly at the mainstage. They look at each other and laugh. One says: "let's go," and they continue past.

A completely different scene plays out at the eastern end of the market. A young couple slowly pushes a stroller down the street market. A Chinese vendor ignores a middle-aged white male who gestures to a toy on the table, saying "I can't figure out what is in here. Dinner?" Further down the market, I overhear a conversation between two jewelry vendors occupying adjacent stands. "Nice to see you. We missed you last week." One of them nods at a man standing guard outside the booth and says something in Chinese. He points to a white patron. "You just took something from my table. I saw you," he accuses. The patron looks confused, shaking his head "no" and holding up his hands. A security guard walks up and down Keefer St., conversing with various customers, giving directions to the washrooms and the nearest ATM. He asks a white homeless man to leave after he is spotted asking for change. He nods to a Chinese man at least in his 80s who peeks into the garbage can and retrieves an empty pop bottle, adding it to the collection he is carrying.

Outside the market, Chinatown is for the most part deserted. The many hair salons, Chinese medicinal shops, and knick-knack tourist stores close early. Many storefronts sit empty although a few Chinese restaurants are open at this late in the evening. As any city planner will tell you, Chinatown was once "the place to go at night." The enclave had been associated with vice and mystery since the 19th century. Whites made forays to Chinatown at night in search of the Orient. After-hours bars sold illicit liquor in

teapots. On Friday and Saturday nights, Chinatown's streets bustled with white Vancouverites searching for a taste of the exotic.

But over time the "stars lined up the wrong way" for Chinatown. Other nightlife areas of the city received more support and more investment. The nearby Downtown Eastside became a "public health crisis." Chinatown once again came to be associated with criminal and dangerous elements, but these were no longer exotic but the cause for avoidance. When I began my doctorate at the University of British Columbia in September of 2008, a Faculty of Graduate Studies orientation to the city's night life warned us: "Chinatown is great during the day, but you don't want to go down there at night. It's like Gotham city." That semester also marked my first reading of Kay Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown* (1991). I was struck by the full circle of Chinatown's sin city discourse.

The nighttime landscape of Chinatown is now showing clear signs of gentrification. Trendy drinking holes and fusion restaurants are materializing throughout the area. At Bao Bei Brasserie on Keefer St., you can eat potstickers while sipping a "Chino Margarita," made with tangerine-peel infused tequila, ginger, and chili salt. This is served to you with flourish by a waif-thin white suspender-and-dark-rimmed glasses wearing bartender. The clientele is young, stylish, urban, and mainly white, although the bar's creator is Chinese-Canadian. The iconography of old Chinatown is all around you, in the brand, referenced in every menu item. The hand of the state is obvious. The faces of the crowd of twenty-somethings lined up at the door are illuminated by the restaurants neon marquis. The marquis was supported by the City of Vancouver, reminiscent of the old days of purposeful Orientalism. At

the same time, this is Chinatown with a whole new spin. Younger, hipper, more global, more diverse.

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Thirteen kilometers to the South, a crowd at the River Rock Casino in Richmond waits for the bus headed for Sweden Way. Despite the name, Sweden Way is typical of the suburban “geography of nowhere” (Kunstler 1994), a concrete jungle of big box stores. The only thing “Swedish” about it is the giant IKEA store. The area, which includes a Sears, a Future Shop, and various furniture warehouses, would normally be deserted at 10pm, but the night market has returned for another season. A bus arrives with a sign saying “Night Market Special” and everyone crowds on until it is completely packed. Almost everyone is between the ages of 15 and 30.

A few minutes later, the bus empties at Sweden Way, and its riders join a steady stream of people walking across the lawns and parking lots. Eventually this crowd is funneled by fences into one stream of people headed into the parking lot of the Cathay Chinese furniture importer. Just to the north of the market, a subsidiary of the Fraser River ambles along, dividing the suburban City of Richmond from Vancouver. The food court is hot, loud, and packed. Music blasts from the mainstage where “Pinoy Idol” is well under-way. A Filipina teenage girl belts out a (mostly) on-key tribute to Whitney Houston. The MC makes jokes in Tagalog and English. “You know I used to be a DJ in the Philippines? Yeah, D.J.: De Janitor.” The crowd roars.

In many ways, the story I will tell here about Chinatown and Richmond is temporal. It is about the nighttime landscape and contrasting sensibilities of what this means and should look like. This is a story about the connections between the

nighttime landscapes of hyper-modern Asian cities, the City of Vancouver, and its suburbs.

The Chinatown Night Market boasts itself as the first of such spaces in North America. It began in the 1990s in downtown Chinatown. Chinatown's merchants saw this particular space as a way of attracting immigrants from Hong Kong away from the suburbs. For much of the 20th century, they had been co-opted into the Western Chinatown aesthetic. The City's idea of making "Chineseness"¹ visible was through the icons of this Western landscape type: neon signs, horses and buggies, temples, pagodas, Chinese gardens, lantern-style streetlamps, Oriental arches, and facades. In other words, icons that white Westerners could easily recognize and consume.

By the 1990s, the suburb of Richmond had come to challenge the downtown's monopoly on "Chinatown" (Li and Li 2011) as Canada reformed its immigration program to capture wealthy business immigrants from Hong Kong. These immigrants sought protection from the uncertainty associated with Hong Kong's handover to the People's Republic of China (PRC). The impact and lives of this new wave of trans-Pacific migration has been well documented by geographers.

So the story of the Chinatown Night Market goes, these new wealthy, hyper-mobile, hyper-transnational, post post-modern class of immigrants would not be attracted to Chinatown by the knick-knack stores which catered to tourists, the hair

¹ The ethnic Chinese community in Chinatown has been most associated with immigrants from the People's Republic of China (PRC), while Richmond's Chinese community with immigrants from Hong Kong, although as demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 5, these associations are changing with new migration patterns. This dissertation avoids perpetuating a homogeneous view of "Chineseness" or "Chinese culture." It is important to note that these categories represent heterogeneous communities of sub-ethnicities distinct cultures, languages and dialects, different economic classes, and immigration streams (see Lo and Wang 1997).

salons, or the images of horses and buggies. They wanted banks with opening hours geared towards doing trans-Pacific business transactions and other features of modern Asia. The Chinatown merchants hatched a plan to re-create a temporal and cultural form of a modern Asian cityscape. The hope was that people would come back to Chinatown in search of “red hot sociability,” the “unquantifiable ambiance” characteristic across night markets, created through densely packed vendor stalls, narrow paths, smoke, bright lights and displays, shouting, hawking, and loud music (Chau 2008:486). Such a public culture of nighttime leisure was lacking in the suburbs and seen as something that Richmond could not replicate.

The night market in Richmond has become part of the shifting “place imagery,” of a suburb that is no longer white and rural. This landscape includes No. 5 Road, where the skyline is now punctuated by a mosque, a Buddhist Temple, a Gurdwara, a Jewish school, a Muslim school, and many churches; No. 3 Road, where developers have sought to replicate Asia for its consumers through Asian-themed malls; and in the case of the night market, the parking lot of a Chinese importer where, on summer nights, tens of thousands of people attend an open-air market that in no way reflects Richmond’s white European past. An enormous amount has changed since Anderson wrote *Vancouver’s Chinatown* in 1991, arguing that Chinatown is a western idea steeped in white European hegemony. The way in which the suburb is imagined can no longer be characterized as a “naturalized” white suburban space that is juxtaposed against “historically constructed notions of enclaves for the Chinese” (see Ray et al. 1997:81). In fact, as I will argue, Chinese culture has become an accepted and expected feature of Richmond’s landscape, such that even white participants feel that Asian culture can be a “distinctly Richmond”

occurrence, and that Chinese food (in particular) is no longer exotic, but mundane. The Summer Night Market in Richmond embodies this complex and shifting social geography.

As I will show in this thesis, immigrants from the Pacific Rim, through events like the night market, have transformed the suburb spatially as well as temporally. In the case of the night markets, a wide swath of residents embraced this force. Coincidentally, many of Vancouver's other immigrant groups, both Asian and non-Asian come from places with active nighttime cultures, and even night markets. Although the event began as a Chinese night market targeted to a very specific sub-ethnicity, it has manifested into a crosscutting phenomenon. This spatial form may be "Chinese" but translates cross-culturally. It has converged with a growing North American interest in market culture, driven by nostalgia for face-to-face interaction. Farmer's markets have grown in popularity with a heightened interest in eating and buying 'local', 'ethical', and hand-made. Cities across Canada are re-writing "street food" bylaws to allow a greater variety of mobile vendors in public space.

Since beginning this project, night markets have gone mainstream, popping up all over North America. They are found in downtowns and in suburbs, held in parking lots, alleys, and campus student union buildings. In the last five years, they have become seen by local governments and entrepreneurs as a way to revitalize downtown spaces by capitalizing on ethnic consumer preferences. Both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have developed night markets since 2010. Pittsburgh's "Project Pop Up: Night Market" is part of City's Pittsburgh's Downtown Partnership downtown core revitalization program. In suburban Los Angeles, the "626 Night Market" was launched in the spring of 2012. The digits 626 refer to the area code of the San

Gabriel Valley, an area of suburban Asian settlement described by Wei Li's (1998) concept of an *ethnoburb*. This market was started for many of the same reasons as Richmond's market – to cater to an Asian population nostalgic for Asian culture. In New York City, where the lack of suitable public space has to date impeded the creation of a night market, a feasibility study is currently underway by the Chinatown Partnership Local Development (Chiu 2012). Toronto now has three night markets, both urban and suburban: The T&T Waterfront Night Market, hosted by T&T Supermarket, launched in 2010 in Toronto's downtown Portlands. The following year, the Chinatown Business Improvement Area launched a seasonal night market at the Spadina/Douglas intersection. Markham's "Night it up!" market is an entirely youth run, two-day event. Organized as a fundraiser, it attracts a mainly Taiwanese crowd of over 100,000 people. The night market form also found its way into Toronto's art-scene at Nuit Blanche in 2010, when artist Mammalian Diving Reflex collaborated with the Toronto Weston Flea Market, to create "Nuit Market," an installation piece intended to redefine Victoria St. Lane.

Everywhere, people are trying to cash in on "red hot sociability." In the Canadian national and local media, night markets are represented as a positive corollary of immigration and cultural diversity. The country's national newspaper, *The Globe and Mail*, called Asian night markets "Canada's exciting new import" (Li, 20 July 2011). The phenomenon is deeply implicated in the new cultural economy, representative of the perception that diversity is an economic good in and of itself, and one that cities need more of. Vancouver's night markets have caught the attention of food (and particularly street food), entertainment, and travel critics, and are routinely

part of Vancouver's "playground listings." Both night markets are highly constructed spaces of cultural consumption that are evaluated based on their "authenticity" vis-à-vis Asia. Food critics, travel writers, and market administrators describe these spaces using exotic language: Why go all the way to Asia, when you can experience Asia right in your backyard?

All of these processes – the relationship between race, and space, shifting policies of diversity management, the commodification of ethnicity, gentrification and revitalization, and the infusion of North American cities with immigrant cultures, values, and sensory, spatial, and temporal sensibilities – all combine to influence the way social interaction is carried out in everyday social spaces like the night market.

As Ash Amin (2012:60) writes

A lot more than the proximate or the human is at work in shaping the feelings of strangers in public space, for example, the cultural influences that flow into the city through its many networks of global connection, or social habits formed out of negotiating the whole ecology of a public space, including its built form, aesthetic and symbolic feel, sensory resonances, and technological and material organization.

The night markets are rich sites of study, encompassing and relating all of these processes inherent to the contemporary reshaping of North American cities. At the same time, they are also sites where obvious longstanding discourses of Orientalism are given new life, recalling Kay Anderson's (1987:1) seminal argument that "'Chinatown' is not 'Chinatown' only because the 'Chinese', whether by choice or constraint live there." Vancouver's night markets straddle the boundary between what David Ley (2010:17) recently describes as the "Chinatown landscape of slowly decaying ethnic stuff, some might identify as the last gesture of Orientalism,

sustained and promoted by three levels government in the designated Chinatown Historic Area” and the “massive economic power of contemporary East Asia.” They can be seen as both Orientalism’s last stand and an “alternate Asian modernity.”

1.1 Overview of the Literature & Rationale

I see the night markets as at the heart of three key theoretical debates. The first debate concerns the role of space in everyday encounters with difference in the city. The second debate concerns the relationship between structure and agency in our understanding of “Chinatown” and new patterns of Chinese settlement. The third debate concerns a longstanding anthropological line of inquiry on social interaction in marketplaces specifically, and whether marketplaces can foster meaningful exchange. I take up these debates in three separate chapters (2 – 4), but I will briefly introduce them here.

First, encounters with difference are inherently embedded in various sets of social relations, including property regimes (Mitchell 2003), the built environment (Wood and Gilbert 2005), normative codes of behavior (Wise 2005; 2010), racism and fear of the stranger (Amin 2012), and policies at various levels of government (Newman 2012). Urban scholars have made important contributions to our understanding of macro-theoretical concepts of citizenship, cosmopolitanism, and multiculturalism by grounding these in the everyday (Germain and Radice 2006; Hiebert 2002; Lamont and Aksartova 2002; Wise 2010; 2005; Wise and Velayutham 2009). A dominant theme of this literature is that some spaces have greater potential for fostering meaningful exchange than others. On one hand, in public space, theoretically, all types of people can meet and “rub along” (Watson 2009). In practice,

however, public spaces are re-territorialized, re-segregated, under surveillance, and shaped by power relationships. On the other hand, commodified spaces are seen as highly contrived, with culture purely acting as a backdrop for consumption (Davis 2006; Dunn 2005; Flusty 2005; Goonewarda and Kipfer 2005; Hackworth and Rekers 2005; Kohn 2004). Little attention has been paid to the marketplace, which falls in a theoretical grey zone between public space and spaces of consumption.

Second, I frame this thesis within scholarship on Chinatown and the social geography of race more broadly, which was heavily influenced by Anderson's (1991) study of *Vancouver's Chinatown*. In Chapter 3, I take stock of the literature on Chinatown in the last quarter century. Anderson's (1991) seminal work approached Chinatown as a cognitive category created and maintained by and for white Westerners in Canada. This thesis marked a significant departure from previous analyses of Chinatown, which tended to focus on internal dynamics. Although enormously influential, Anderson's work was heavily criticized for ignoring the agency of individuals within Chinatown (Lee 2007; Leitner 1992; McDonald 1992; Ng 1999; Zhou 1993). While the post-structuralist approach has remained dominant, over the last twenty-five years, scholars have been concerned with reinserting agency (Lee 2007; Ng 1999; Phan and Chiu 2008). More recently, scholars have also begun turning their attention to new suburban patterns of Chinese settlement, variously dubbed as "new Chinatowns," or ethnoburbs (Li 1998; 2009). Between these two bodies of literature is a stark juxtaposition between "old" and "new" Chinatown. The former is viewed as the realm of the downwardly mobile, non-agent migrant, trapped in a decaying and outdated vision of Chinese culture imposed by the West. The latter

is taken to embody the agency of new classes of upwardly mobile, highly skilled, Asian flexible citizens (Ong 2000). The night market phenomenon offers a way of comparing the shifts in experiences across these spaces. On one hand, the night markets have the potential to breathe new life into the harmful Orientalist representation of Chinatown and Chinese space and to encourage white consumption of the ‘Other’; on the other hand, in various ways these markets support not only the Chinese community, but also Vancouver’s public as a whole.

Third, since the early 20th century, anthropologists have debated the social significance of economic transactions in the marketplace. One set of scholars (Smith 1965; Maisel 1974) characterizes the marketplace as a site of “mutual avoidance.” Although market-goers may frame their experiences through positive notions of intercultural encounter and “rubbing shoulders” with difference, at the end of the day, profit takes precedence over sociability. Social relationships between vendors and consumers are seen as superficial necessities for profit. Another set of scholars, however, emphasizes that the marketplace places different groups of people on an equal playing field (Furnivall 1939; de la Pradelle 1995). This camp (Kelly 2003; Watson 2009) emphasizes, for example, the potential of markets to serve as social and economic safety nets in diverse communities. Economic transactions can serve as meaningful points of social exchange that may foster more positive attitudes towards difference. But of course, marketplaces, both in a historic and contemporary sense, allow for the consumption of diversity by a colonial/white/or majority culture. The experience of ethnicity through food, goods, customs, or music may serve only to boost individual cultural capital (Hage 2000). This thesis explores a dilemma

integral to the question of whether marketplaces can be used as urban development strategies to support inclusive communities or if they will inevitably fall into the trap of reinforcing unequal power relations.

1.2 Research Questions

Following from these three debates, this thesis is concerned with three research questions.

1. Does the everyday matter for intercultural understanding and exchange?
2. Are Vancouver's night markets simply Orientalism's last stand, or are they something more?
3. What is the significance of consumption and diversity in the public realm? What can the night markets tell us about the impact of ethno-cultural diversity and consumption in Metro Vancouver? Can marketplaces be used as tools to support inclusive communities?

1.3 Argument

My argument for this thesis is thus threefold:

1. The night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver is a project in re-writing both the City landscape and the suburban landscape in a way that challenges imposed notions of "Chineseness" by City governments and multicultural planning discourses. Both markets sought to replicate a highly modern feature of the contemporary Asian cityscape in a North American city. But the way in which these projects have played out over time in both locations reveals the reordering of the socioeconomic and ethnocultural landscapes of both city and suburb.

2. The evolution of these marketplaces in the context of shifting planning emphases reveals a broader shift from mosaic to micro-scale diversity. As a result, they represent a constant, dynamic renegotiation of authenticity through changing and multiple perspectives.

3. The night markets represent shifting attitudes towards ethno-cultural diversity in Metro Vancouver. Vancouver's night markets both express and contribute to the social normalization of ethnic diversity in the public realm.

1.4 Guide to the Dissertation

This thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter 2-4, I outline the three literatures that frame the dissertation. In Chapter 2, I examine the literature on geographies of encounter in the public realm. In Chapter 3, I turn to the contemporary literature on Chinatown and new suburban patterns of Chinese settlement through the lens of the social geography of race. In the final literature Chapter 4, I shift my focus to marketplaces themselves. This Chapter provides a review of the themes relating to the topic 'markets and diversity.'

Chapter 5 consists of an interlude chapter in which I set the stage for analysis. In it, I "map" the night markets, framing the phenomenon through three "Acts." Act I concerns the changing social geography of Vancouver. Act II considers the development of night markets in Asia and their meanings. Act III tells the story of the two night markets.

In Chapters 6-8, I analyze the empirical material generated from this study. This project is inherently comparative. For this reason, I choose not to separate my analytical chapters. Rather, my aim is to examine how these processes are

interwoven across these two spaces. In Chapter 6 “Anderson Redux,” I consider the relevance of Anderson’s *Vancouver’s Chinatown* for the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver. I use the empirical material to examine the binaries established between “old” and “new” Chinatowns, city and suburbs. In Chapter 7, “Multicultural Engineering,” I examine competing versions of multiculturalism at the urban scale and their implication for both night markets. In Chapter 8, “Red Hot Sociability,” I consider the nature of cross-cultural social interaction in the marketplace. In particular, I examine whether or not the night markets are socially significant for Metro Vancouver, and if and how values and tastes are being transformed through these events.

1.5 Methodology

The Richmond Summer Night Market and the Chinatown Night Market share a common cultural imaginary, in that they are both modeled after night markets in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Yet, one market is in the downtown, while another is in a new space of Chinese settlement. Although they have the same general format, they have very different intents and audiences. My starting assumption is that a comparison of these spaces will be vital to understanding how their meanings, symbols, and experiences are different.

1.5.1 Methodology 1: Ethnography

The principal methodology for this research was a comparative ethnography of the Richmond Summer Night Market and the Chinatown Night Market during the 2010 and 2011 market season (May to September). The ethnography was modeled after previous ethnographies of marketplaces undertaken by McGrath et al. (1993), Watson and Studdert (2006), Watson (2009) and Radice (2010). Ethnography is a methodology focused on understanding the situatedness of social behaviour and lends itself well to

analyses of the everyday interactions of people and culture. Although there are many forms and approaches to ethnography, fundamentally it involves observing and writing about people, capturing what they “say they do and why, and what they are seen to do and say to others about this” (Cloke et al. 2004:169). Through this lens, people are viewed as “knowledgeable subjects” whose actions and behavior are representative of complex systems of meaning and processes, and as “situated agents from whom researchers can learn a great deal about how the world is seen, lived and works in and through ‘real places, communities, and people’” (Cloke et al. 2004:169). Literally “people writing” (from the Greek) ethnography is also particularly appropriate for addressing geographic questions about the mutual relationship between place and identity – the “life world of a social group and the geographic world they construct” (Herbert 2000:551).

Ethnography aims to establish a “thick description” (Geertz 1973) that captures the “processes and meanings that undergird sociospatial life” (Herbert 2000:551). It is based on the understanding that the social behavior of people is “symbolically encoded.” Humans have agency but are also in negotiation with structural/“macrological” processes. These processes shape places, which, in turn, intervene in identity constructions and behaviour. In short, ethnography is intended to uncover the “knowledge and meaning structures that provide the blueprint for social action” and to allow for an understanding of intersections between the “macro and micro” (Herbert 2000:551-555). Ethnography as a method is thus intended to be open to the wide range of social behavior in a particular context. It is an “intensive” mode of research concerned with “fine grained detail.” The researcher is intended to immerse themselves in the setting, undertaking “close

observation” of “daily activities” (Herbert 2000:551). An understanding of the “social order” is built through an “extended” period of fieldwork, involving a form of participant observation (Silvey 2003:92; Cloke et al. 2004:169). As Herbert explains, “attachments to place are created through various symbolic markers and activities that involve member’s senses” (2000:552). Ethnography lends itself particularly well to the night market because of its focus on capturing the “full sensuality” of the field-site – “the sights, sounds smells, tastes” and so on (532).

Participant observation

I undertook intensive observation of both markets in the summer of 2010 and continued this in the summer of 2011. Through preliminary pilot visits to these spaces in the spring of 2010, I established focus points of each site. These were points deemed to be key areas of activity in each market, and thus important areas for observation. In Chinatown, the focus points included the entrances, the stage and entertainment area, the main vendor corridor, and the tables and stoops on the sidewalks behind the vendors’ booths that function as informal seating areas. In Richmond, I observed the entrance, the stages, the ATM, the food court seating areas, and the bus stop. Photographs were taken throughout the study period and were important in establishing these focus points for return during future visits. Specific observation of these focus points served as the starting point for the ethnography.

I used photographs to create a map/sketch of both markets and also made use of the market layout blueprints for both markets that are readily available on the web. These blueprints show the locations and number of available stalls in the market, as well as the rental fees for each stall. Booth arrangements were far more static in the Chinatown Night

Market than in Richmond, where vendors frequently shift locations. Following Radice (2010), I employed both 'mobile' and 'static' participant observation techniques.

The mobile participant observation technique was intended to capture the situatedness of social behaviour in the night markets from the perspective of a market user. Mobile observation sessions typically lasted 2-3 hours, and involved walking up and down the market corridors, 'shopping', eating, waiting in line for the washrooms, waiting in the line for the ATMs, and chatting with vendors. In both static and mobile observations I observed the ethnicity, gender, age, language and the behaviour of participants, and interactions between market-goers, and between vendors and consumers, security personnel, maintenance personnel, market administrators, and performers. I generally wrote up my fieldnotes/observations while on the bus ride/Skytrain ride home. The tightly packed Richmond night market was not conducive to carrying a notebook and recording observations in real time. While less crowded, conspicuous note taking was not well received in the Chinatown Night Market.

Static observation involved sitting in one place for a period of time (usually no more than an hour) and watching the surrounding area. In the Chinatown market I sat on a bench near the entrance, stood at the back of, or sat in the stage audience, and sat behind the vendor booths on stoops or in the seating area. In Richmond I sat in the seating area in the food court or the seating area in front of the stage. On several occasions, vendors invited me to sit with them in their booths. An additional opportunity for static observation arose in the summer of 2011 in the Richmond market. In April 2011 I contacted the market administration to enquire about volunteering as a form of 'behind the scenes' participant observation. I was offered a volunteer position running the 'door

prize' ballot booth. On three separate weekends (one in June, one in July, and one in August) I collected ballots between 6pm and 10pm on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (a total of 9 evenings and 36 hours). The location of this booth changed each weekend, so I was able to observe three separate market corridors. This was an extremely valuable opportunity, as the Richmond market, because of its sheer size, was much less conducive to fine-grained observation than the market in Chinatown. My field notes and photographs were compiled on a weekly basis.

1.5.2 Methodology 2: Interviews

The second methodology consisted of four separate but overlapping interview schedules/guides. All interview schedules and guides can be found in the appendix. In this dissertation, the names of all interview participants have been changed to ensure anonymity.

Key Informants

Key informant interviews were conducted from October 2010 – July 2011. These were targeted at night market organizers, local city officials, and community representatives and aimed to establish and interrogate the history and role of each night market. These long, semi-structured interviews typically lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were conducted by phone or in person, at the office of the participant. A total of ten key informant interviews were conducted.

“Expert Users”

The second type of interview targeted “expert users” of the night markets. These were medium-length (15-45 minute), semi-structured interviews with participants who self-defined as “repeat users” of either the Chinatown or Richmond market (attending either night market at least once a year) (See Appendix for recruitment poster and interview guide). Participants were recruited using a snowball sample, via word of mouth and a facebook group I created. Interested individuals could add themselves, and invite their friends to participate. When a new member joined, I contacted them by email. This proved to be a fruitful research strategy. I also put up posters on lampposts in Chinatown, Richmond Centre, and UBC campus, but these did not attract any participants. The “expert” interviews were conducted primarily from October 2010 – April 2011. Of this group, three were male, and seven were female. Seven identified themselves as Chinese in ethnic origin, two as white, and one as Filipino. The average age of the expert group was 26, ranging from 19 to 42 (see appendix for a table of participants). While “once a year” was the minimum requirement, most of these participants attended multiple times per season.

Vendor Interviews

The third type of interview was with market vendors. These took place in June and July of 2011 (in Richmond), and July and August 2011 (in Chinatown). These interviews were intended to paint a more detailed portrait of vendors in terms of their experience with entrepreneurship, their experiences in the market, and reasons for choosing to vend in the night market (see Appendix for interview guide). These were also semi-structured interviews with a separate interview guide and were done “on the spot.”

These interviews ran roughly between 10 and 15 minutes, with several cut-short (for instance if customers began arriving at the booth the vendors would lose interest in the interview). However, the length depended on the interest level of the participants, and on several occasions the interview ran longer than 15 minutes.

As anticipated, language was a barrier in both markets, although to a much greater extent in the Chinatown Night Market, and in the food court area in the Richmond market. I am not a Chinese speaker, so I employed a Cantonese and Mandarin speaking research assistant to help with interviews in both markets. Because of the nature of market vending, there was a fairly narrow window within which the vendor interviews could be conducted. In Richmond, vendors arrive between the late afternoon up until 7pm, depending on the level of set-up they require. Interviews were generally conducted between 6 and 7pm, in the hour before the market's opening, when vendors have mostly set-up and are waiting for patrons. During the interviews, vendors would often suggest other booths they thought would be willing to participate. Once customers began arriving the vendors would quickly lose interest, unless more than one person was attending to the booth. A combined total of 30 vendor interviews was conducted (14 in Chinatown, 16 in Richmond). Of the Chinatown vendors, all defined themselves as Chinese in ethnic origin. Most were middle-aged and had immigrated to Canada from the PRC in the last ten years. Five had immigrated from Hong Kong. Of the Richmond vendors interviewed, eight defined themselves as Chinese, four as other Asian ethnicities, three as white, and two as Ecuadorian in ethnic origin. The characteristics of the vendors are summarized in Appendix A.

Consumer Interviews

Short, structured, interviews with consumers were conducted on the spot, also with the help of a Mandarin and Cantonese-speaking research assistant. While I acknowledge the impossibility of conducting a true random sample of market users under these circumstances, I tried as best as possible to select many different types of market-goers to ensure representativeness.

During the 2011 market season, I conducted forty-eight interviews with night market consumers (twenty-two in Chinatown, twenty-six in Richmond). Of the participants in Chinatown, twelve were female. Eleven were born in Canada. In terms of ethnic origin, nine defined themselves as white, six as Chinese, five as other Asian ethnicities, one as Jewish, and one as Iranian. In Richmond, fifteen of the participants were female. Ten were born in Canada. In terms of ethnic origin, seven defined themselves as Chinese, eight as white, and eight as other Asian ethnicities (Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Thai, and Japanese). There were also two Latino and one Iranian participant (please see Appendix A for additional information).

1.5.3 Methodology 3: Demographic & Contextual Information

I established a quantitative profile of the characteristics of consumers in the Richmond Summer Night Market through collaboration with the market administration on a prize-draw ballot form that doubled as a survey of night market users. I assisted with the design of the ballot form, which consisted of a series of questions about: gender, age, ethnicity, work status, language spoken at home, number of visits per year, reasons for

visiting, amount spent, ATM, transportation, and parking (the findings are summarized in Chapter 5, but see Appendix D for complete results).

I operated the door prize table on three weekends in the spring and summer of 2011, once in the low season (June), one in the middle of the season (July), and one at the peak of the season (August). The survey data was not intended for statistical analysis, but was used to give a general idea of the demographic characteristics of the market and reasons for use of the night market (see appendix D for a copy of the ballot ticket). The survey data therefore must be taken with a grain of salt, as “prize draws” carry considerable bias. Furthermore, the Richmond survey was only possible because of my high level of access in the market. I did not have the same access in Chinatown, and was not able to carry out a survey there.

Media Articles

In addition, I also conducted a general survey of media coverage of both night markets in *The Vancouver Sun*. A total of 161 articles mentioned the Chinatown Night Market, Richmond Night Market, or Richmond Summer Night Market between January 1st, 1996 and August 31st, 2012. These articles were imported using QDA Miner and content analysis was performed using Wordstat, a content analysis software tool. These programs allowed me to sort through the appreciable dataset and to discern thematic trends in the text.

1.5.4 Limitations & Notes on Terminology

This research has several limitations. My access to these markets was unequal. I did not have access to administrators of the Chinatown Night Market and am thus forced

to rely on the narratives of one security guard, the experiences of vendors, and media coverage (including public statements by the VCMA).

A second problem stems from the fact that two separate event production companies have operated the night market in Richmond at different times (but in the same location). The Richmond Night Market was the first night market in Richmond, but due to circumstances outlined in Chapter 5, suspended operation from 2008 to 2011, during which time the ‘Richmond Summer Night Market’ was held at the same site. I am careful throughout to refer to the ‘Richmond Summer Night Market’, rather than the ‘Richmond Night Market’ as they are independently owned and trademarked events. During the study period, only the Richmond Summer Night Market was in operation, and had already begun its multicultural rebranding project. Many participants (particularly the expert group, but also vendors and consumers) previously attended the Richmond Night Market, and spoke to their experiences in both places. I have therefore relied on their perceptions of the Richmond Night Market, media coverage, as well as the new administrators perceptions of how their market differs from the previous one. Both suburban night markets have been in operation since 2012. Hence, this is a story of three night markets, as well as a tale of two.

Chapter 2 – Pluralism in the Public Realm

Difference is an inescapable feature of urban life. This has been the mantra of urban scholars for more than two centuries. The classic urban sociologists saw urbanization as an intensely psychological phenomenon. As people moved to cities they were confronted with difference in all aspects of daily life. Some, like Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin, reveled in this new reality, celebrating the city for unchaining urbanites from restrictive social mores, fostering innovation through the cross-pollination of ideas, and exposing people to difference. Others, like Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim, Georg Simmel, and Max Weber, stressed the social distance that accompanies heterogeneity. Cities are “worlds of strangers” (Lofland 1985:19). The more we live in large urban centres, the more we experience *anomie*, a situation of urban loneliness stemming from the loss of primary ties.

The Chicago School of sociologists imagined the city as a “mosaic of social worlds” carved out by urbanites as a way of coping with difference. Robert Park was the first to use this analogy, describing the city as a system of distinct spaces that “touch but do not interpenetrate” (1925:40). The same “mosaic” analogy is found in Louis Wirth’s (1938) essay: “Urbanism as a way of life.” Wirth believed that urban heterogeneity forces social relations from the realm of the personal to that of the utilitarian. The mosaic metaphor persisted into the second half of the 20th century. Claude Fischer (1975:58) argued that urbanism expanded the array of sub-cultural worlds by bringing a “critical mass” of people together in close proximity. According to Fischer, these subcultures “touch” but “sometimes rub against one another only to recoil, with sparks flying upward.”

Similar themes on the subject of “living with difference” are found within the large body of literature on contact and conflict. The former, developed by Gordon Allport in 1954, views inter-group social interaction as reducing racial prejudice. The latter, rooted in the work of Hubert Blalock, views inter-group interaction as increasing racial prejudice through competition for resources and political power. Both of these theories were developed to understand black-white race relations in the context of de-segregation in the United States. As Western cities were transformed by new migration patterns in the second half of the 20th century, these theories have been applied with increasing fervor to immigrants and ethnic minorities.

I begin this chapter by examining the contact hypothesis and its critics (section 2.1).² As several geographers emphasize (Valentine 2008; Wessel 2009), this hypothesis erases history, politics, and power from social relations. Essentially, it ignores space. I then turn, in section 2.2, to the literature on “geographies of encounter” (Valentine 2008) as an alternative approach. Following the cosmopolitan turn, many geographers celebrated the city as an emancipatory site, pointing to new regimes of urban citizenship, and the “politics of propinquity” (Amin 2004:38; Massey 2005) that developed out of the reality of living with strangers. The central contribution of this literature has been to show that space matters in encounters with difference. I then focus specifically on two sub-sets of this literature that are relevant for the case of the night markets: the literature on public space, and the literature on spaces of consumption. I conclude the chapter by establishing a framework for analyzing the night markets that builds from the gaps in these two sets of literatures.

² Section 2.1 draws broadly from research conducted for an ongoing project on attitudes towards immigration with Dr. Rima Wilkes (University of British Columbia, Sociology).

2.1 Contact Theory & its Discontents

The most longstanding approach to understanding the effects of social interaction in plural societies has been the contact hypothesis. This theory has also been one of the most salient social science theories for social policy during the 20th and 21st centuries (Brewer and Brown 1998; Matejskova and Leitner 2011). The hypothesis was developed by social psychologist Gordon Allport in *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954). Allport was principally concerned with U.S. black-white race relations and deeply entrenched opposition to desegregation (Dixon et al. 2005). He believed that “face-to-face” interactions between groups, under the right “conditions,” could foster positive inter-group relations and reduce racial prejudice. The logic underlying this hypothesis was that repeated encounters with the “Other” teach people about the “values, lifestyle, and experiences of those groups.” In the absence of contact with out-group members, people develop opinions and images of the “Other” through “potentially problematic sources of information...such as family socialization, informal discussions within networks of friends or associates, media images, and misperceptions circulating within popular culture” (Ellison et al. 2011:938-39).

Allport originally specified four necessary “optimal” conditions through which inter-group interaction could lead to more positive relations, stating that

Prejudice, unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual, may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority individuals in pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional support (i.e. by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the appropriation of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups (1954:281).

In other words, “equal status” among groups, “institutional support” and the development of “common” goals were seen as crucial conditions of contact. Since 1954, scholars have variously specified and built on these original conditions, seeking to develop the “taxonomies of conditions for ‘good contact’” (Dixon et al. 2005:699). Some of these conditions include the frequency of contact, the demographic balance between groups, and the “friendship potential” of the interaction (Pettigrew 1998:80) (see Dixon et al. 2005 for a summary).

A significant body of evidence supports the contact hypothesis (see Hamberger and Hewstone 1997; Pettigrew 1997; Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003; Shelton 2003; Tropp 2006; Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins 2006). Pettigrew and Tropp’s (2006) meta-analysis of 515 studies of contact theory demonstrates the consistency of the negative relationship between contact and prejudice across the research. Contact has been found to directly predict a wide variety of attitudinal and psychological outcomes, from positive associations, decreased “physiological threats,” cortisol activity to neural processes (Hewstone and Swart 2011:376). The effect of contact on attitudes has also been shown to be mediated, for example, by the reduction of inter-group anxiety, and “empathy” – factors that strengthen the relationship between contact and attitude.

At the same time, as Yinger and Simpson (1973) highlight, the “paradox of contact” is that it can also spur more negative attitudes (cited in Dixon et al. 2005:698). Stemming from work by Hubert Blalock (1957) and Herbert Blumer (1958) on racial prejudice in the U.S., conflict theory (the intellectual opposite of contact theory) is also concerned with understanding the roots and “preconditions” of prejudice. Like Allport, both of these theorists were writing in the context of desegregation. Blumer specified four

“preconditions” of prejudice: perception by the in-group of “superiority” and distinctness from the out-group, and of the perceived competition and threat posed. Further, the greater the population of minorities, Blumer argued, the more intense these preconditions become. Thus, Blumer’s work spurred the “group size” hypothesis – that the greater the population of the minority group, the greater amount of prejudice. In a number of studies, group size is used as a proxy for contact (i.e. the greater the minority population, the more chances of contact, and thus the more prejudice). Thus, while contact theory holds that interaction fosters affinity across groups, conflict theory views contact as strengthening solidarity within groups and potentially breeding negative attitudes.

Despite nearly 60 years of research, there is scant agreement among scholars about the role of inter-group interaction and attitudes. A considerable body of research *also* supports conflict theory (Coenders et al. 2005; Gijsberts et al. 2004; Kunovich 2004; Jacobs and Kleban 2003; Quillian 1995; Rink et al. 2009). At the same time, however, other studies have found the relationship between group threat and prejudice to be negative (Berg 2009; Fox 2004; Huddy and Sears 1995; O’Neil and Tienda 2010; Schlueter and Scheepers 2010; Taylor and Schroeder 2010; Wagner et al. 2006), while others find it to be non-existent (Escandell and Ceobanu 2009; Dixon 2006; Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004; Hjerm 2007; Hjerm 2009; McLaren 2003; Strabac and Listhaug 2008; Wilkes and Corrigan-Brown 2011; Wilkes et al. 2008). Putnam’s (2007:138) “constrict” theory is an attempt to negotiate these two hypotheses. It sees contact with diversity as reducing social capital and “social solidarity” in the short-term. He finds that “areas of higher diversity exhibit lower levels of trust,” decreased “political efficacy” and trust in

government, lower voter turnout and levels of volunteering even when controlling for poverty, language, and education (151).

Geographers cannot afford to ignore this literature. Contact theory is enjoying a recent resurgence given calls that multiculturalism is failing to foster social cohesion. Contact has resurfaced as the “fix all” for immigrant integration, particularly in Europe following the 2001 race riots in three northern English mill towns and the London bombings of 2005. It was believed that the root of these events could be found in the lack of “community cohesion” and inter-ethnic communication in the UK, and the failure of ethnic minorities to integrate into British/European society. A subsequent government inquiry produced the *Cantle Report on Parallel Lives*. The report argued that traditional official multiculturalism discourse places too much emphasis on maintaining and protecting cultural difference rather than on encouraging intercultural connections (for critical analysis see Phillips 2006; Amin 2002). This is a marked change in the scale of diversity management policy, which until the latter half of the 21st century, was a national project. Although answers to the question of incorporating “Others” into the nation developed differently across immigrant receiving countries, this problem was firmly conceptualized at the national scale. The focus was first on top-down national “assimilation” policies, and later on integration, with little value placed in the micro-scale experiences of “everyday” relations (Amin 2012:60).

Diversity management policy is increasingly active in the public realm (Amin 2012; Collins and Friesen 2011). In the U.K. for example, there has been a growing concern over “social cohesion.” With this new impetus, Amin (2012:60) emphasizes that the “aim to intervene in the micro-climate of co-habitation is unambiguous. The

interventions seek to either clean out the spaces of cohabitation, or engineer contact.” The focus has shifted from national multiculturalism policy to local policies that encourage inter-group contact in neighbourhoods, schools, and public spaces. That “diversity requires interpersonal and intercultural encounter” has become the mantra of policymakers (Amin 2012:62). As Collins and Friesen (2011:3073) argue, cities are increasingly choosing to forgo the “top-down national policies of multiculturalism for a focus on the existing interactions between people of diverse backgrounds in urban public spaces.” The Intercultural City Project (ICP), for example, is an international policy organization that promotes the urban “diversity advantage.” It advocates interculturalism, defined as cross-cultural “engagement.” The ICP’s goal is to promote “meaningful intercultural contact.” According to Collins and Friesen, this impetus reflects the current dominant critique of multiculturalism – that it encourages societal “fragmentation” and precludes cross-cultural interaction, and therefore provides a weak guide for local policy. Discourses such as that put forth by the ICP (and embraced, as Collins and Friesen demonstrate in the case of Auckland, New Zealand) demonstrate the pervasiveness of the idea that multiculturalism is “passive” while interculturalism is “active.” Collins and Friesen caution, however, against this blanket emphasis on intercultural contact. Without respect for place specificity, such policies can further entrench inequality.

As Gill Valentine noted in a 2008 review in *Progress in Human Geography*, geographers have many reasons to be critical of contact discourses. For one, none of the contact/conflict scholars pay much attention to the role of space in social relations. Indeed, one of the major critiques of this literature is that it “decontextualizes” social interaction (Tredoux et al. 2005). Methodologically speaking, contact/threat research

generally falls into one of two camps, both of which are clearly problematic for understanding the role of space (Hewstone and Swart 2011). The first camp (mainly sociologists) conducts quantitative cross-sectional analyses using survey or interview data. These studies assume that attitudes “align with facts about the demographic make-up of the area in which they live” (Wong et al. 2012:18). The models assume that opportunities for contact (or conflict) increase with the diversity of the population. Thus, demographic data are often used as a proxy for contact or context, with the percentage of racial, minority, or immigrant groups in a given areal unit used as a stand-in for social interaction across groups. This common operationalization is theoretically and statistically problematic. The diversity of a population may not correspond to the degree of interaction across groups. In highly diverse spaces, re-segregation processes often minimize inter-group contact. Even well-designed interactive spaces may not actually produce more social interaction (Holland et al. 2007).

Further, contact researchers have tended to “scale up” individual outcomes to the group as a whole (Matejskova and Leitner 2011). Interaction between a member of the majority group and minority group may cause the majority individual to empathize with the minority member. There is no guarantee, however, that the person will extend this empathy to the group as a whole. In fact, there is significant evidence that people frame positive encounters at the individual level by “excepting” that individual from stereotypes that they will continue to hold about the group (Matejskova and Leitner 2011:719). For example, according to Matejskova and Leitner’s (2011) analysis of native German prejudice towards Aussiedlers, participants were often still prejudiced against Aussiedlers despite positive interpersonal encounters with them in Community Centre projects.

It is also unclear what the appropriate “context” is to measure contact. Contexts are “social and psychological constructions” (Wong et al. 2012:2). People are notoriously unaware of the racial/ethnic environment in which they live (for instance, whites tend to overestimate the size of the black population) (Alba et al. 2005). People also define their community in very different ways. One person’s ideas about the boundaries of their community may differ significantly from their neighbours, not to mention the political boundaries established by Census enumeration districts. Areal units serve as “containers” for data and assume that individuals within that unit are “uniformly oriented” (Wong et al. 2012:4). Because the areal units employed in such studies are inherently “modifiable,” there are many different ways of aggregating data. Relationships can change depending on the scale of aggregation. This problem is well-known to geographers as the modifiable areal unit problem, but is generally ignored in this body of literature. Often, a researcher’s choice of unit of analysis is determined simply by what is available (Cho and Baer 2011). The failure of this literature to deal with the social construction of context may, in fact, explain why it is so rife with contradictory findings (Cho and Baer 2011; Wong et al. 2012).

The second camp of contact researchers has evaded the problems of context entirely through the use of clinical experiments to examine the effect of contact in controlled environments. But these clinical studies “abstract” interpersonal relationships, examining them only under ideal situations that are far removed from the spaces of everyday life (Dixon et al. 2005; Wood and Landry 2008; Matejskova and Leitner 2011; Scott 2004). As Matejskova and Leitner (2011:721-2) argue, “real- life contact between members of different social groups is always structurally mediated and embedded in

particular historical and geographical contexts of power relations between and within social groups.” Contact cannot be removed from unequal “power relations.”

What’s more, changing attitudes do not necessarily mean changing inequality (Matejskova and Leitner 2011; Jackman and Crane 1986). A number of authors argue that contact may reduce the propensity for collective action on the part of minority groups (Dixon et al. 2007; Saguy et al. 2009; Wright 2001; Weight and Lubensky 2008). Valentine (2008) emphasizes the imperative of bringing to light the “structural inequalities and power differences between groups, and factors that inhibit, or encourage, mass mobilization and collective action as forms of social protest by minority group members” (379). Further, contact theory has also been critiqued for placing the onus on minorities to engage in “contact” and subscribing to “white values and cultural reference points” (Wood and Landry 2008; Valentine 2008), but little is said about the tendency of whites to self-segregate (Amin 2002; Phillips 2006). This body of scholarship has nevertheless come to dominate policy discourses on immigrant integration. In order to understand the spaces of encounter, we need to consider alternative conceptual frameworks and methodologies.

2.2 Geographies of Encounter

An alternative approach is found in the literature on “geographies of encounter.” From this perspective, social behaviour in public is seen as shaped by many sets of social and spatial relationships (Cresswell 1996). As Valentine (2008:329) argues, our interactions “always carry with them a set of contextual expectations about appropriate ways of behaving which regulate our coexistence.”

In the 1990s, many scholars, geographers included, turned their attention to the connective potential of urban space. The cosmopolitan turn, as it became known, involved a “reimagination” of the city as a stage where a new “civic culture” could be fostered through encounters with difference (Valentine 2008:323). Over the last decade, scholars have celebrated the city as an emancipatory site (Lees 2004), pointing to expansive new regimes of urban citizenship (Brodie 2000; Holston 2001; Sassen 2003). This turn marked a new way of seeing the urban that emphasized its “potential for the forging of new hybrid cultures and ways of living together with difference” (Valentine 2008:324). Accompanying this cosmopolitan turn was a significant change in attitude toward the public realm (Lofland 1998).

As Valentine argues, geography is the “natural disciplinary arena for such concerns given the implicit role of shared space in providing the opportunity for encounters between strangers” (2008:323). David Harvey’s proclamation in 2000 that “cosmopolitanism is back,” signified a renewed interest in these ideas. In the last decade, geographers have made significant additions to the concept of cosmopolitanism, interrogating in particular the problematic roots of this philosophical tradition, and the reconciling of the utopian universalism of cosmopolitanism (and its *placelessness*) with the particularism of geography (and its *place*) (Cosgrove 2003; Harvey 2000). To be a citizen of the world, as the ancient Greek Cynic philosopher Diogenes described as early as 412 BC, means relinquishing one’s local attachments. Entrikin (1999:280), however, argues that cosmopolitanism, if it is to be fruitful, needs to be grounded in “everyday experience” while at the same time remaining “open to the potentiality of a common humanity striving to make the earth a better place.” Dominant critiques of

cosmopolitanism as a guide for universal citizenship emphasize its Western, upper-class, white, and masculinist connotations. The cosmopolitan citizen is often thought of as a highly mobile, jet setting, male, economic agent. More recently, alternative cosmopolitanisms – feminist (Mitchell 2007), subaltern cosmopolitanism (Gidwani 2006), and ordinary cosmopolitanism (Hiebert 2002) were proposed as attempts at evading these problematic conceptions. Lamont and Aksartova (2002) argued that a cosmopolitanism of the everyday implies the development of “intercultural competence.” For in our everyday city spaces, such as the back lane gardens of East Vancouver, that “diversity is accepted” and “rendered ordinary” (Hiebert 2002). Amin (2004) developed a “politics of propinquity” centering on a respect for difference and an ethic of care through the connectivity of cities. Massey (2005) argued for a coming to terms with our “throwntogetherness” and difference. The cosmopolitan ethos was newly interpreted as having the power to foster urban belonging in the everyday (Muller 2012; Popke 2007).

A similar conceptual project is found in the literature on everyday multiculturalism. This scholarship seeks to reclaim discourses of multiculturalism at the grassroots level. Multiculturalism is generally approached from a “macro-theoretical” lens that focuses on immigrants and minorities’ incorporation in the nation-state with little attention paid to how it is experienced on the ground (eg. Kymlicka 1995; Taylor 1994). In contrast, Wise and Velayutham (2009:3) define “everyday multiculturalism” as a “grounded approach to looking at the everyday practice and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and spaces of encounter.” Studies of everyday multiculturalism seek to understand how people negotiate diversity in their everyday lives,

and how macro-structural processes and discourses are “filtered” or re-worked from the ground up.

Amanda Wise’s work on Ashfield, a suburb of Sydney, Australia, illustrates that multiculturalism is fundamentally “something that occurs in place” (2005; 2010:922). As such, she distinguishes between multiculturalism as an “abstract” policy and the everyday experiences of people living in diverse settings. Here, multiculturalism is conceived as a description of the “layers of ethnically different individuals inhabiting urban and suburban environments, corporeally interacting with one another as neighbors, shoppers, workers” (172). This framework allows her to explore the everyday experiences of Ashfield’s seniors, many of who have lived in the suburb for over 50 years, in a shifting social, residential, and commercial landscape.

Similarly, according to Wood and Gilbert (2005:686), everyday social relations in lived spaces have the power to counteract the “homogenizing or superficial narratives” of multiculturalism policy,” while at the same time rendering “its ideals relevant and hopefully achievable through/for everyday urban practices.” As they explain, the constructed versions of culture associated with multiculturalism have little utility for people’s lived experience of Toronto’s public realm. Rather, this city’s multicultural imaginary has developed from a complex urban social geography of older ethnic and cultural communities, and new spaces of immigrant reception. As they describe, “in the city, diverse urban areas lie on major public transit networks and pedestrian traffic corridors. The diversity of cultures is evident in the language and dress of people, the shop signs and window displays, street decorations hanging from lampposts often identifying the neighbourhood by name” (p. 688). Thus, the very fabric of the city is

woven by people's daily articulations and negotiations with difference through physical space. Along these lines, a number of scholars explore the patterns of behavior in public, such as opening doors, saying "excuse me," smiling, nodding, waving, or lining up for the bus. Amin (2008:12) refers to these as "rhythms of use and passage," which develop as a response to the need to negotiate difference on a daily basis.

As Watson and Saha (2012) recently illustrate, the normalization of multicultural diversity in everyday spaces has profound consequences for social relations. They demonstrate the "multicultural drift," or normalization of ethnic diversity, that has taken place in suburban London over the last several decades. Hall introduced this concept in 1999 to describe developments in the U.K. during the 1990s. Rather than stemming from official state policy, the "drift" occurred simply through an "unplanned, incremental process" (Watson and Saha 2012:4). In the suburbs of Tooting and Redbridge, diversity has become "simply a fact of life" (ibid). They use this concept to explore the ways in which first and second-generation immigrants living in the suburbs expressed belonging. According to the authors, such expressions, were neither "dramatic nor exotic," but rather occurred through mundane, and "ordinary" practices. First generation respondents expressed a sense of attachment through the presence of their family and friends, rather than through their use of local public spaces or value of local heritage. In contrast, older second-generation immigrants demonstrated an "internationalization" of nationalist rhetoric about the consequences of multiculturalism at the urban scale, expressing discomfort with that they perceived as the dominance of one ethnic group in the public realm around them. Younger second-generation respondents, however, revealed an explicit linking between their sense of belonging and the public realm, emphasizing the

importance of local Asian shopping streets as “markets of their acceptance and deep connection to London” (17).

Along these lines, other scholars demonstrate the role of sensory experiences in everyday negotiations with cultural difference (Degen and Rose 2012; Wise 2010). Wise (2010) emphasizes the role played by “bodily hexis” in Ashfield’s elderly residents’ negotiations of cultural difference. As she shows, much of the resentment expressed by Anglo-Celtic residents related to divergent ideas about “what a ‘welcoming body’ should do.” Hand gestures, eye contact, and body language are all easily “misinterpreted.” Smell and sight are connected to Otherness. All these sensorial ways of being in space result in heavily “embodied routes carved out through paths well-trodden over years, punctuated by familiar landscapes” (932). When Ashfield’s seniors were expressing resentment about the changes Chinese immigrants had instituted in their shopping landscape – aisle width, lighting, lines, the display of items, and codes surrounding personal space – reveals the role of “bodily hexis” in everyday racism. Similarly, Degen and Rose (2012:3272) demonstrate how the urban environment affects one’s “experience of place.” Thus, as they argue, changes to the “built environment not only reflect wider structural political, economic, cultural, and government changes, but also profoundly alter the everyday experience of urban space.”

But, it is important not to assume that “difference will somehow be dissolved by a process of mixing of hybridization of culture in public space” (Valentine 2008:325). Valentine thus cautions against what she sees as a “worrying romanticization of the urban encounter,” warning that we should not take the “magic” of the urban for granted. For one, the local scale has been a site of exclusionary citizenship politics, rather than

emancipatory ones (Gilbert 2009; Varsanyi 2008). As Amin (2002; 2012) has argued, mixing, in and of itself, does not address the “power differentials” operating in multicultural societies. The places in which we inhabit are steeped in longstanding racialized hegemonic discourses (Anderson 1991; Shaw 2007), and policed based on norms of masculinity, heteronormativity (Andersson 2012), class (Mitchell 2003; Walby and Lippert 2012) and physical ability.

Norms of everyday sociability may not develop into a greater respect for difference. Simmel (1949:255) defines sociability as the “free-playing” interaction whereby strangers become connected others, “resolved in togetherness.” This definition precipitated a longstanding sociological interest in the significance of sociability for interpersonal relations. Goffman (1963:84), for example, describes the process of “civil inattention” that occurs as

one gives to another enough visual notice to demonstrate that one appreciates that the other is present (and that one admits openly to having seen him), while at the next moment withdrawing one’s attention from him so as to express that he does not constitute a target of special curiosity or design.

The appearance of social distance or avoidance is seen as belying more complex and deeply engrained norms of acceptable eye contact, body language, and use of spaces such as public parks (Germain and Radice 2006) or seats on public transit.

Displays of civility, however complex, do not necessarily involve a reduction of prejudice. Often, that people are civil, polite, and politically correct in public has more to do with inward orientation and the self-definition process than outward orientation, acceptance, and respect for others. Technology prevents us from interacting – our computer screens and cellphones mean that we are still in the private realm even when we are in public (Valentine 2008). The café is no longer necessarily a space of interaction,

but one where social relations are stymied by the laptop computer screen (McLaren, 29 January 2010, *The Globe and Mail*). Calhoun (1998), giving a different twist on an old phrase, refers to this as “community without propinquity.”

In *Living with Strangers* (2012:137) Ash Amin offers a “politics of hope” in the role of urban public spaces, albeit one that emphasizes the “mediated” nature of encounters with difference in the city. Amin sees urban public “rhythms of co-presence” as a constant interplay of the familiarity and fear of difference. In the former case, public spaces (ideally) afford strangers the “breathing space” to express identities and differences. In the latter case, longstanding and deeply engrained conceptions of race and Otherness cause deep discomfort about encounters with the Other. This constant negotiation is always subject to political intervention. As the boundaries of community are increasingly defined through the rhetoric of risk and security, encounters in public space are being colored by the perceived need to protect oneself from the threatening Other. Such machinations, argues Amin, are allowing xenophobia to take hold in plural European societies. Amin is hopeful that these trends can be reversed by “re-purposing” public spaces informed by the “principles of multiplicity and common access” (63). His “politics of the stranger” thus advocates for co-presence without recognition, an “indifference to difference” (74). Such a project depends on the reanimation of democracy and social justice in the public sphere.

A major point to be taken from this literature is that space matters and not all spaces are created equal. Spaces are governed by different designs, experiences, exclusions, inclusions, and histories. They are shaped by power relations. Scholars have

thus become intent on elaborating what sort of spaces can foster mutual understanding and exchange.

In the literature, we find a range of competing perspectives on types of spaces. Wise (2010:181) for example argues that “non-ethno specific” social spaces are crucial for spurring the “magical moments that unexpectedly produce intercultural relationships.” She illustrates this using the vignette of a senior’s fair in Ashfield whereby a Greek accordion player incited a spontaneous and joyful cross-cultural sing along to the “Zorba” (182). She argues that “relations of reciprocity” (181) develop in spaces that have multiple users. Such relations are formed through important “gestures of recognition” such as nodding, saying hello, or enquiring about family members.

In earlier work, Amin (2004:969), more skeptical about the potential of unstructured public space, pointed to more “compulsory” arenas such as schools and workplaces. These spaces more often serve multiple groups and require “interdependence and habitual engagement.” Amin (2004:964) also highlighted “unsteady social spaces” such as “legislative theater” or “nighttime/weekend leisure spaces for youth.” These spaces allow young ethnic minorities, the ability to voice their claims to space, and to question assumptions about appropriate codes of “minority” behaviour in public.

Wood and Landry (2008) provide an exhaustive list of the potential contemporary “zones of contact” in the city, which include neighborhoods, classrooms, workplaces, the high street, public space and institutions, as well as marketplaces. For the purposes of this thesis, I consider three types of spaces relevant for the night market phenomenon: public spaces, spaces of consumption, and suburban space.

2.2.1 Public Space

Public spaces provide an obvious potential site of engagement with difference because, ideally, they are free spaces of contact. Public space is an amorphous concept with a wide range of interpretations and a literature that is correspondingly rife with debate (Newman 2012; Springer 2011). In the most recent entry on public space in *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (written by Nicholas Blomley) public space is defined as that to “which all citizens have a right of access.” Public space is defined in terms of its relationship to private space, in which property is privately owned and therefore governed by rights of property. This definition reflects the republican tradition through which urban geographers have generally approached the topic. This tradition stems from the work of Jurgen Habermas (1962) who linked the public sphere to citizenship. For Habermas, the public sphere represents a site of freedom and deliberation removed from the state.

More recent work has also emphasized the need for public spaces for political purposes (Young 1990; Mitchell 2003). Low (2000) contends that the “physical designation and design of public space itself can also become avenues for the negotiation of politics.” Don Mitchell’s (2003) famous definition of public space sees it as both an “ideal” and a “real” place that embodies social relations as governed by private property and other laws. The extent to which philosophical theories about the public sphere can be extended to “material space” has been a matter of debate in human geography (Springer 2011:539). As Newman (2012) argues, there is an enormous amount of confusion between the theoretical public sphere and physical public space. This stems from our inability to empirically test theories of the democratic public sphere.

Concerning the “encounter” in public space, there have been important critiques. Sennett (1976; 1994:375) argues that the public space has grown increasingly “meaningless,” an “empty space, a space of abstract freedom but no enduring human connection.” Public spaces often are shaped by new geographies of segregation. They are often at best territorialized, and at worst, re-segregated (Amin 2004; 2002; Kohn 2004; de Koning 2009). People develop ways of living and crossing between private and public spaces without interacting (Atkinson and Flint 2004). This research recalls the “mosaic of social worlds” analogy put forth by Robert Park, Louis Wirth, and Claude Fischer. In many cases, the built environment itself fosters these distinct social spaces, via gated communities, fences, and the tinted windows of SUVs. Further, interactions in public space may be too fleeting in nature to change values (Amin 2004).

There are clearly reasons to doubt the possibilities for meaningful social interaction in public spaces of consumption. But, as Newman has recently argued, these lamentations concerning the “end of public space” are expressions of nostalgia for a past that has never truly existed. Public spaces have always been subjected to norms, rules, and regulations. Newman (2012:2) instead chooses to employ the term “urban commons” which he defines “exclusively according to the architectural design of the term: to refer to urban, parks, squares, sidewalks, streets.”

Like Newman, I wish to take a more expansive view of the public that is concerned more with their contexts of use and meaning. Many spaces have public qualities and are used and thought of as public spaces, but to which it can certainly not be said that everyone has a “right of access.” Take the local pub, café, or mall, for instance. These are privately owned spaces but are used as public spaces, at least by some (Lofland

1985:20). Of course, these are by no means free spaces of interaction. At the same time, many people think of these spaces as public. Malls often play an important community role. In my hometown of Syracuse, New York, a curious phenomenon has developed in which a local suburban mall, devastated by the economic recession of the last five years, is being reclaimed by community organizations. An entire wing of the mall, which used to contain national retail chain stores like Nike, Famous Footwear, and Old Navy now contains a children's dance studio, a branch of the public library, as well as the upstate New York train museum.

Conversely, spaces that are traditionally thought of as publicly owned (government buildings, for example) are inaccessible to the general public (Latham et al. 2009). Mexico City's zocalo is the largest public square in the world, but is bordered by armed guards and military officers with machine guns. Universities in Canada are "semi-public." McGill University, a public institution, shuts its main gates once a year in order to prevent people from obtaining "acquired rights." At the same time, its main commons were physically designed to preclude the political assembly of large numbers of people.

Consequently, I echo Vigneswaran's recent call for consideration of the "more variegated and anarchic process of social construction and imagination of the 'public', which occurs across a range of less likely forms of space and contexts we may not have commonly envisaged as 'public' at all." Like Wood and Gilbert (2005:687) I view publicness as a "quality of space" whose meaning cannot be reduced to matters of ownership, but rather reflects "design and practice." Public spaces are the

physical spaces of the city where people congregate, or spaces of social relations where production and consumption processes come together, or spaces of collective identity resisting structural patterns striving to impose an order onto the

diversity of the city (or society). Public spaces and institutions are the places where people (residents and immigrants) meet and potentially mix with one another” (Wood and Gilbert 2005:687).

This definition allows us to take a bottom-up approach to understanding plurality and discourses of diversity for people’s everyday lives. Such a definition, which envisions publicness as a spectrum, is broad enough to have value for comparing the two night markets.

Nevertheless, I also wish to retain some notion of contestation that flows through much of this vast literature. A number of scholars have fruitfully applied the theories of Iris Marion Young on the public realm, to physical public spaces. Young emphasized the concept of agonism, by which she meant that a truly just public sphere must allow for democratic debate and struggle. As Amin (2002) and Dunn (2005) show, public spaces are potential sites of “agonistic democracy.” Springer (2011:526) defines public space as the “battlefield on which the conflicting interests of the rich and poor are set, as well as the object of contestation.” A space’s publicness revolves around the extent to which the “criteria for entry” into that space are challengeable. A space is public as long as the “right to enforce those criteria is always in question” (Springer 2011:541).

2.2.2 Spaces of Consumption

While public spaces have been reified in geography, spaces of consumption have been demonized. There is a longstanding tradition in geography of discounting the social in spaces of consumption. One of the major themes of this scholarship has been the increasing surveillance of public spaces (Flusty 2001; Davis 2006). The economic restructuring of the 1980s had a significant impact on clothing and food retailing and its

geography. In particular, via the mergers and acquisitions made possible by deregulation and privatization, North American and British ownership “underwent a profound concentration process.” In the late 1980s, for example, 40% of the fashion retail market sales in the UK was controlled by six clothing companies and five companies controlled 60% of the food retailing sector (Crewe 2000:276). As a result, retail spaces, such as main streets and department stores, became increasingly homogeneous; the shopping mall became known as the “urban cathedral” of the day. Subsequent research focused on understanding how neoconservative agendas worked in tandem with such commodified spaces and the “complex and contradictory relations of retail capital with the regulatory state” (Crewe 2000:276). McGrath et al. (1993), for example, pointed to the “process of ‘desocialization’ of retail spaces, or the “elimination of opportunities for humane interpersonal encounters” (280).

Geographers in particular became interested in illustrating the ways in which commodified spaces such as the mall exemplified Foucault’s panopticon - highly regulated spaces, surveilled by CCTV networks and guarded by security personnel, where social behaviour is heavily dictated and meaningful interpersonal interaction circumscribed by codes of capitalist behaviour (Davis 2006; Dunn 2005; Flusty 2005; Goonewarda and Kipfer 2005). Seemingly public spaces, malls are nevertheless engineered as spaces of exclusion: of the poor, youth, of racialized subjects, and of those perceived as “‘the other’ to the dominant order: at best irrelevant, almost always unwelcome; at worst deviant, such that ‘exclusion may always be an unintended consequence of commercial development” (Crewe and Gregson 1998:40). Money and class dictate participation in the mall, main shopping street, or department store, as well

as creating the grounds for exclusion. Geographers also highlighted the ways in which malls simultaneously “fragment” and “freeze” both space and time (through creating “fixed” meanings) (Gregson and Crewe 1994:262) (Chaney 1990; Goss 1993). Recently, Newman’s (2011) analysis of the Paris Jardins d’Ecole project demonstrates the ways in which the processes of advanced capitalism infiltrate the design of the “urban commons.” He shows how middle class residents were co-opted into this project, to be “vigilant citizens” and to assume responsibility for the policing of the gardens. The project of surveillance was facilitated through a landscape design centering on open sight lines.

Other scholars argue that contemporary public spaces have been reduced to mere simulations of public life (Kohn 2004; Sorkin 1992). Hankins and Powers (2009) emphasize the ways in which neoliberal discourses of urban livability have clouded popular attitudes towards being in public. Publicness has been reduced to “performance,” rendered devoid of any “collective sense of struggle or awareness” (847). Social contact with others in public space – “having chance encounters” – is a desired backdrop for “luxury, theater, and consumption.” This conception precludes collective engagement with the state and any association of the public with “social justice, community, and public life” (847).

There is also convincing evidence concerning the changing nature of the iconography of public space. Cities and neighbourhoods are increasingly “branded” (Hackworth and Reckers 2005). As city spaces are “spectacularized,” such brandscapes make their way into the public realm. As Iveson (2012:161) shows, the “urban surface” has long been used as a canvas for “text and images” in order to “address strangers who pass through spaces at other times.” The “outdoor media landscape” has always been a

strategic site, and has traditionally been less costly and more accessible to different groups than private spaces. But the “creeping monopolization” of this landscape has instituted a new “regime of publicity” that reduces its openness. This landscape has become increasingly monopolized by large international advertising agencies, evidenced by the prevalence of new forms of advertising in outdoor public spaces. Advertising is increasingly mobile – found on the sides of buses and subway cars, and increasingly digital – with video screens adorning everything from billboards to the walls of public washrooms. Furthermore, as Walby and Lippert (2012) demonstrate, those who are not deemed part of the desired urban “aesthetic” are often excluded from public space. In the case of downtown Ottawa, the homeless are subjected to various strategies of dispersion in order to fabricate a cityscape intended to foster “public consumption and ceremonial nationalism” as well as to uphold certain “temporalities” of city life. Such projects increasingly rely on public-private policing arrangements.

Regeneration schemes and business improvement districts are also implicated in the shaping of social relations in public spaces. Cities have become increasingly “entrepreneurial,” subscribing to “market-led” remodeling. This remodeling has included the harnessing of gentrification as a tool of “urban regeneration” (Collins and Friesen 2011:3068). It has led to the creation of “new forms of social governance that seek to be more inclusive in their efforts to secure successful urban futures” (3070). Ethnic neighbourhoods and enclaves from Chinatown to Little Italy are increasingly seen as important to tourism, neighbourhood revitalization, and the place marketing of cities on the global stage (Yeoh 2005; Rath 2007). Hackworth and Rekers (2005:232) explore the ways in which the branding of ethnic neighbourhoods in Toronto produces a “constructed

multicultural urbanity.” In many city spaces, culture is seen as the perfect backdrop for consumption, producing an “overconsumption of the apparent signs of coexistence and ethnicity” (Latouche 1997:13, cited by Germain and Radice 2006:121). Canadian Chinatowns are seen as “cultural attractions that ‘celebrate diversity’ and complement the cosmopolitan ‘buzz of the nearly city Central Business District’” (Shaw 2007:55). In these ethnic precincts, consumers demonstrate cosmopolitan status by displaying their “mastery of the ‘dim sum’ trolley and the live fish tank” (Hannigan 2010:85).

2.3 Discussion

It is important to emphasize that different people perceive and use public spaces differently. Vertovec’s (2007) concept of super-diversity emphasizes the increasingly variegated experiences of immigrants and minorities by variables other than ethnicity, including country of birth, age, generation, sub-ethnicity, race, religion, language ability, class, education, and legal status. In other words, this perspective urges the consideration of the expanding number of variables as well as interactions between them for both academic research and policy on diversity, inclusion and immigration. Such an argument extends to the shared spaces of the public realm. Super-diversity provides a fruitful lens from which to consider the changing nature of cultural diversity in cities as well as suburbs. As Watson and Saha (2012) have recently shown, attachment of people to certain spaces varies widely by generation, age, and gender. That some immigrant groups may prefer to express their sense of belonging through attachment to private spaces where they meet friends (rather than the library or park) should not be taken as evidence of their leading parallel lives. This is a crucial point. People express attachment and sense of belonging differently that may not have to do with local spaces.

In my view, geographers have been too hasty to dismiss spaces of consumption. The focus on the mall (and the “high street” and department store) as the “cathedral of consumption” has caused the neglect of alternative spaces of consumption and provides an overly simplistic account (Crewe and Gregson 1998:40). A notable exception has been the work of Crewe and Gregson who argue that too much attention has been paid to the commodity as a source of distinction in the post-modern economy. In their view, such a focus has led to the “oversimplification” of the processes of exchange and trade – viewed as purely profit oriented, rather than as social acts. But as Crewe and Gregson (1998:41) emphasize, “exchange” is not purely about “material transaction.” It is an embedded social act – a “richly symbolic activity which can have important emotional consequences quite apart from any material changes which may result.” They have thus pointed us to the new “geographies of consumption,” the more marginal, and less formal spaces of consumption such as car boot fairs, jumble sales, flea markets, and street markets. As such, they call for a “serious and detailed interrogation of the social, cultural and economic practices of exchange within such marginal spaces” (Crewe and Gregson 1998:40).

At a typical British car boot (trunk) sale, for example, no licence is required for vending; buyers one weekend can be vendors the next. Each Sunday, vendors fill their trunks with second-hand merchandise, which “hordes” of buyers pick through, bartering on the sale and paying in cash. The car boot sale is characterized by its “sliding pricing systems, interpersonal relations of exchange, flexibility of social roles and affective as well as economic motivations” (Crewe and Gregson 1998:39). Its appeal lies in its “unpredictability” of exchange where

transactions are dominated by cash, where prices are negotiable and where commodities are invested with histories and geographies [that] evidently offers a compelling alternative to the uniformity and predictability of the mall and the department store. (Crewe and Gregson 1998:50)

In this disorganized space, shoppers seek to discern “diamonds” from rubble. Vendors are attracted by the “entrepreneurial freedom.” Participants are also enticed by the “communal” quality of the car boot ‘crowd’; social networks, friendships, and rivalries are formed and negotiated through these events over time, in a way that is qualitatively different from the “anonymous crowd of the mall” (43). The car boot sale has commonalities with the “fair, the carnival, and the theatre of exchange in previous centuries.” According to the authors, the car boot fair “celebrates past modes of exchange, modes within which we can all be the small-time entrepreneur and within which we, rather than the retail conglomerates and developers, control and shape social practices” (262). These spaces are simultaneously about ‘imagination and creativity,’ social relationships, and entrepreneurial skill. Hannigan (2010) suggests that retail spaces are also “contact zones” in which new identities and conceptions of mutual understanding, civility, and responsibility can develop. Germain and Radice (2006:121) argue, and I concur, that the “local urban bazaar has value beyond its commodities.” Surprisingly little geographic research, however, focuses specifically on the marketplace.

2.4 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter has been to establish the position that space matters in the “geography of encounter” and that markets are places of encounter. Social relations in public are embedded in a wide range of processes. It is this sense of embeddedness and

embodiment in space that the literature on contact and conflict misses. There is also an assumption that certain spaces are better than others for fostering meaningful exchange. Amin's work raises important questions about the types of spaces that can put everyday multiculturalism in conversation with social/active citizenship and engagement. Some kinds of public spaces may have more potential than others to serve as sites for the negotiation of citizenship; conversely, some 'multicultural' spaces may encourage everyday racism or may serve only as arenas within which whites can access cultural capital.

The two night markets are integrally related to these debates over public space, spaces of consumption, and suburban space. They are used as public spaces, but are clearly subjected to a variety of regimes of publicness, including property relations, spatial regulation, managing behavioural norms, micro-scale diversity management projects, and fear of the "Other." These particular cases are also grounded in the context of Vancouver's Chinatown and new patterns of suburban settlement where 25 years of literature have told a particular story about encounters with difference. In the following Chapter I consider Vancouver's long history of racialized exclusion of the Chinese before examining the literature on the anthropology of marketplaces. My aim is thus to contribute by approaching these debates from the perspective of everyday multiculturalism, considering the role of intercultural shopping in "a much neglected public space and site of social connections and interaction in cities that is not often recognized" (Watson 2009:1578): the marketplace.

Chapter 3 – Immigration and the Social Geography of Race

Twenty-five years ago, Kay Anderson first published material from her doctoral research in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. This 1987 article was entitled “The idea of Chinatown: The power of place and institutional practice in the making of a racial category.”³ Anderson was a pioneer, bringing together the fields of social and cultural geography, and advancing our understanding of the socio-spatialization of race in the city. A simple Google Scholar search indicates the *magnitude* of this work’s influence – *Vancouver’s Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (1991) – has 497 citations. Her post-structuralist critique emphasized the spatial manifestation of white European hegemony in Vancouver. Through a detailed history of Chinatown, she demonstrated how the category “Chinese” was constructed at multiple scales in Canada, and concretized by and for Westerners in the physical boundaries of Chinatown itself. Over time, as white European perceptions of the “Chinese” changed, so too did the material space of Chinatown. This intellectual contribution united Chinatowns on a global scale through themes of “power and racial discourse, the social construction of identity and place, the relation between ideology and institutional practice, and the formation of conceptual structures into material forms” (Anderson 1991:250). It influenced not only scholarship on race relations in Canadian cities, but is now considered fundamental reading for the study of *any* Chinatown.

³ The piece was based on her 1986 PhD thesis entitled ‘East as West: Place, State and the Institutionalization of Myth in Vancouver’s Chinatown, 1880-1980.’

One theoretical starting point for this thesis is to consider the relevance of Anderson's seminal work for the recent night market phenomenon in Vancouver. The goal of this Chapter is to establish the ways in which scholarly approaches to Chinatown have changed since 1987. I draw on the genealogy of Anderson's work as a lens through which to review the literature on immigration and the social geography of race, focusing specifically on the changing theoretical approaches to Chinatown over the last quarter century. *Vancouver's Chinatown* was published during a paradigmatic shift in the understanding of the relationship between space and race. I therefore begin with a short review of the work's precursors in the Chicago School and the field of ethnic geography (section 3.1) before outlining its major themes and theoretical contributions (section 3.2). In section 3.3 I trace the impact of this work, through both its continued application and its critics. *Vancouver's Chinatown* had a double-edged effect in the literature on the social geography of race. In recognizing Chinatown as an "idea" as well as a physical space, it was a marked shift in approach. This advance also pushed theory forward in another way – it stimulated a significant debate over the role of agency and the dialectical relationship between race and space. Subsequent scholarship has paid more attention to the multiplicity of voices and experiences within Chinatown (Lee 2007; Mitchell 1998; Ng 1999; Phan and Luk 2008). Generally speaking, however, the post-structuralist approach has remained dominant in the last quarter century. Chinatown is viewed as a highly constructed, fabricated, insular, bounded, homogeneous, Western urban form.

In the last 15 years, scholars have focused on conceptualizing new suburban patterns of Chinese settlement, particularly in North America, but also Australia (Bauder and Sharpe 2002; Cheng 2010; Fong 1994; Johnston et al. 2008; Li 2009; Lin and

Robinson 2005; Zhou et al. 2008; Xue et al. 2012). In section 3.4 I examine the literature on “ethnoburbs” and consider its application in the Vancouver case. This scholarship contrasts starkly with that on Chinatown. Ethnoburbs are seen as fluid, organic, spontaneous, socially mixed expressions of the agency of a new class of mobile Chinese migrants. The crucial question emerging from this literature concerns whether or not these positions can be synthesized. This Chapter makes the case for a more complex understanding of the *shifting* roles of structure and agency in the social geography of race.

3.1 Intellectual Pre-cursors

For much of the 20th century, Chinatown was viewed either as a product of ghettoization or as an expression of the internal dynamics and experiences of the Chinese immigrant community (see Cho and Leigh 1972; Lai 1973; Salter 1978). In 1987, Kay Anderson, summarized the history of social geographical thought on Chinatown as follows:

In social geography, Chinatown has been conceptualized as a launching point in the assimilation of Chinese immigrants, as an urban village pitted against encroaching land use, as a product of segregation on the basis of race or ethnicity, and as a Chinese architectural form (580-581).

These narratives are owed largely to the Chicago School sociologists of the early 20th century, and particularly to the human ecology and ecological succession models developed by Park, Burgess, and Mackenzie. These theories informed the assimilation model, the dominant paradigm in the spatial modeling of ethnic identity in 20th century America.

Robert Park applied ecological principles to human society. He saw human society as partly functioning on a sub-social, or biotic, level that mimics the ecological

processes of plant communities. Human drive for survival (and personal gain) induces a state of perpetual competition and struggle for resources. The differential abilities and characteristics of individuals result in their sorting into groups. Within these communities, individuals recognize the mutual benefits of cooperation, therefore staving off the ill effects of competition via the creation of distinct “moral orders,” or cultural superstructures. Ernest Burgess’ model of concentric zones represents the application of these ideas to the city, viewing the city as a series of rings around a Central Business District that result from ecological competition and sorting processes. Park, Burgess, and Mackenzie’s (1925) ecological succession model bridged these two lines of thinking, by linking urban growth and residential transition. The city’s concentric rings are formed through invasion and succession. The middle classes suburbanize with upward mobility, moving from the working class zones to the inner and outer suburbs, driven by the perpetual growth of the Central Business District.

Cultural assimilation came to be seen as an inevitable outcome of ecological succession.⁴ Assimilation is generally known as a model of immigrant integration whereby immigrants exchange the cultural norms of their sending society for those of the receiving one – including language, religion, food, dress, and thought. When combined with ecological principles, assimilation is viewed as a function of population dispersal (Park 1926; Peach 2003:99). The more spatially dispersed an immigrant or minority

⁴ It should be noted that in 1918, Thomas and Znaniecki’s study of Polish immigrants in Chicago also made the link between the spatial concentration of the Polish and the persistence of Polish culture, priming subsequent Chicago School sociologists for further study of the relationship between the retention of immigrant cultures and the adoption of host society norms (i.e. Wirth 1928).

population, the more likely they are to lose their cultural attachments – religious, linguistic, culinary, and so on – and be folded into the “melting pot” (Li 2009:12).

Within this ecological paradigm, assimilation is seen as a desirable, linear, and statistically testable function of spatial distance. Herbert Gans (1979) later distinguished between acculturation, the degree to which immigrants embrace the culture of the host society, and assimilation, the extent to which their reliance on “ethnic associations” and institutions diminishes. While acculturation occurred quickly, assimilation could take generations, depending on the degree of openness of the host society institutions. Ultimately, although ethnic groups might retain “symbolic ethnicity” (Gans 1979), they would eventually “merge into the host society and lose their distinctive identities” (Li 2009:12; Gordon 1964). The ecological succession model assumed that immigrant groups would make the same residential choices as the native born population as they became upwardly mobile (Li 2009:12; Kwong 1987). From this perspective, Chinatown is seen as the starting point in the immigrant transition from ghetto, to enclave, to suburb (Peach 2003).

The assimilation model was variously refined throughout the course of the 20th century but was never without its challengers (see Hoyt 1939; Firey 1947). As a number of scholars note, a central problem concerns the model’s clear (and highly problematic) normative underpinnings. Robert Park (1928:890), for example, attributed all “so-called racial problems” to “situations in which assimilation and amalgamation do not take place at all, or take place very slowly.” The Chicago School sociologists had no trouble indicating that it was “Protestants of vaguely British descent” to which immigrants “were supposed to aspire” (Waldinger 2003:26; Harvey 1973). Another critique concerns the

model's assumption that all groups follow the same trajectory, when experiences vary widely across groups as well as within them. The "ethnicity-pluralism" model viewed ethnicity as "dynamic," acknowledging the "resilience of ethnicity" and inter-group differences. Unlike the assimilation model, it "holds that such differences will coexist over time, making American society an ethnic mosaic" (Li 2009:12).

Neither model, however, sufficiently accounted for the roles played by discrimination, racialization, and power in immigrant settlement patterns. To be fair, Robert Park recognized the social construction of race. He viewed racial categories as ultimately unimportant, as all groups would gradually be folded into the mainstream (Farber 1995; Persons 1987). Of course, by the 1960s, it was obvious that upward mobility was achievable for some and not for others, and that these patterns were highly correlated with race. Thus scholars turned their attention to residential segregation and the various push and pull factors involved in the formation of ghettos and enclaves in the U.S. and U.K. (Jones 1960; Peach 1975). This line of scholarship, known as "spatial sociology," focused on outlining the patterns associated with the residential concentration of minority groups (Jackson 1987:4). The central debate in this field concerned whether residential segregation was the product of "choice" or "constraint" (Jackson 1987:4; Peach 1975; Peach et al. 1981). In geography, this field would come to be known as "ethnic geography," and by 1990s, as the "geography of race and racism" (Li 2009:11).

In the 1980s, the growing influence of social theory in geography precipitated a major shift in both the content of the research and its methodologies (Kobayashi and Peake 1994; Li 2009:11; Wylie 2009). Human geographers were increasingly concerned with the ways in which the landscape and social realm were dialectical. These scholars

called for increased understanding of “the social construction of race and the dynamics of racialization, to the social spatial structuration of ethnic communities, and to the role of ethnic economies in ethnic community development” (Li 2009:11). The prominent social theorists of the day – Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and Stuart Hall – were highly critical of the longstanding models of ethnicity and assimilation, seeing them as “order theories” which over-emphasized archetypical inclusion and took for granted a “core culture and society” into which immigrants and minorities assimilated (Feason and Feason 1994:29). Omi and Winant’s (1986:64) introduction of the concept of racialization – as the “extension of racial meanings to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group” – was also hugely influential. Race came to be viewed as a social construction, that was not only a mode of “differentiation” but also as a concept that was deeply implicated in power relationships (Li 2009:15).

In geography, these theoretical advances fostered new understandings of the relationship between race and space. Scholars began interrogating the ways in which space itself is “discursively ordered and produced” (Ray et al. 1997:77; Soja 1989; Gregory 1994). Race and racialization were newly understood as linked to a “complex mesh of social relations and spatial structures” (Li 2009:16). Race and racism could be “read” through landscape. Peter Jackson (1987:4) for example first described the “geography of racism,” lamenting the continued subscription of many geographers to the assimilation model despite the dearth of evidence suggesting any “consistent decline in ethnic segregation over time.” Instead he argued for a greater understanding of the ways in which race and racism have a spatial “dimension that requires us to examine the

complex interweaving of social relations and spatial structures at multiple spatial scales” (Jackson 1987:12).

3.2 Vancouver’s Chinatown – The Post-Structuralist Approach

Kay Anderson was concerned with introducing a new perspective on Chinatown. While recognizing the role of residents in shaping and building their community, her principal goal was to demonstrate that Chinatown held a separate meaning for white society that was far removed from these internal dynamics. Anderson intended her analysis as a departure from interpretations of Chinatown as a “Western landscape type” that relied on analyses of dynamics internal to the neighbourhood. Chinatown, she argued, must be seen as 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 1987:581). In other words, the Chinatown of European Canadian society had little to do with the actions of Chinese immigrants, or the ways in which the Chinese “defined themselves.” Instead, Chinatown was framed by European “cognitive categories” about racial ideology that stemmed from centuries of racial classification (583).

Drawing primarily on the theoretical work of Edward Said, Michel Foucault, and Antonio Gramsci, Anderson connected Orientalism, race, and white hegemony in the physical space of Chinatown. Anderson emphasized the processes through which racial categories were produced over time. The physical site of Chinatown was instrumental in the creation and maintenance of this “system of racial classification” as well as for white hegemony itself. As Anderson (1987:584) argued, white European officials at all levels of government in Canada used the category “Chinese” to bolster their own “identity and

privilege” doing so through their construction of Chinatown as a “morally aberrant” and “unsanitary sink.”

Vancouver’s Chinatown emerged in the mid-1880s as a small number of mainly Chinese merchants, their workers, and sawmill employees, settled on the mudflats next to False Creek. The formation of Chinatown, in this early period, was deeply related to exclusion. The location provided distance and protection from a hostile white settler community. As Chinatown attracted increasing numbers of Chinese immigrants, the Canadian state’s efforts to restrict the growth of Chinatown and to discourage further migration intensified. The 1885 Head Tax placed a fee (first \$50, and then \$500) on Chinese entering Canada. The fee was intended to prevent permanent Chinese settlement in Canada by making it difficult for labourers to bring their families to Canada. Vancouver’s Chinese population, however, nearly doubled between 1911 and 1921. By 1921, there were 6,500 Chinese in Vancouver, including a growing number of women and children. Despite the state’s best efforts, a Canadian-born generation of Chinese was forming. Chinatown was also expanding physically (Ng 1999:14).

Although the early Chinatown had held some exoticism and mystery, as it grew, white British Vancouver increasingly viewed it as a problem. Chinatown came to be known as “vice town,” associated with filth, disease, opium addiction, gambling, and prostitution: dangerous social ills that needed to be contained. As such, Chinese land ownership outside of the enclave was viewed as a significant “threat,” that was exacerbated by popular ideas about eugenics and the “rising tide” of colour in the 1920s. Gentlemen’s agreements among white landowners limited the residential mobility of the Chinese until the 1950s (Anderson 1991:127). WWI had seen the discourse of nationhood

fused with racial discourse. “White Canada Forever” became a “political rallying cry” as well as a “popular bar-room song” (Yu 2009:1015). In Ottawa, the long list of exemptions to the Head Tax system had rendered it unwieldy and ineffective at curbing Chinese migration to Canada. In heavy-handed response, Chinese immigration was banned outright from 1923 until 1947.

During WWII, Canadian attitudes towards the Chinese began to change. Although racism and hostility continued to be prevalent, a post-Nazi backlash undermined the eugenics movement and somewhat more liberal attitudes began to take hold. Outright restrictions on Chinese immigration ended with the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923. The enfranchisement of Chinese Canadians occurred with the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947. Gradually, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, it became “fashionable” to express “respect for difference.” Chinatown was reinterpreted as a commodity: the romantic idealization of the “little Orient.” By the 1960s, Chinatown came to be seen as a “civic asset” in Vancouver (Anderson 1991:210) and the “purposeful orientalizing” of Chinatown began to capitalize on the shifting “tastes of European consumers” (Anderson 1991:177).

Landmark changes to Canada’s immigration policy in 1962 and 1967 ended the country’s “white immigration policy” and heralded a new era for Chinatown. The policy shift opened the doors to immigrants regardless of ethnic origin, place of birth, or religion, evaluating newcomers instead in terms of skills, occupation, age, as well as the presence of family members in Canada (Knowles 2007). Large numbers of immigrants from Hong Kong, mainly urban professionals, arrived in Vancouver in the early 1970s, seeking escape from a “colonial outpost in the midst of major struggles over questions of political

authority and legitimacy,” attracted by political liberalization and economic opportunity in Canada (Mitchell 1998:736; Li 2003). Meanwhile, diplomatic relations between Canada and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) were established in 1971, upon the country’s admittance to the United Nations. Chinese emigration laws were relaxed, and an agreement was reached between Canada and the PRC (in 1973) that close relatives could be brought to Canada by Chinese Canadians (Li 2003).

Canada’s 1971 policy of official multiculturalism institutionalized diversity as “the key to the nation’s elusive identity” (Anderson 1991:211). The policy was intended to address the separatist movement in Quebec, by establishing an official cultural policy in Canada: of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, rather than one of biculturalism. The policy entrenched the mosaic as the “ideal form” for Canadian society and heralded an important era for Chinese identity politics, as “Chinese-Canadian” as a category was supported officially by the Canadian state (Ng 1999:103). The Chinese came to be seen in a much more positive light than in previous eras, but did not escape the essentialism of the past. As Anderson (1991:213) argues, in this period, the Chinese shed negative stereotypes for positive ones, becoming praised for “industry, fastidiousness, courtesy, and compassion.” They became “targeted” in a new way: as a potential “symbol of the new Canada,” and as contributors to the country’s “originality” (Anderson 1991:212). The Chinese were encouraged to “celebrate their Chinese heritage and cultural skills as a legitimate part of the Canadian mosaic” (Ng 1999:124).

Designated a historic site in 1971, Chinatown was to be honored for its diversity, authenticity, and tradition, as the “classical east” recreated for the “West” (Anderson 1991:235). Both city planners and Chinese merchants promoted the aesthetic visibility of

Chineseness. The neon sign guidelines of the 1970s, for example, strove to make Chinatown more visible through the encouragement of “Chinese motifs, symbols and forms” (City of Vancouver 1974). The 1980 Streetscape project intended to beautify Chinatown through a coordinated neighborhood colour-scheme, bilingual brass street signs, and lantern-style streetlights. Between 1970 and 1980, Chinatown increasingly became associated with tourism, the longstanding white hegemonic construction of the Chinese race harnessed in the service of urban development.

3.3 Intellectual Interpretations of Minority Relations and Race since Anderson

3.3.1. The Continued “Othering” of Chinatown

Vancouver’s Chinatown continues to influence students of Chinatown and, more broadly, of the social geography of race. Although it is a case study of Vancouver, its theoretical contribution is relevant for studies of Chinatowns in many other cities. Over the last twenty-five years, scholars from Brisbane (Ip 2005) to Singapore (Yeoh and Kong 1994) to Chicago (Santos and Yan 2008) have continued to explore the ways in which Chinatown is both an imposed “idea” as well as an “entity” (Yeoh and Kong 1994:19).

In the case of Vancouver, Martin (2004:88) emphasizes the persistent promotion of the area as one of “‘safe’ exoticism.” His analysis of the Vancouver Heritage Conservation Board’s self-guided Walking Tour of Chinatown pamphlet highlights the policing of the racialized boundaries of Chinatown by “white ghosts” (93). The tour conceals the history of discrimination, quickly ushering participants toward Chinatown’s “revitalized streetscape.” In other words, the tour erases past injustices in order to

represent Chinatown as a “civic asset” (88). Externally constructed Orientalist discourses continue to be imposed.

Similarly, as Santos et al. (2008) show in the case of Chicago’s Chinatown, former constructions of the neighbourhood – as dirty, dangerous, and criminal – have simply been “repackaged” by the Chicago Office of Tourism in order to attract tourists. Through a marketing scheme that asks: “isn’t it time you had a glimpse of another world?” Chicago’s Chinatown is portrayed as an exotic destination, albeit one with just enough mystery to allow tourists to feel safe to consume its “wonderful smells and tastes.” Business owners within Chinatown purposefully play up the area’s features to conform to a “tourist’s expectations” (887). Although these discourses have been given a new spin through sleek marketing campaigns, they remain bound to the longstanding and prevailing “White American societal” vision of Chinatown as a “space of the Other” (1003).

More recently, Klein and Zitcer (2012) apply the framework of Orientalism to examine the contemporary connections, both physical and conceptual, among North American Chinatowns. They examine the discourses surrounding inter-city Chinatown buses in the U.S. Northeast. These buses have connected the Chinatowns of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston since the late 1990s, and attract both Chinese and non-Chinese riders with low fares. Klein and Zitcer (2012:60) focus on the ways in which the latter group “experiences” and “understands” this mobile, extended “space of Chinatown.” Non-Chinese passengers view the Chinatown bus as an “authentic” Chinese experience (as one participant explained: “you’re in China when you ride the Chinatown bus”) (56). These passengers take pleasure in sharing their “insider knowledge” of the bus system

through stories of chaotic, crazy, dangerous, or disorganized “Chinese” behaviour on the bus. A recurring story among participants, for example, concerned the use of the bus to transport live poultry. Although none of the participants had in fact witnessed this practice, the “chicken bus” myth became a trope through which non-Chinese passengers affirmed the “exotic” and “authentic” nature of the Chinatown bus experience (47). Chinatown was constructed, through a “selective tourist gaze,” as “existing outside of the norms of the dominant society” (60). As such, discourses of the Orient, and the desire to consume the authentic Other, persist through this mobile “representation” of Chinatown (60).

Anderson’s work – and particularly her contributions concerning the mutually constitutive nature of space and race – continues to be highly influential for scholars of Chinatown. A number of scholars have found parallels in other cities and have emphasized the ways in which the meaning of Chinatown was and continues to be the subject of external fabrication by whites. These insights have both been important in revealing the persistence of Orientalist discourses surrounding Chinatown, but also for understanding the dynamic between space and race in new suburban Chinese neighborhoods.

3.3.2 Challenges

Intellectual interpretations of minority relations, race, and space have also changed dramatically since 1987. *Vancouver’s Chinatown* was extensively criticized for ignoring the agency of, homogenizing, and perhaps essentializing the Chinese by focusing strictly on White Canada’s interpretation of Chinatown, as well as reinforcing the “monolithic nature” of the racial categories of Chinese and European (i.e. Ng 1999;

Lee 2007; Leitner 1992; McDonald 1992). Helga Leitner (1992:109) characterized Anderson's neglect of agency as a "curious absence that has the effect of reducing social construction to processes which impinge on the group from the outside." The "peripheral" nature of Chinese residents to Anderson's account is a dominant theme among its reviewers (see Kasinitz 1993; McDonald 1992; Zhou 1993). In one of the more scathing reviews, Zhou (1993:745) decries Anderson's characterization of the Chinese as "lifeless objects manipulated by a more powerful group." What's more, she adds, her reliance on primary source material generated by a prejudiced white society introduces a tautological dilemma: how could an analysis limited to white hegemonic voices not produce a vision of white hegemony?

Elsewhere, McDonald (1992:281) lamented Anderson's preoccupation with applying her theory to history, instead of considering how it might be used in the future. She considered history through a theoretical lens rather than considering the "value" of this lens as "an analytic tool across time." Indeed, this point was also taken in a review by Kwong, who by 1993 had already questioned the relevance of Anderson's book for the shifting patterns of immigrant settlement in Vancouver, including the influx of immigrants from Hong Kong and the impact of overseas capital. To be fair, Anderson anticipated many of these criticisms, and qualified her apparent dismissal of agency in her 1987 article. In my view, she overstates her case in order to emphasize the degree of her departure from previous work. Indeed, she later tempered her position, urging for the consideration of "different centers of cultural authority surrounding race, gender, and sexuality" (Anderson 1996:208). Nonetheless, the criticism spurred by the book drove important advancements in the field. Scholars have since emphasized the agency of

internal actors, including the role of institutions, and have challenged cohesive accounts of Chinatown by highlighting the multiplicity of voices within it.

A number of scholars emphasize the role of internal agency in Chinatown. Ng's (1999) goal was to reinsert "historical agency" into the story of the Chinese in Vancouver. He focuses on the internal dynamics surrounding the evolution of a Chinese identity during distinct waves of Chinese migration from 1945-1980 in order to create distance between his analysis and a Foucauldian (i.e. Andersonian) one that privileges "majority-minority relationships." As such he argues "these immigrants, and their local born descendants had much to say about, and experienced much internal disagreement over, the meaning of being Chinese" (126). Ng divides the Chinese in Vancouver into three generational groups/cohorts, demonstrating how they had distinct ideas about their Chinese identity and the way Chinatown should be organized. The "old timers," Canadian born Chinese, and post-war immigrants, competed for power, and the ability to define "Chineseness." Despite the importance of resinserting internal agency in Chinatown, in Ng's analysis this project is accomplished through the problematic exclusion of external agencies from the analysis.

Several authors focus on the tension between externally imposed constructions of Chinatown, and internally lived, everyday experiences of the area's residents. SKY Lee's (1993) fictional work, *Disappearing Moon Café*, is set in Vancouver's Chinatown over four generations. The title Café has two sides. One side consists of a replica of a Chinese teahouse that offers a stereotypical Chinese "replica" space for tourists. On the other side is a modern diner where members of the community meet to gossip about the neighbourhood. The Café thus has very different meanings and uses for its user groups,

serving both “homesick Chinese clientele but also outsiders who come looking for oriental exotica” (Lee 1990:32, cited by Martin 2004:93). As such, Martin (2004) argues that the Café serves as a “site of resistance to any ideologically upheld celebration of Chinese Canadian history that exhibits the past within contemporary architectural heritage” (Martin 2004:93). The *Disappearing Moon Café* serves as a metaphor for the tension between white Canada’s construction of Chinatown and the everyday lives of Chinese-Canadians. This metaphor extends to scholarship, which has grappled with the tension between agency and the external imposition of the idea of Chinatown.

Santos and Yan (2008) examine how workers in Chicago’s Chinatown assert agency by understanding their behaviour as “role playing.” They argue that the “multiculturalist agenda” has necessitated the smoothing over of intra-ethnic differences within Chinatown, as people try to profit from “ethnic difference” (892). They are concerned with the “everyday inter-ethnic relationships constructing and representing the ethnic Other in urban spaces of tourism” (879). In Chicago’s Chinatown, business owners and workers actively produce what they see as the tourists “expected” version of Chinese culture. The multiculturalist agenda, according to the authors, requires Chinatown to serve the “American middle class,” the population who “patronize the ethnic restaurants, attend the multicultural festivals and celebrate cultural tolerance” (883). This requires a production of Chinese identity that belies the “under-lying socio-cultural complexities” (884). Vendors for example, recognize that “what separates them from other spaces is the large concentration of ethnic Others and symbols” (886). As one participant explained, “if the tourists think that Chinese know much about teas and herbal medicine, that’s good. I will be as Chinese as they want me to be” (887). As such, the authors draw parallels

between Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown*, and Chicago's. Nonetheless, the authors insert agency into the equation by emphasizing the intra-ethnic negotiation of these processes. Workers, in particular, assert agency by framing their behavior as "a role they are playing rather than being" for the purpose of "capitalizing on ethnic difference" (890).

In reinserting agency, other scholars have revisited Chinatown's internal institutions. Mitchell's (1998) work is important in its emphasis on both the role of Chinese institutions as well as the multiplicity of voices within Chinatown. She highlights the competing visions of democracy evident in the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) and Chinese Cultural Centre (CCC) in order to challenge Chicago School assumptions about assimilation as a linear process from traditional to modern. She shows how competing visions of democracy related to a series of "dislocations and disruptions" caused by "transnational processes," political events overseas, and different waves of immigration (730). There was no linear progression from traditional to modern, but rather a constant negotiation of these in a transnational framework. Ng (1999) considers the role of mutual aid associations, such as the Chinese Board of trade, the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA), and Chee Kung Tong fraternity in protecting the Chinese community both socially and economically.

Li et al. (2002) emphasizes the role of Chinese-American banks in the development of Chinatown in Los Angeles. The Cathay Bank assisted with financing for business and home-ownership, and provided a catalyst for the neighbourhood's commercial and residential growth after 1965. The bank also assisted with family-sponsorship, connecting applicants to legal experts, as well as providing loans in order to pay the application fees and to assist with relatives' travel and relocation to the United

States. As a result Chinatown grew from a community of under 1,000, to one of nearly 20,000 in the span of a decade.

Another vein of scholarship emphasizes the multiplicity of voices within Chinatown. Yeoh and Kong (1994:33) conceptualize Singapore's Chinatown as a "multicoded" palimpsest landscape that contains a "multiplicity of meanings." The neighbourhood was actively re-written by a state-led project of modernization in the second half of the 20th century. Yeoh and Kong demonstrate how this project was variously challenged by the landscape's everyday users. Landscapes are socially constructed, not only through change to the built environment imposed by architects, planners, and city officials, but also through their everyday use. As the Singaporean state engaged in a continuous project to eliminate "illicit" and unofficial activities, residents continued to formulate new ways in which to evade authorities. Thus Chinatown, they argue, must be understood as occupying a central position in the "negotiation of power between the dominant and subordinated in society" (18).

Ramsay (2003) notes that the term "Chinatown" has meant different things to different groups at different times. He shows how the term was used as a tool of empowerment in Cherbourg, Australia, through its "appropriation" by an early 20th century Aboriginal family with Chinese heritage. Ramsay thus challenges Anderson's conception of Chinatown as a derivative of "spatial Othering." Instead, he demonstrates how the term was used to "claim a third space" for a subjugated aboriginal population. As a self-imposed label it represents a territorial challenge to the "white-minority binary of most Australian narratives" (111). This analysis reveals the complexity of the relationship between white, aboriginal, and Chinese in Australia.

Other work in this vein centers on understanding an increasingly diverse population, as well as using this lens to re-consider past events. Lee (2007), for example, revisits Vancouver's anti-urban renewal activism of the 1960s in the neighborhood from a feminist lens. The end of WWII heralded an era of modern planning and urban renewal in which Chinatown was seen as a slum and blight on the landscape that needed to be "cleared." The City proposed a freeway project that would have cut right through Chinatown. The successful mobilization of Strathcona and Chinatown residents, and Chinese merchants against this project of urban renewal ensured that the project did not come to fruition and signifies an important moment in Chinatown's history, as well as the end of the destructive force of urban renewal in Canada (see Lee 2007; 1987; Madokoro 2012). Often considered as a Chinese (and male-dominated) movement against slum clearance in Chinatown and a freeway that would have transected the neighborhood, Lee argues that the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association (SPOTA) was not "ethnically homogeneous," but should be understood as a multi-ethnic movement, in which ethnic women were key actors. As such, Lee identifies "culturally hybrid forms of oppositional practice:" a multi-ethnic negotiation with the Canadian state through activism and presents a new way of understanding place-based activism through a feminist lens. To be fair, Anderson also covers this period of resistance, but although she gestures to agency in this discussion, it is certainly not her emphasis.

Further, scholars of ethnic entrepreneurship have also questioned the appropriateness of the term "ethnic economy" given the growing diversity of the contemporary Chinese population. Phan and Chiu (2008) argue that this diversity calls into question the traditional "emphasis on cohesiveness" of Chinatown, portrayed by

Anderson. In other words, this strand aims to “unfix” a homogeneous Chinese identity/ethnicity. As they argue, once predominantly Cantonese Chinese, the diversity of Toronto’s downtown Chinatown has grown enormously. The authors examine the place of Sino-Vietnamese refugees in Toronto’s Chinatown - differentiated based on country of origin, ethnicity, refugee status, as well as language, regional origin (from North or South Vietnam), and class. This diversity calls into question the traditional “emphasis on cohesiveness” of Chinatown, portrayed by Anderson. Specifically, Phan and Chiu highlight the challenges this heterogeneity poses to networks for resource sharing and sociability. Their picture of Toronto’s Chinatown is thus one marked by high levels of competition, and sometimes exclusion. Vietnamese residents, for example, complained that Chinatown was more aptly termed “Asiatown,” pointing to the inadequacy of the label, and emphasizing that they did not feel their culture was represented in the images and festivals.

3.4 New Patterns of Settlement

Over the last 10 to 15 years, there has been a growing interest in the new patterns of Chinese, and immigrant settlement more broadly in North America and Australia. Kwong (1987) highlighted the differences between the “downtown” and “uptown” Chinese population in New York City. Fong (1994) referred to Monterey Park, outside of Los Angeles, as the “first suburban Chinatown.” Wei Li coined the term “ethnoburb” in 1998 to describe the emerging multi-ethnic, Chinese settlement in suburban Los Angeles. There had already been considerable movement of upwardly mobile Chinese immigrant population in Los Angeles to the San Gabriel Valley in the 1960s as part of a “general postwar trend of suburbanization” (Li 2009:81). In the 1970s and 1980s,

however, new immigrants began bypassing the crowded inner city Chinatown, choosing to settle directly in the suburbs. This phenomenon challenged the Chicago School's ecological succession model of immigrant assimilation.

Li explains the emergence of the San Gabriel Valley through the complex, multi-scalar interplay of immigration policy change, geopolitics, global economic restructuring, and local context. Changes to U.S. immigration policy in 1965 opened the door to large numbers of immigrants from Asia and Latin America. Over the next decade, war and instability in Southeast Asia also precipitated the large-scale migration of Korean, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian refugees to the U.S. Los Angeles experienced post-Fordist deindustrialization and accompanying "polarized reindustrialization." These global restructuring processes caused a shift in the economic vitality of U.S. cities. While some, like Detroit, faltered, others, like Los Angeles, which had developed both high and low-tech sectors, had a broader foundation. Vertical integration gave way to "disintegration," which encouraged the development of smaller-scale entrepreneurial businesses (Li 2009:31). At the same time, the suburbs were proving attractive to new immigrants for a number of reasons. They were close to high-tech sector jobs in Silicon Valley, were more spacious, and had lower costs of living, better school systems, and Chinese-American banks to help with financing (Li et al. 2002). Many of the new immigrants were from Taiwan, and were Mandarin-speaking, while Chinatown was primarily Cantonese. Significantly, the suburbs also did not carry the racialized and marginalizing undertones associated with Chinatown (Fong 1994).

Li argues that the ethnoburb must be seen as a distinct new form of ethnic settlement, rather than simply a "continuation of the traditional ethnic enclave in a

different geographical location” (Li 2009:3). According to Li, ethnoburbs differ from traditional and contemporary Chinatowns because they are the product of “voluntary” decisions. Traditional Chinatowns formed as the result of “forced segregation.” Contemporary Chinatowns persisted as a response to deliberate exclusion from the mainstream. In contrast, ethnoburban residents are “able to choose potential locations because of their economic strength” (Li 2009:45-46). Ethnoburbs thus must be seen as “voluntary” communities that form as people “maximize their own personal network and business connections” (Li 2009:46).

Ip’s (2005) comparison of the “old” and a “new Chinatown” in Brisbane, Australia, echoes this point. He argues that the new suburban settlements “reflect the agency” of Chinese immigrants. While downtown Chinatown was constructed by the state to conform to white Australia’s “notion of the ‘East’,” “new Chinatown” shows how they have “contested and challenged that still recurrent, metonymic Western image of the Chinese as preferring life in ‘ethnic’ urban enclaves, fundamentally detached from the lives of other ethnic groups” (2005:73). He thus describes a contrast between these two forms predicated on a “spontaneous” and “organic” vision of the suburbs and a “vacuous” and “clichéd” historic Chinatown.

The terms “satellite Chinatown” and “new Chinatown” are also deceiving, according to Li, because ethnoburbs are typically multi-ethnic. They exhibit a high degree of social interaction across groups and are more “open to the mainstream society” (Li 2009:47). Ethnoburbs tend to be spacious, with less-concentrated ethnic clustering than Chinatowns. Their boundaries tend to be “fuzzy and arbitrary” in contrast to the “sharp boundaries of ghettos and enclaves” in the inner-city (Li 2009:45). As Li explains,

“both wealthy and poor people live in ethnoburbs, although often in different sections of the community or in different but nearby communities” (46). They may exhibit more class-stratification and therefore may have more class conflict. At the same time, they allow immigrant and minority groups to nurture and display “ethnic affinity” and to “resist complete assimilation into the non-Hispanic white culture and social norms of American society” (4). Subsequent studies of Los Angeles by Lin and Robinson (2005), Zhou et al. (2008), and Cheng (2010) further consider the internal dynamics of these ethnoburbs, which provide not only a setting for “intimate social contact” between ethnic groups, but also the potential for inter-and intra-group conflict.

There have been several social constructionist-type analyses of suburban areas of Chinese settlement. In 1997, Ray et al. considered the utility of the theoretical framework put forth in *Vancouver's Chinatown* for demographic change in the suburb of Richmond, British Columbia. In the 1980s, a conflict arose in Metro Vancouver's inner and middle-range suburbs surrounding the architectural and aesthetic tastes of immigrants from Hong Kong (i.e. their preference for “monster homes”) and the increasing prevalence of Chinese-only signage (Li 1994). Ray et al. argued that these conflicts revealed longtime white residents' anxieties about the encroachment of the Chinese ‘Other’ onto an otherwise white, suburban “way of life.” These debates over changes to the public realm were shrouded in the neutral language of “streetscapes” and “livability” (see also Ley 1995; 2008; 2010; Mitchell 1993; 1997) but nevertheless revealed a racially charged resentment. This resentment was disproportionate, vastly outmatching the actual pace and scope of changes to the built environment. Despite the fact that the Chinese in Richmond exhibited the characteristics of typical suburban residents (in terms of income and

location), there were claims made that Richmond was shifting into a “Chinese” territory. As such, the authors argue that the “marginalization” of the Chinese was imposed in the suburbs (96). This argument might lead us to predict public opposition to large-scale “Chinese” or “Asian” centred public realm events, like the Richmond Night Market. Yet, there has been no public outcry. Rather, the City’s mayor and a broad swath of the community have embraced the market as a community institution. We might then choose to see the night market as a representation of white Richmond’s cognitive perceptions of the Chinese, shrouded in multicultural consumption of the ‘Other’. This thesis, however, offers a more complex interpretation, incorporating the increasing superdiversity (Vertovec 2007) of the suburbs, and temporal and spatial rhythms of public life, alongside the vestiges of marginalizing discourses about the Chinese in Canada. I will return to these points in Chapter 6.

Cheng (2010) demonstrates the continued “salience” of discourses of Chinese “takeover” and “invasion” in the San Gabriel Valley through an analysis of two competing 21st century branding projects. Both Alhambra’s “Main Street diversity” and San Gabriel’s “Golden Mile” campaigns were banner-based projects to re-brand the Valley’s “civic landscapes.” Yet, the differential reception of these projects reveals racial, ethnic, spatial, and “ideological divides” (459). The former campaign cloaked a divided population under the banner of diversity, framing “whiteness” as “just another ethnicity” alongside neatly packaged visual depictions of Asian and Latino minorities. The latter campaign was intended to brand the Village Boulevard as a Chinese commercial zone to serve the area’s Asian majority. This project, however, was met with considerable opposition from San Gabriel’s city officials, who represented the Valley’s old white elite.

The elite sought instead to promote a “Spanish fantasy past” thereby asserting a racial typology that defined Mexicans as more “American” than the Chinese. Cheng (478) argues that these competing “civic” projects show how “conceptions of race, space, and history work in tandem with state-structured processes to produce specific power relations that are sedimented and recodified in the landscape.” Under such circumstances, the Golden Mile project could not garner enough support and was only realized through private funding. This research emphasizes the presence of white European hegemonic discourses in the suburbs as well as in “old” Chinatown.

Li’s work highlighted the global emergence of ethnoburbs as an altogether new form of settlement. Also novel was the emphasis on these new ethnic neighborhoods as spaces of ethnic and class diversity. This lens has been fruitful for scholars in other contexts, with ethnoburbs identified in Brisbane (Ip 2005), Auckland (Johnston et al. 2008; Xue et al. 2012), San Francisco (Laguerre 2005), Philadelphia (Katz et al. 2010) and New York (Fong 1994). In Canada, ethnoburbs are found in the suburbs surrounding Toronto and Vancouver. Richmond, British Columbia has been called a classic “ethnoburb” (Alba and Denton 2004; Bauder and Sharpe 2002; Miller 2003; Murdie and Teixeira 2003; Singer 2008). This emerging literature emphasizes that the “suburbs are neither historically fixed or homogeneous” (Katz et al. 2010:525).

Indeed, in the Vancouver context, as in the San Gabriel Valley, a conjuncture of international geopolitical and economic events, national immigration policy change, and local factors spurred Richmond’s transformation (Ley 2010). Prior to 1971, Vancouver’s social geography reflected the logic of the Chicago School (Burnley and Hiebert 2001). Immigrants generally settled in the inner city where housing was cheaper, or settled near

particular “resource sectors.” As the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed in 1984, signaling Hong Kong’s handover to China in July of 1997, Canadian policymakers sought to capture capital investment from Hong Kong during a time of political and social upheaval there (Mitchell 1998). A new category of immigration, the Business Immigration Program’s investor class, was created in 1986 to encourage the migration of wealthy business owners and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong, and their families. The Tiananmen Square tragedy of 1989 intensified this process and generated the peak of immigrant applicants from Hong Kong – 50,000 for that year (Li 2003). Between 1986 and 2000, immigrants from Hong Kong comprised one fifth of the total number of incoming immigrants in British Columbia (Edgington 2005).

Until the mid-1980s, although some Chinese and Japanese families connected to the fishery lived in the small village of Steveston, Richmond was a predominantly white European space (Ray et al. 1997:80; Rose 2001). Once a primarily agricultural region, mid-21st century bridge construction precipitated Richmond’s growth as a Vancouver suburb. Rose’s (2001) interviews with long-time Euro-Canadian residents of the suburb emphasized the area’s low housing costs, pastoral, and semi-rural landscape in their decision to settle there. It was a typical suburb – with big backyards and treed streets.

Between 1986 and 2006, the demography of the suburb was transformed by new trans-Pacific migration patterns. For one, Vancouver’s increasingly “internationalized” property market had created strong connections between Hong Kong and Vancouver in the lead-up to Hong Kong’s handover to China. As Olds (1998) demonstrates, following the Vancouver World Expo of 1986, Vancouver gained a reputation as a city with an “open social structure” which permitted Chinese property developers to participate as

“respected players” in the local economy. Property ownership provided a foothold in Canada, at a time of great economic uncertainty in Hong Kong.

But why Richmond? Immigrants from Hong Kong were attracted to Richmond for many of the same reasons that made Monterrey Park attractive – its affordability, spaciousness, physical beauty, and amenities. As Vancouver’s middle class began to place more value on “inner city living,” (Burnley and Hiebert 2001:10) there was a marked “deepening of value” in the central business district and in the wealthy inner suburbs such as Shaughnessy (Ley et al. 2002:711). The suburbs became “new reception centres for lower income immigrant” and refugee communities (Burnley and Hiebert 2001:11).

At the same time, the “millionaire migrants” eschewed previous migration paradigms (Ley 2010). As Ley demonstrates, distinct patterns in the Canada-East Asia migration process emerged centering on “the circulation of households at well-defined status passages, including the phase of career development, the period of children’s education, and the time of approaching retirement” (5). Many wealthy migrant families left positions of social status in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China to settle in Canada. In many cases, they chose to migrate even given prior knowledge of the barriers they would face in the labour market and the high housing costs. Immigrant families chose to tie up substantial portions of their assets in property. As Waters (2002; 2003; 2006; 2009) shows, while dominant media accounts portrayed this group as an “immigrant overclass” who used their high degree of trans-Pacific mobility to generate wealth, education was one of the main reasons these immigrants chose to move to Canada. Hong Kong and Taiwanese parents placed a symbolic premium on education in

Vancouver, which was valued for being “Western,” as well as more accessible than elite schools in Hong Kong or Taiwan. Kobayashi et al.’s (2011) study of Hong Kong migrants in Toronto and Vancouver also emphasizes the role of family and education in the decision to emigrate. Approaching retirement, and fear of the PRC were also often factors in this decision. There were also unquantifiable explanations for Richmond’s attractiveness. For example, Richmond’s physical geography, “facing the water with its back to the mountains,” was seen as having good “feng shui” (Ley 2010:143). Its quiet suburban neighbourhoods offered respite from crowded noisy streets, and from social pressures in Hong Kong (Kobayashi et al. 2011). Thus, Ley (2010:5) highlights an often-heard phrase in Richmond and Hong Kong in the 1990s: “Hong Kong for making money, Canada for quality of life.”

From 1986 to 2006, the proportion of Richmond residents self-defined as of “Chinese” ethnic origin rose from 8 to 45%. There was a corresponding increase in Chinese businesses. The expanding middle class Chinese residents had “new demands for upscale services and entertainment” (Li and Li 2011:17). By the 1980s, it could no longer be said that most of Vancouver’s Chinese population lived in Chinatown (Li and Li 2011:16). By 1999, there were nearly 50 Asian theme malls in Richmond (Lai 2003:330; Ley 2010). In just two decades, Richmond had challenged the downtown’s monopoly on “Chinatown.”

Like the San Gabriel Valley, Richmond’s new population is highly transnational, characterized by high degrees of international mobility (Ley 2010; Ley and Kobayashi 2005; Waters 2002; 2003; Tse 2011). Many immigrants in Richmond are characterized

by their maintenance of “trans-Pacific life lines” (Ley 2010).⁵ Furthermore, as in suburban Los Angeles, Richmond has also become a space of considerable diversity. Migration from Hong Kong has decreased, while that from South Korea and the Philippines has increased. Taiwanese migration has also been important, rising in the late 1990s and gradually decreasing in the early 21st century (Ley 2010). Most recently newcomers are arriving from Mainland China. As a number of scholars show, the label “Chinese” covers significant differences among sub-ethnicities. The Sino-Vietnamese population, for example, has continuously expanded (Ng 1999:138). Based on the 2006 Census, in total, those of ‘Chinese’ origin comprise 44% of Richmond’s population. ‘Whites’ and other ‘visible minorities’ account for 35%, and 21%, respectively. Of the latter group, South Asians and Filipinos make up the largest percentages, while others of Japanese, multiple visible minority, Southeast Asian, Black, Korean, West Asian and Latin American origins are also represented (Statistics Canada 2007). The most recent Census data from 2011 indicates an increase in the population speaking non-official languages at home and as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada 2012). Thus, over the last quarter century, the ways in which place and race intersect both in downtown Vancouver and in the suburbs have become increasingly complex.

At the same time, the case of Metro Vancouver highlights several problems with the ethnoburb concept. First, as Xue et al. (2012) highlight, the concept of ethnoburb lumps many distinct areas into one category. As they demonstrate in the case of Auckland, New Zealand, the label “ethnoburb” veils significant diversity of form. Their analysis

⁵ Waters’ (2002; 2003; 2006; 2009) research examines the transnational familial strategies employed by this new wave of highly mobile immigrant families from Hong Kong and Taiwan. As Waters (2002) explains, the term “satellite kids” came into use in the 1990s to describe young adults, aged 13-22 years, who lived in Vancouver while their parents lived overseas. The arrangement had significant emotional ramifications for the teenagers, who expressed “loneliness” and a sense of “abandonment.”

shows how the “arrival of the Chinese community from different places of origin, at different times, with different levels of access to capital, and for different reasons (whether political, lifestyle choice, education, or economic) has contributed to the emergence of diverse and varied ethnoburbs in Auckland” (594). This is certainly the case in Vancouver whose social geography exhibits a high degree of “variegation.” There are a number of Chinese “nodes” throughout Metro Vancouver that are used in different ways. The experiences of other immigrant groups can also be described as multi-nodal. For example, Kwak (2004)’s study of the settlement patterns of Vancouver’s Korean community demonstrates that this population is generally spread out across the City but with a few nodes in the suburbs of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Surrey.

Second, the literature on new patterns of Chinese settlement has tended to focus on upwardly mobile immigrants. This focus needs to be problematized, given the growing evidence concerning the “impoverisation” of the Canadian suburbs (Ley and Lynch 2012; Smith 2004). There is a trend towards the spatial overlap of immigrant neighbourhoods with multiple markers of deprivation. Since 1991, increasing percentages of immigrants in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal reside in “multiply disadvantaged” neighbourhoods. Certain immigrant and minority groups have become more concentrated, and some more marginalized. This picture – of growing polarization and income inequality – raises serious questions concerning the ethnoburb as a space characterized by high degrees of socio-economic mixing. In the case of Richmond, a recent paper by Ley and Lynch (2012) finds that a large swath of the central suburb experienced a more than 15% decline in average income from 1971 –2006. This decline is highly correlated with visible minorities and recent immigration, in particular.

Third, in making the case for ethnoburbs as diverse settlements, Li presents too singular a perspective vis-à-vis downtown Chinatowns. This perspective flies in the face of the scholarship emphasizing the multiplicity and internal dynamics within Chinatown. In contrasting the bounded, homogeneous nature of Chinatown with the fluid, heterogeneous ethnoburbs, Li reinforces a problematic urban-suburban binary that causes us to overlook the interrelationship between these two settlements. As Gibson et al. (2012:13) argue, such a “taken-for-granted ontology of scales” belies the ways in which day-to-day “affective relations to place are networked across city [and suburban] spaces.”

This problematic binary is prescient for this analysis because the processes and pressures associated with the new cultural economy, within which the night markets must be placed, are not confined by urban boundaries. A number of scholars have highlighted how the perceptions and meanings of Chinatown have shifted in an economy increasingly centered on the “production, distribution, and consumption” of culture (Gregson et al. 2001:621). As diversity has come to be a symbol of “economic dynamism” at all levels of government (Catungal and Leslie 2009; Florida 2005; Mitchell 1993; Ottaviano and Peri 2005; Pecoud 2002), the ethnic economy has been targeted in a new way. The attraction of diversity is an economic strategy, federally, provincially, and municipally, so that minorities are “expected” to bring economic growth (Pecoud 2002:501) and “diasporic circuits of capital” (Catungal and Leslie 2009). At the urban scale, ethnic neighbourhoods and enclaves from Chinatown to Little Italy are increasingly perceived as important to tourism, neighbourhood revitalization, and the place marketing of cities on the global stage (Yeoh 2005; Rath 2007; Shaw 2007). Canadian Chinatowns are seen as “cultural attractions that ‘celebrate diversity’ and complement the cosmopolitan ‘buzz of the

nearby city Central Business District” (Shaw 2007:55). But suburbs like Richmond have not been exempt from these processes, which are seen as strategies in bringing people to outer areas.

Fourth, and most important for this analysis, *ethnoburbs* leave us with an unanswered question about whether “Chinese ethnoburbs offer a distinctive model of everyday urbanism” (Sandoval-Strausz 2011). As Sandoval-Strausz (2011:290) argued in a recent review, Li’s analysis ignores that “part of the distinctive character of Chinatowns involves their crowded and lively sidewalks.” Public sociability is an often-assumed characteristic of “authentic” city spaces (Gans 1968; Watson 2009; Wirth 1938). In contrast, true-to-form suburban spaces are seen as socially “contrived.” Suburban design lulls people into relinquishing the “privileges of urban public space” in exchange for highly controlled, commoditized, anti-social, and inauthentic environments (Goss 1993:29-30). Suburban residents are drawn to the downtown core with the promise of social “exposure to the ‘urban’ itself” and the “escape” from the “newer, more sedate, [and] more ordered” (Campo and Ryan, 2008: 310). The “imagined geography” of suburbia is one of routine, monotony, and sameness. The ‘burbs, it seems by dominant accounts, have ‘no soul’ (see Harvey 2008). But as Miller (2003) demonstrates, the “old” and “new Chinatown” forms challenge this logic. While the experience of Chinatown is about “publicness, public transportation, public streets and places, apartments and population density, experienced in a more rooted situatedness, Richmond’s mobile experience is arguably more privatized, more capsulated.” Richmond’s residents operate transnationally, both physically and mentally, through “imaginative mobilities.” Li does well to challenge this imagination through extensive qualitative analysis showing how

new waves of immigrants make their everyday lives in the suburbs, but gives us little in the way of theory as to what this means for urbanism itself.

3.5 Concluding Discussion

Vancouver's Chinatown was instrumental in changing scholarly approaches to the social geography of race. Anderson revealed how discourses about the Chinese 'race' in white Canadian society shaped the space of Chinatown over two centuries. As subsequent scholars have noted, the "idea" of Chinatown was variously negotiated, challenged, and used from the inside. Later cognitive analyses have been careful to emphasize the agency and multiplicity of internal voices within Chinatown.

In the last 15 years, there has been a notable bifurcation in the literature, between old and new Chinatowns as scholars are presented with new realities of Chinese migration and settlement patterns. The social constructionist approach has persisted, but the new camp of research has generally focused on the ways in which new settlement patterns defy existing paradigms. Table 3.1 summarizes these two camps.

The table reveals a strong contrast between these two areas of literature, which sets up a series of dichotomies between the two forms: between imposed/organic; old/new; bounded/fluid; forced/voluntary; urban/suburban; mono-cultural/multiethnic; place-based/globalized; and insular/open.

By way of conclusion, I will raise three interrelated points concerning structure and agency. First, recent scholarship on Chinatown makes clear that Orientalist discourses about Chinatown and the Chinese persist. Scholars have also done well to

Table 3.1 Scholarly Characterizations of Chinatown and New Suburban Chinese Settlement

Chinatown				Suburban Chinese settlement			
Author	Year	Country	Description	Author	Year	Country	Description
Santos & Yan	2008	USA	"Space of the Other"	Ip	2005	Australia	"Organic"/"spontaneous"
Pang & Rath	2007	USA	"Symbolic ethnic enclave"	Laguerre	2005	USA	"Panethnopolis"
Ip	2005	Australia	"Place-based"	Laguerre	2003	USA	"Technopolis"
Ip	2005	Australia	"Government planned"	Saito	1998	USA	"Multiracial city"
Ling	2005	USA	"Cultural community"	Li	1998	USA	"Ethnoburb"
Martin	2004	Canada	"Safe exoticism"	Eljera	1996	USA	"Chinese Beverly Hills"
Yeoh and Kong	1994	Singapore	"Palimpsest landscape"	Horton	1995	USA	"Mandarin Park"
Zhou	1992	USA	"Urban enclave"	Fong	1994	USA	"Suburban Chinatown"
Anderson	1991	Canada	"Western landscape type"	Zhou	1992	USA	"Satellite Chinatown"
Lum	1991	USA	"Cultural insularity"	Kwong	1987	USA	"Uptown Chinatown"
Li	1988	Canada	"Bounded"				
Lai	1988	Canada	"Town within a city"				
Takagi & Platt	1978	USA	"Gilded ghetto"				
Yuan	1963	USA	"Voluntary segregation"				
Park	1952	USA	"Launching point"				

reinsert the agency of individuals in Chinatown, and to encourage a more broad understanding of the multiple voices. These analyses, however, focus on the ways in which individuals assert agency *despite* the constraints of white hegemony/Orientalism, rather than considering the ways in which the latter *structures* themselves are shifting. This fixed notion of structure is just as problematic as the omission of agency, ending up reinforcing the very representations of Chinatown – as fixed, cliché, Other – that they seek to challenge. In this thesis, I invite a more nuanced interpretation of structure that considers shifting meanings of Chinatown that allow it to be more than “historically fixed or homogeneous” (Katz et al. 2010:529).

Second, this literature also raises concerns about the urban-suburban binary enforced in old/new Chinatown scholarship, which precludes an understanding of their inter-relationship. The processes and pressures of consumption that accompany the new cultural economy do not fit neatly into the categories of ‘city’ and ‘suburb’. How useful are these binaries for understanding the spaces of the Chinatown and suburban night markets? In the city centre, events are seen as tools of urban promotion, as spurring

gentrification, or as contributing to the city's image as tolerant or multicultural (Gibson et al. 2012). How different is this for the suburbs, and in Richmond, more specifically? Does Richmond's "ethnoburban" night market bring into being a new type of "urbanized" suburban authenticity?

Third, the ways in which race and place intersect in the downtown core and in the suburbs have grown increasingly complex. In this context, can these events be dismissed as Orientalisms's last stand, or are they something more? Perhaps the night markets represent the imposition of a fixed and Western notion of Chinese identity. Perhaps they defy the constructionist paradigm.

Ultimately, the debates raised in this Chapter set the stage for an understanding of the night markets as places of encounter, where cultural authenticity, diversity, and temporality are negotiated. As I will show in this thesis, both the Richmond night market and the Chinatown Night Market encompass competing interpretations of what it was to be 'Chinese' in Vancouver's past, what it is, and what it should mean in the future.

Chapter 4 – Markets & Diversity

Marketplaces have long existed as spaces of economic and social/cultural contact and exchange. These spaces take a diversity of forms: market buildings, open-air markets, street markets (both official and unofficial), purpose-built markets, periodic markets (weekend, festival, weekday, night, morning, and so on), permanent and mobile markets (Pena 1999), as well as other spaces of exchange such as British car boot sales, “jumble sales,” and flea markets (Crewe and Gregson 1998). Diversity also characterizes the products represented in the marketplace, which range from second-hand goods, produce, food, jewelry, art, services, and counterfeit goods to traditional handicrafts—all of which are imbued with conceptions of origin, quality, fakeness/authenticity, modernity/tradition, and familiarity/uniqueness. While a significant body of literature on marketplaces exists, much of this research focuses on the developing world, where the market is seen as something “archaic,” a fading remnant of a more traditional economy. Several scholars have noted that, as the “meta-narrative” of “The Market” (the abstract realm of rational, profit-maximizing exchange) dominates, interest in the physical marketplace, or “real marketplace” recedes (de la Pradelle 1995; Shepherd 2009).⁶

As we saw in Chapter 2, there is an increasing scholarly interest in the geography of encounter and the types of spaces that promote constructive cross-cultural exchange. For example, while some scholars see “rubbing along” as enough, others argue that only compulsory spaces (schools or the workplace) can foster meaningful interaction (see

⁶ This chapter is a modified version of a working paper, ‘Markets and Diversity: An Overview’, published by the author as Metropolis British Columbia Working Paper 01-11 (also published by the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity as Working Paper 11-03).

Amin 2002). Although a great deal of research in the last decade, particularly in immigrant-receiving societies, has argued for the importance of spaces that encourage inter-cultural/racial/ethnic contact, surprisingly few scholars have considered diversity and markets together. This chapter examines the potential of marketplaces to serve as sites of meaningful interaction between diverse groups of people. As such, it is concerned with understanding the ways in which the market has previously been theorized across disciplines, periods, and regions in order to proceed with the empirical analysis of contemporary spaces of diversity, namely Metro Vancouver's night markets.

I begin with a brief historical overview of the evolution of diverse markets (section 4.1). In Section 4.2, I then develop and discuss the seven major themes emerging from the literature:

- The social dynamics of trade in the marketplace.
- Markets as spaces of contact.
- Consuming diversity: Orientalism, cosmopolitanism, and authenticity.
- Markets and the state: Governance and policy.
- The political economy of the marketplace.
- Markets and social inclusion.
- The spatiality of the marketplace.

I conclude by posing a series of questions about the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver.

4.1 Historical Markets

As McMillan (2003:4) notes, “markets have been around as long as history” and have always been spaces of cultural growth and “reinvention.” Five thousand years ago, markets sprang up along trading circuits between cities in the Fertile Crescent, leading to

the production of the first written documents: goods and livestock inventory for sale in the marketplace. From the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE, the Agora was the “heart of Athens,” hosting a market as well as theater, politics, athletics, and religion (McMillan 2003:5). Chinese night markets can be traced back to the eighth century CE and their form has spread with Chinese migration, throughout Asia and to North America (Yu 2004). Pena (1999) dates street vending in Mexico to the Aztec Empire. Early markets often brought groups of people across geographical and topographical boundaries, as in the case of the fourteenth century Carpathian mountain folk fairs in what is now Romania (Geana 2006). These fairs, which coincided with Christian feast days, were simultaneously about access to trade and social relationships through dancing, music, and inter-marriage. After the fall of Constantinople (1453 CE), the bazaar played a crucial role in the consolidation of the Islamic Empire, particularly through revenue generated via collection of the *waqf*, a religious charitable donation, from merchants (Dale 2010). The state played an instrumental role in the construction of the market and had an economic interest in protecting non-Muslim merchants (ibid).

Marketplaces were also central to early European cities. Interaction between East and West served as a catalyst to the renaissance; these markets of the fifteenth and sixteenth century were spaces where “eastern and western societies vigorously traded art, ideas, and luxury goods in a competitive but amicable exchange” (Brotton 2002:1). The renaissance marketplace also offered a space where the rigid social mores of the day were temporarily suspended in lieu of spectacle and theatricality (Bakhtin 1984). As well as being sites that have historically brought different people together, marketplaces also have a much more somber side; as Ahluwalia notes, the African colonial marketplace was

the starting point for the slave trade (2003). Furthermore, marketplaces have served as field-sites for colonial ethnographic excursions, where the “primitive” traditions of the colonized were documented and represented for the Empire at home, stimulating European fascination for the “Oriental bazaar” (Lysack 2005).

In North America in particular, farmers’ markets have recently been re-born by “local food” movements (and the “100 mile diet”), and other markets have been boosted by a nostalgic desire for face-to-face interaction in public space (Clough and Vanderbeck 2006). Western marketplaces have also been reinvigorated by the arrival of immigrants for whom markets function as spaces of informal employment, the source of ethnic goods, and sociability (Olsson 2007). In the global south, however, popular markets have often come under attack from the state and global financial institutions, who see them as informal economic activity that must be brought into the formal realm (Ahluwalia 2003).

4.2 Themes from the Literature

4.2.1 The Sociability of Exchange & the Market

The longstanding debate over the social significance of exchange in the marketplace provides a useful starting point to my discussion of “markets and diversity.” Since J. S. Furnivall’s (1939) writings on the colonial Indonesian marketplace, economic anthropologists and sociologists in particular have debated the cultural/social meaning of buying and selling in the marketplace, and the implications of this interaction for diverse societies. Furnivall emphasized the social significance of economic interaction, arguing that the market place is the “only place in which the various sections of a plural society meet on common ground” (449). To M. G. Smith, however, economic interaction between groups is a non-event—the seeming “symbiosis” of the marketplace is

accompanied by “mutual avoidance” (Smith 1965: vii). The debate can thus be broadly divided into two camps: those who are pessimistic about the quality of interaction in the marketplace and those who see marketplace as something more “magical” (Watson 2009).

The first camp, led by M. G. Smith and R. Maisel, warns against an “Edenic vision of sociability” in the marketplace (Maisel 1974). Maisel examines the expressed motivation for vendor participation in the Alameda Penny Market in San Francisco. These vendors maintained that their decision to hold stalls in the flea market was driven by the marketplace’s “easy atmosphere,” its “good vibes,” as well as a “pride in being participants in a social activity where blacks and ‘rednecks’, hippies and squares, homosexuals and straights visibly rub shoulders” (494). Alameda was represented as a place where “benevolence” and “character” intervene to set the value of goods. Ultimately, however, when pressed, the vendors revealed profit maximization as the overarching goal. Maisel argues that although vendors “claimed” a social motivation for participation (via the “myths” of sociability in the market), market success was always described in terms of “profit and loss,” and not on social terms (503). Thus, according to Maisel, “at the end of the day,” profit trumps sociability in the marketplace.

The second strand of literature views the marketplace as a social space, operating outside the confines of pure economic interests. Plattner, for example, in a study of the Soulard Farmer’s Market in St. Louis Missouri, demonstrates how vendors sacrifice short-term profit maximization in order to cultivate “habitual relations” with customers that allowed them to “maintain a long-run niche on the marketplace” (399). Although not denying the profit motives of vendors, Plattner nevertheless demonstrates how the social intervenes in an environment of seemingly “pure [economic] competition” (1982, 401).

Both Furnivall (1939) and de la Pradelle (1995) emphasize the marketplace as creating an equal playing field for diverse groups of people, regardless of class, social status or ethnic background. De la Pradelle compared the Carpentras Market in France to a nearby French supermarket. He argues that the fixed (and unequal) power dynamics between producers and consumers in the supermarket (which favour the producer) preclude sociability. In the marketplace, however, the possibility of bargaining allows people a more expansive role—allowing them to come together to “create a public space” (345). The Carpentras marketplace becomes composed of “citizens” of a space that brings together an array of social groups that would not normally interact (for example, North African immigrants, people from the French countryside, members of the bourgeoisie, and so on).

Within the positive camp, several scholars have focused on the role of the marketplace in shaping the value of goods themselves, by bestowing them with cultural meaning, or offering a social experience. Kelly (2003) describes how Hawaiian T-shirt vendors were able to survive competition from Wal-Mart and other megastores by offering a shopping experience that was distinctly social—an approach that attracts both tourists and locals. Kelly argues that craft fairs serve as a social activity as well as a place to search for unique items/variety, or to follow local artists’ work and are thus “equally” social and economic events. The fairs provide a source of customer feedback and camaraderie is emphasized as attracting customers and vendors alike. Despite cheaper prices at big box stores, discount chains, and malls, shoppers (both local and tourist), continue to frequent craft fairs because they feel they are getting a product that is authentic, more unique, reflective of local culture and way of life, as well as a “warm

feeling” of social interaction that passes between salesperson (who may often be directly involved in the product’s design) and consumer. Along similar lines, Shepherd’s (2009) analysis of street vendors in the Eastern Market in Washington, D.C., demonstrates how the stories told by vendors play a role in creating product value. The recounting of these stories to customers, and the ensuing interaction, shapes product value structures in the market.

Important contributions have also been made from within the discipline of geography. Focusing on markets and diversity, Watson (2009) emphasizes the importance of sociability to the marketplace in a study of eight markets across the UK. She describes markets as sites allowing for “‘rubbing along’, social inclusion; theatricality/performance; and [the] mediating [of] differences” (1581). As she puts it, the “informality of market trading and shopping, the openness of market spaces, the proximity of stalls to one another, the lack of restraint on entering and leaving market sites clearly gave rise to a multitude of easy encounters and informal connections” (1582). Interaction provides the “social glue” that holds the marketplaces together, but sociability varies across the markets. Sociability was stronger where eating/drinking/sitting spaces were set up, and around stalls selling “unusual items.” Watson’s respondents also highlighted the role of the markets in forming “social bonds across different ethnicities,” especially between newer immigrant groups and the long-established Jewish market traders. Where there were fewer non-whites and where traders were predominantly white, more racist attitudes were experienced by market-goers (1586). Watson’s work thus is important in bridging the gap between those who have considered the social nature of

markets (interaction between people in general), and those who are working on questions of diversity (but who have not focused on the marketplace as a site of interaction).

4.2.2 Spaces of Contact

Another theme of the literature on “markets and diversity” focuses on the role of the marketplace as a point of contact—where “disparate people meet in order to carry out their local way of life” (Alhuwalia 2003:142). Here, the marketplace is conceptualized as a meeting place, and numerous references liken it to the Roman agora (see de la Pradelle 1995; Kelly 2003; Hunt 2009). Similarly, Alhuwalia (2003) highlights the similarities between the Kenyan term for “public meeting” (*baraza*) and the word *bazaar*. In Kenya, *baraza* signifies the “meeting of minds . . . aimed at building understanding and consensus” (Alhuwalia 2003:142). Contact within the market is approached, on the one hand, by considering the implications of social interaction between people on identity and relationships, and on the other hand, by considering interaction in a broader sense: involving people, but also goods, ideas, and broader processes of globalization and modernity.

Identity

I turn first to consider scholarly work on social contact in the marketplace, and particularly how it shapes the identities of individuals and groups involved. Interaction in the marketplace can create a shared sense of identity or reinforce feelings of sameness among people. Geana (2006) explains how the fourteenth century Carpathian folk fairs (in what is now Romania) were instrumental to the development of a Romanian national consciousness. The periodic markets (on Christian holidays) allowed for inter-marriage and kinship ties across three distinct political territories. The periodic contact encouraged

the entrenchment of common religious and cultural practices, as well as linguistic homogeneity. Thus, one way of thinking about contact in the marketplace is through the convergence of social practices—which may impact national or ethnic identity.

Contact with difference in the marketplace can also reinforce feelings of difference between groups. Liu (2010) examines the increased presence of Chinese traders in a Ghanaian marketplace. As a survival strategy, Ghanaian traders, undercut by the lower cost of Chinese wholesalers, attempt to represent Chinese wholesaling as an “illegitimate” activity in the marketplace. Busch (2010) also demonstrates the relationality involved in the ways in which German shoppers and a Polish food vendor represent each other during a sales transaction on the German-Polish border. During the interaction, the participants are shown to draw on specific linguistic “devices” to gain bargaining power over the other. The German shoppers, for example, repeatedly made reference to the vendor as a “trickster,” or as a subject of their “holiday flirtation,” while the Polish vendor attempted to create an atmosphere of friendship and hospitality. Busch demonstrates how even the mundane interaction over buying sausages is loaded with meaning with implications for identity. Ultimately, people “assign people and objects to categories” using devices to make sense of the “interaction” and their social/cultural position (75). Sometimes this interaction involves asserting difference.

But marketplace interactions can lead to the development of hybrid identities and identity renegotiation in a more positive sense. Kapchan’s (1993; 1995) analyses of interaction between female vendors and male shoppers in the Moroccan bazaar suggest how the presence of women in a traditionally male dominated area creates the space for cultural negotiation during the transaction. Interaction in the marketplace between the

majority and new immigrant cultures has also been shown to challenge and to change the majority culture. Olsson (2007) describes the arrival of waves of immigrants in a farmer's market in the southern United States. In the Dekalb Farmers' Market, which employs mainly immigrants and refugees and caters to both native southerners (black and white) and immigrants, there has been a gradual "intermingling" of new cultural practices with the "down home," instead of an expected cultural "clash" (56). The increasing diversity has also helped to challenge the black-white dichotomy and "resistance to change" associated with the region. The market founder sees himself as "doing his small part in helping race relations" (53). As Olsson argues, the Dekalb Farmers Market represents the "quiet revolution of immigrant and food [which] continues to upset and redefine the meanings of local, regional, and global identity" (56).

Modernity

In the developing world, contemporary market spaces have also been conceptualized as sites of contact with globalization. Alhuwalia (2003) argues that marketplaces in Africa serve as a counterpoint to globalization, allowing Africans to reassert themselves in the face of international institutions such as the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and structural adjustment-oriented development projects. Despite these institutions' best efforts to "modernize" Africa (and formalize the economy), seemingly informal markets have persisted, popping in up in refugee camps and in spaces re-appropriated from global capitalism. A Shell station in Western Uganda illustrates this point. The "best lit place in town," the station is the site at which virtually all people who are in town converge. It is here that hawkers peddle their food and wares, making it an unofficial marketplace. In this way, the petrol station, a signifier of

globalisation and Western extravagance, has been appropriated and given meaning at the local level. (140)

While the state sees the market as an opposing force to modernity, Alhuwalia emphasizes the market's role in encouraging an "alternative modernity" (see Gilroy 1993; Appadurai 1996)—one "that is not simply a mimicry of some universal modernity but a modernity with its own peculiarities" (138). The market at the petrol station thus allows for "transculturation" as the local community comes in contact with a global commodity (oil), and this commodity is re-appropriated—and imbued—with multiple hybrid meanings and functions.

Similarly, the way in which modernity is exercised in the marketplace is examined in a second-hand street marketplace in Tonga (Besnier 2004) and in a periodic market in rural China (Liu 2007). Besnier demonstrates how, in a country structured rigidly by status hierarchy, the Tongan *fea* (market) brings together a number of marginalized groups—Chinese migrants, Mormon converts, women, and diasporic Tongans who receive remittances from overseas in the form of second-hand goods—as well as elites. Status mobility is achieved via the collection of objects from elsewhere and the appearance of cosmopolitanism in the marketplace (i.e., knowing what is "in fashion" overseas). Besnier argues that as a buffer zone between modernity and tradition, between the diaspora and the homeland, and between the outside world and Tonga, the Nuku'alofa *fea* is where the boundaries between these contrasting categories are placed under scrutiny and argued over, both benignly and stridently. (37)

In rural China, a state-sponsored periodic marketplace also brings the Nuosu ethnic minority in contact with the processes of globalization. Such pressures are not

absorbed in full. Rather, they become intertwined with local traditions, infused with local kinship ties and conceptions of morality along with “market rationality” (15). Thus, in the global south, the marketplace functions as an important social site where consumption is practiced as a form of modernity.

4.2.3 Consuming Ethnicity in the Marketplace

A third way in which scholars have approached diversity in the marketplace has been to consider the ways in which marketplaces have both historically, and contemporarily, allowed for the consumption of ethnicity, by a colonial/white/majority culture. From the colonial period, the eastern “bazaar” has been viewed from an Orientalist fascination with the exotic and desire to consume the “Other” while contemporary ethnic markets provide a source of cultural capital, elevating the market consumer to cosmopolitan status.

The Oriental Bazaar

Colonial and post-colonial marketplaces have been approached from a post-structuralist perspective, concerned with a colonial/Orientalist fascination with the mystery and exoticism, particularly of the Eastern bazaar, a common Orientalist theme. Along with depictions of the desert and harem, Orientalist painters of the nineteenth century, such as American Addison Thomas Miller, painted countless market scenes of carpet and vase merchants. The bazaar was also a focus of Orientalist literature. Flaubert’s descriptions of the Cairo bazaar portray the European as a “watcher” of the Orient, “never involved, always detached,” for whom the Orient is a “living tableau of queerness” (Said 1979:103). The Victorian poet Christina Rossetti told of the mysterious power and danger of eastern merchants in the bazaar to Victorian women in “The Goblin

Market”; Rudyard Kipling, writing of his travels to Canton, entitled the chapter, “Shows how I came to Goblin Market and took a scunner at it and cursed the Chinese people” (280). Kipling described the markets of Canton as horrific spaces marked by “chaos” and “devils” (Ricketts 1999; Lysack 2005). Yet despite the association with fear, the bazaar was fascinating to Victorian society. As Lysack explains, the rise in popularity of the eastern bazaar as shopping destination for the middle class Victorian woman established a mode of imperial consumption that was predicated on the act of “looking.” In the bazaar recreated at Liberty’s department store, women could take in the “spectacle” created through the display of various eastern products: silks, shawls, and other textiles. The marketplace was thus intimately linked to imperialism. As Lysack argues, the oriental bazaar was used to bring a domestic (female) audience into the colonial project.

Post-colonial marketplaces have also been considered from this lens. Witz et al. (2001), for example, highlight the ways in which South African markets are constructed to serve a Western tourist appetite for the traditional and “authentic” Africa. The Ratanga Theme Park features an Old Market Place designed to represent the “bustle” of the Marrakesh style *souq*, offering a “history of the ‘Orient’” and a “taste of the East” for consumption by contemporary Western tourists. Craft markets in guided tours of the former townships involve craftspeople “in situ ... in traditional costume, ready to demonstrate the function of the object” (285). The creation of the “authentic fake” for tourist consumption is also described by Alraouf’s (2010) analysis of the Manama souq renovation in Bahrain. The Manama souq is the “traditional” market in Bahrain, where spices, cloth, fruit, and nuts, as well as other “traditional” goods are sold. The market serves a diverse clientele: Bahrain’s multi-ethnic population comprised of Indians,

Persians, and Arabs, as well as international tourists. The renovation, however, ignored the historic and contemporary diversity of the Manama souq. The project, for example, made little mention of the historic “little India” zone of the bazaar where South Asians have historically held stalls and instead attempted to maintain a vision of the bazaar by emphasizing “continuity, sustainability, and balance,” and traditional Gulf architectural motifs. The renovation attempts to uphold a particular vision of the middle-eastern bazaar that is fixed and unchanging. It also imposes an ethnically homogeneous representation onto a space that, in reality, supports a locally diverse community. The case of the Manama souq exemplifies the ways in which the consumption of ethnicity in contemporary marketplaces cannot be removed from histories of Orientalist, colonial power relations.

Consumption and Cosmopolitanism in the Market

A related conceptual framework, concerned with the processes of cultural capital, distinction and cosmopolitanism, approaches consumption in contemporary ethnic marketplaces. Drawing on the work of Bourdieu on cultural capital and distinction, such theorists explain how the experience of ethnicity in the marketplace—through food, goods, customs, and music—bolsters individual cultural capital. Through connoisseurship of ethnic practices, one demonstrates one’s cosmopolitanism. Craftspeople and vendors, who offer products that appear authentic to specific audiences, exploit this desire for cultural capital. Kelly (2003) for example, explains how consumers seek “symbolic capital” in Hawaiian craft fairs, non-traditional retail locations that are seen as significant sources of “authenticity and cultural capital” (242). Similarly, Chang et al. (2007) demonstrate the ways in which Japanese visitors to Taiwanese night markets seek out

authentic experiences. Hindman (2009) examines the ways in which expatriates (many of whom are diplomats) in Katmandu, Nepal use consumption of local arts and crafts to elevate their social position. Expatriate shoppers in Nepalese markets seek to distinguish themselves from the other group of whites (tourists) by cultivating expertise of local goods and how to “get a good deal” (671). Hindman explains how merchants play into this practice by praising foreigners for their “eye” (for quality, or authenticity). Purchases are displayed in the expat home and used as cultural capital. In the case of foreign diplomats, the objects enable the “performance” of “status as cosmopolitan subjects” in subsequent diplomatic assignments (669).

In the last three sections we have seen that interaction in the marketplace is a social act, often bringing diverse groups of people together. We also see, however, that this interaction is not always positive—as it can reinforce difference, inequality, and “Otherness.” Although, in theory, the marketplace situates people on an equal playing field, in reality, unequal power dynamics often stymie meaningful interaction. Important questions remain as to how the “magical” potential of markets can be encouraged to create sites where different groups of people can work out differences without being confined to expected roles.

4.2.4 Markets and the State: Governance and Policy

A fourth area of research centres on the relationship between markets and the state. This work examines the regulatory activities of the state in the marketplace. Marcinszak and Van der Velde (2008) for example, demonstrate the effect of European rescaling on apparel markets on the Polish-Russian border, particularly given the tightening of the border following Poland’s acceptance into the European Union. Hunt (2009) examines

the ways in which the Colombian state uses policy on the marketplace to “pedagogicalize” citizenship through vendor relocation and recuperation schemes. She argues that the actions of the state against vendors represent the state’s attempt to impose “market values” on citizens in a neoliberal context (346). A more specific focus on cross-border social interaction is taken up by Valtchinova (2006) in an analysis of periodic fairs on the Bulgarian-Serbian border. Although the Bulgarian socialist state permitted free economic exchange in the fairs, allowing Bulgarians to “experience capitalism,” social interaction was highly constrained by the watchful eye of authorities who wanted to prevent the spread of “capitalist propaganda” and Bulgarian “escape.” Even a one-on-one conversation between a Bulgarian and a Serb was considered suspicious activity. He argues that, until the 1970s, while goods were exchanged freely, social interaction was “tightly controlled” by the Bulgarian socialist state.

Another strand of literature within the theme of the state concerns the interplay among marketplaces, urban policy, and diversity. Human geographers, interested in the consequences of urban regeneration schemes and gentrification for marginalized residents such as new immigrants and ethnic minorities, have taken up this line of inquiry, particularly in the North American and British literature. City officials and urban planners view multicultural neighbourhoods as vital to the cultural cache and economic vitality of a city; their colorful marketplaces provide a “picturesque backdrop for consumption,” encouraging tourism and related economic activity (Shaw et al. 2004:1983). Serious doubts have been raised, however, as to whether the tourist and functional role of such spaces (as living and working spaces) can be “reconciled” (1988). In particular, Shaw et al. argue that the increase in people visiting the marketplaces from outside precludes

“spontaneous interethnic and intercultural encounters” as the “the one-way traffic of onlookers . . . become[s] intrusive, disturbing the rhythm of people’s everyday lives” (2004:1997). Along these lines, several scholars have attempted to flesh out the conditions that encourage the flourishing of marketplaces that support diverse groups—and the developments that stifle them.

Purpose-built market spaces have limitations. Clough and Vanderbeck’s (2006) analysis of Burlington, Vermont’s Church Street Marketplace raises serious questions about purpose-built market spaces in planned Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) as public spaces encouraging engagement. The Church Street Marketplace is known and represented as a vibrant public space supporting multiple social groups and serving as a space of activism and protest, as well as economic activity. While a great deal of political activity is permitted on the street, Clough and Vanderbeck reveal clearly enforced rules regulating behaviour in the marketplace. Public safety or “tastefulness” is used as grounds for policing (for example, in the case of a staged “die-in” to simulate deaths from AIDS). Although the authors’ focus is not on ethnic diversity (but rather, a diversity of political opinions and activities), the study nevertheless has important implications for urban policy and diverse marketplaces. It suggests that markets, controlled by private interests and cultivated for tourism, may preclude meaningful interaction between different groups.

Dines’ (2007) case study of Queen’s Market in London also warns against urban regeneration programs that aim to render marketplaces more conducive to consumption. In the wake of London’s race riots in 2001, and in the lead up to London’s bid for the 2012 Summer Olympics, the Queen’s Market, a multi-ethnic open market in the

ethnically diverse neighbourhood of Newham, became the target of a development plan (Dines 2007). The plan aimed to make ethnicity more official and visible (for example, through murals and other aesthetic elements of urban design) and to increase social interaction. Despite the market's role as a key public and social space to the neighbourhood—for example as a space for elderly residents to stroll, or for racialized minorities to wander without fear of harassment—officials and planners viewed the existing market as chaotic, unprofitable, disorganized, and dirty. They aimed to give it a “more coordinated appearance” that would be more conducive to consumption, by creating an “orderly assembly of customers.” The ethnic diversity of the market was considered superfluous to consumption.

4.2.5 The Political Economy of the Marketplace

A fifth area of research examines the marketplace from a political economy perspective, considering its role as a space of economic inclusion for precariously positioned groups. A number of authors support a view of the marketplace as an economic safety net in insecure political and economic environments (although diversity is not always a central concern). In both developed and less-developed economies, participation in the market can be seen as a way to meet basic needs that are not “met by the state” (Hunt 2009). A great deal of work has been done on the importance of the informal economy in the developing world, and some of this concerns the marketplace, particularly in Latin America (see Bromley 1998a, 1998b; Stillerman 2006; Bromley and Mackie 2009). The role of marketplaces in the post-socialist transition in Europe and Central Asia has also emerged as a dominant theme of research, where markets have served as mediators of economic dislocations (Konstantinov et al. 1998; Czako and Sik

1999; Sik and Wallace 1999; Marcinczak and Van der Velde 2008; Spector 2008; Kaminski and Raballand 2009). In these post-socialist “bazaars,” competition for scarce resources, as well as decades of communist ideological denigration of the marketplace as “backward,” have sometimes complicated ethnic relations. Konstantinov et al. (1998), for example, emphasize how Roma participation in trader tourism (and marketplace vending) along the Bulgarian-Turkish border further stigmatizes an already marginalized ethnic population.

While there has been a great deal of research on immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship as an outcome of social and economic marginalization, surprisingly little has been said about the role of the marketplace in mediating these experiences. In immigrant-receiving countries, relatively informal spaces such as the marketplace can serve as the only means of employment, or as a means of supplementing income. De Bruin and Dupuis (2000) emphasize the importance of the marketplace for the economic participation of national and ethnic minorities in New Zealand’s Otara Flea Market, who are confronted with national welfare state restructuring in New Zealand as well as the wider processes of global labour transformations. The Otara market was constructed in part to provide a source of cheap goods for a low-income community (that is predominantly Maori and Pacific Islander but also attracts Chinese migrants) with high levels of unemployment and underemployment. De Bruin and Dupuis connect the difficulties facing immigrants from East Asia in the labour market in New Zealand and their participation as vendors in the flea market. Vendors participate simultaneously in the formal and informal economies. One vendor, for example, sells second-hand T-shirts she receives from a friend overseas (informal), while at the same time selling made-to-order

special occasion Maori formalwear (formal). This simultaneous arrangement bolsters the chances of “survival” in the formal economy. Marketplaces also allow ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurs to branch out of the enclave economy into the wider market (Olsson 2007).

Stoller (2002) demonstrates how economically marginalized and “culturally alienated” West African immigrants develop complex networks of social capital and trading as a coping strategy, making a living by selling a “simulated” Africa to African Americans. L’Hote and Gasta (2007) emphasize the relationship between street vending in Alicante, Spain and the country’s new impetus to attract immigrant labour, although there is only limited formal employment availability. Many of these immigrants—from Morocco, Senegal, Ecuador, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria—lack access to formal employment contracts and work seasonally or through verbal contracts. Entrepreneurship in the Alicante market is thus a product of necessity as traders often expressed dissatisfaction with their line of work and difficulty in finding other work. Further, because many of the goods sold on the street are illegal, the migrants establish an early negative relationship with police, which makes later entry to the formal labour market difficult. Nock (2009) considers marketplace entrepreneurship in a rural environment, detailing the ways in which Mexican agricultural workers rely on participation at “swap-meets” to supplement their (seasonal) incomes. Generally lacking among these analyses, however, are more systematic studies of the profitability of marketplace participation for those involved (for an exception, see Plattner 1982). This gap almost certainly stems from the difficulty of accessing reliable data, as vendors have various reasons to withhold or falsify information about their profits.

4.2.6 Markets and Social Inclusion

Markets also play a role in the social inclusion of immigrants and minorities. Watson demonstrates how markets in economically deprived neighborhoods in the UK serve as a social safety net. Traders were found to care for customers, by providing tea, helping the elderly around, finding seating, and sometimes childminding while customers shop. Watson uses her findings to challenge Robert Putnam's (2000) argument about declining social capital. As she argues, Putnam discounts "the less formal and visible forms of social connection that occur outside the more commonly recognized sites of social encounter" (i.e., marketplaces) (Watson 2009:1589). De Bruin and Dupuis (2000) as well as Olsson (2007) also associate the marketplace with altruism and charity, describing the market as a space in which people want to help one another. Furthermore, as Olsson explains, the market provides a means for immigrants to come together and meet one another. They also serve as places where ethnicities can access the items and products that allow them to carry out their own cultural practices and teach them to their children (Olsson 2007). In the San Joaquin Valley, "swap-meets" provide an important space for Hispanic immigrants to "form networks, to circulate information, to reminisce about home, and to have fun" (Nock 2009:315). Churches, community organizations, and political groups use the spaces to disseminate information. Swap-meet customers relate their use of the market space to nostalgia for home.

4.2.7 The Spatiality of Markets

Finally, the spatiality of the marketplace must be given consideration as a crucial part of interest in markets. The market is conceptualized as a public space (de la Pradelle 1995; 2006) increasingly impinged on by government (Hunt 2009) and planning (Zacharias 1993; Dines 2007; Bromley and Mackie 2009). Clough and Vanderbeck (2006) draw on theoretical contributions of Henri Lefebvre's "right to the city" to consider people's struggles over participation in the marketplace.

Markets operate in a theoretical grey area between public space and commodified space, as we saw in Chapter 2. Furthermore, they are also bound up in ideas and myths of public sociability, which is an often-assumed characteristic of "authentic" city spaces (Gans 1968; Watson 2009; Wirth 1938). In contrast, true-to-form suburban spaces are seen as socially "contrived." Suburban design lulls people into relinquishing the "privileges of urban public space" in exchange for highly controlled, commoditized, anti-social, and unauthentic environment (Goss 1993:29-30). The traditional North American suburb, with its cookie-cutter subdivisions, manicured lawns, two-car garages, and sprawling malls is often depicted, tongue in cheek, as the place where authenticity "dies". Yet, as Gibson et al. (2012:13) argue, such a "taken-for-granted ontology of scales" belies the ways in which day-to-day "affective relations to place are networked across city [and suburban] spaces." The night markets fall at the heart of debates about sociability in public and commodified space, in the city and suburbs.

4.3. Conclusion

The literature on markets and diversity is divided on the question of whether marketplaces can serve as positive spaces of intercultural encounter and understanding.

Markets have long served as both economic and social spaces, bringing disparate groups of people together. Deeply significant in many cultures, markets have become contemporary symbols of sociability and face-to-face interaction. People may therefore bring a specific set of expectations to the market than they do other types of spaces. What's more, participation in the marketplace is more open than in other commercial spaces (Kelly 2003). There are fewer barriers to selling and consumers have more control over the value of goods themselves. This openness creates a leveling effect that places people on an equal playing field in which differences – ethnic, religious, racial, class, social status – may be more easily bridged. Market transactions are themselves social encounters and have the power to develop hybrid identities, to reduce prejudice, and to change the meaning of consumption itself (Olsson 2007; Watson 2009). Marketplaces in plural societies have the potential to be economically and socially inclusive spaces. The ideal, “diverse market” is a space of open exchange, where social rules and hierarchies are suspended—and people meet on common ground.

It is clear, however, that markets do not always foster positive exchange beyond the economic. Marketplaces have longstanding connotations of western Orientalist consumption and representation of the ‘Other’ (Lysack 2005; Said 1979). While interaction between diverse groups can encourage a sense of shared identity, hybridity, or appreciation of difference, contact can also reinforce social difference and exacerbate pre-existing tensions, particularly under circumstances of economic competition (Busch 2010; Liu 2010). Social relations in contemporary marketplaces are dominated by profit motives, from vendors to the state (Clough and Vanderbeck 2006). At best, people avoid each other (Smith 1965) or mis-represent their reasons for participating (Maisel 1974).

Building on the questions raised by Chapter 2, at worst, marketplaces are pseudoplaces (Flusty 2001): mere representations of public space that distract people from the absence of true representational public spaces (Lefebvre 1974; Mitchell 1995). Diversity becomes the backdrop for consumption, the façade in front of which the well to do consume difference for cosmopolitan enrichment (Dines 2007; Shaw et al. 2004). Marketplaces, whose ethnic cache is played up to attract members of the majority culture, for example, are not likely to be “equal playing fields” or sites for the working out of social difference (Hage 2000). On one hand, Vancouver’s night markets have the potential to support not only the Chinese community, but also Vancouver’s public as a whole. On the other hand, they have the potential to breathe new life into harmful Orientalist representation of Chinatown and Chinese space and to encourage white consumption of the ‘Other’. What, then, is the relationship between consumption and diversity in the night markets? In light of the themes raised in this literature, I return to this question in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5 – Interlude: Mapping the Night Markets

The story of the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver is a fascinating global and trans-local one that connects a particular spatial and temporal form across the Chinese diaspora, but is also rooted in the local specificity of Metro Vancouver. In this transitional chapter, I divide this story into three Acts. Act 1 concerns the transformation of the social geography of Metro Vancouver through immigration from the Pacific Rim. Act 2 returns to the home countries of these waves of immigrants, many of which came from places with active nighttime cultures. Night markets developed differently in parts of Greater China and consequently have different meanings among Chinese sub-ethnicities. These cultures are nonetheless linked by a contrasting sensibility concerning the relationship between night and leisure. Act 3 revolves around the relationship between these two issues (shifting social geography and competing conceptions of nighttime landscape) and urban change in Metro Vancouver over the last thirty years.

5.1 Act I: Metro Vancouver's Changing Social Geography of Immigration

The night market phenomenon is inherently related to the transformation of the social geography of Vancouver as well as other global cities. For much of the 20th century, the City of Vancouver was dominated by people of British ethnic origin. This group was relatively dispersed throughout the city. Other white ethnic groups, of north and Western European origin, were also spread relatively evenly. The wealthier segments of these white European ethnic groups resided in Vancouver's west side, or in the North Shore suburbs. In contrast, southern and Eastern European immigrants mainly lived in the

City's eastside working-class neighborhoods. Non-white immigrant and minority groups were spatially concentrated in inner-city neighborhoods in the City's eastside. As we saw in Chapter 2, Chinese immigrants congregated in Chinatown.

With the end of Canada's "white immigration policy" in the 1960s, there was a profound shift in the country's main immigrant source countries. By 1971, only 62.6% of immigrants arriving in the last ten years were from European countries. Up to and throughout the 1970s this wave of immigrants exhibited similar residential patterns to their predecessors, which were in line with Chicago School assumptions. Immigrants in Vancouver generally chose to initially settle in the inner city, moving to the suburbs with upward mobility. During this period, European groups were variably segregated (the Portuguese and Jewish communities for example were highly concentrated). The Chinese population was centered in Strathcona, but the "upwardly mobile" had begun settling in the Oakridge area. Japanese, South Asians, and Caribbean/African groups exhibited lower levels of residential isolation. Overall, most immigrants lived within the city and the suburbs were mainly white (Hiebert 1998).

Between 1971 and 1986 there was a marked increase in non-European ethnic origins in Vancouver, including a tripling of the Chinese Canadian population and a "five-fold" increase in the Indo-Canadian population (Hiebert 1998:12). The percentage of Vancouver residents with Asian origin grew from 5.4% in 1971 to 18% in 1986. The spatial dispersion of the Chinese population also increased. By 1986, 30% of Metro Vancouver's Chinese population lived in the suburbs. Richmond, once a predominantly Euro-Canadian suburb, experienced a rapid demographic shift. As we saw in Chapter 2, Canada's business immigration program, which sought to capture wealthy immigrants

from Hong Kong, was instrumental to this new social geography. Since the 1980s, Vancouver has become an increasingly “super-diverse” (Vertovec 2007) Metropolis.

Li and Li (2011) compared the 2006 Census for Chinatown’s three census tracts (57.01, 57.02, and 59.06) and the City of Richmond. The two areas exhibit considerable differences in terms of language, income, place of birth, ethnicity, and age structure. In 2006, just over 1% of Metro Vancouver’s Chinese (visible minority) population lived in Chinatown, compared to nearly 20% in Richmond, and just over 24% in East Vancouver. A similar pattern was reflected amongst Chinese mother-tongue speakers, roughly a quarter of which lived in Vancouver’s Eastside, with significant percentages in Richmond (20.6%) and on the West side (17.7%) while only 1.3% lived in Chinatown.

The populations of Chinatown and Richmond also differ considerably in terms of country of birth, ethnic origin, age structure, income, and patterns of home ownership. The Chinese population in Chinatown was mainly PRC – born, accounting for nearly a quarter of its total population, compared to 15.1% of Richmond’s. Richmond also had a higher proportion of Hong Kong-born immigrants than Chinatown, representing 12.7% of its population, compared to 2.4% in Chinatown. Strikingly, nearly half of Chinatown’s population registered low after tax household incomes, compared to 20.4% in Richmond (Li and Li 2011).

Although the full 2011 profiles have yet to be released, the most recent Census data indicates that the number of Chinese speakers in Chinatown has decreased considerably since 2006. In 2006, there were 4,585 people in Chinatown who reported speaking Cantonese, Chinese n.o.s., or Mandarin as their mother tongue. This figure has fallen to 3,260. The top five mother tongue languages spoken in Chinatown in 2011, in

order from greatest to least, were English, Cantonese, Chinese n.o.s., Vietnamese, and French, with Spanish at a close sixth (Statistics Canada 2012). Chinatown's population is also older than Richmond's, with nearly 23% of the population over 65, compared to 12.6% in Richmond. Table 5.1 shows the change in age structure of the three Chinatown census tracts and the City of Richmond between 2006 and 2011. The proportion of the population 65 and over has decreased in Chinatown, while the population aged 20 – 34 increased. This changing age structure is symptomatic of the kind of gentrification taking place in the neighbourhood.

Table 5.1 Age Characteristics of Chinatown and Richmond, 2006 and 2011

Age	Chinatown				Richmond			
	2006		2011		2006		2011	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-19	1660	11.6	1455	9.9	39045	22.4	39895	20.9
20-34	2840	19.9	3450	23.4	33630	19.3	37580	19.7
35-49	4020	28.2	3825	25.9	43165	24.7	42870	22.5
50-64	2765	19.4	3350	22.7	36365	20.8	44120	23.2
65+	2990	20.9	2680	18.2	22250	12.8	26005	13.7
Totals	14275	100	14760	100	174460	100	190470	100

Source: Compiled from Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006 & 2011; figures for Chinatown represent the average by Census Tract Aggregated area for tracts 57.01, 57.02, and 59.06; data for Richmond (City).

Table 5.2 shows the City of Richmond's population by mother tongue in 2006 and 2011. The data show an increase in the proportion of the population in Richmond speaking neither French nor English as their mother tongue. In 2006, the top five languages spoken in Richmond were English, Cantonese, Chinese n.o.s.⁷, Mandarin, and Punjabi. In 2011, Tagalog has surpassed Punjabi. The data for 2011 also show a small

⁷ Not otherwise specified.

decrease in the proportion of Cantonese speakers and an increase in Mandarin speakers. More people also reported speaking multiple mother tongue languages.

Table 5.2 Richmond Population by Mother Tongue, 2006 & 2011

	2006	2011
	% Total	% Total
Single responses	98.0	96.7
Single responses / English	38.6	36.6
Single responses / French	0.7	0.6
Single responses / Non-official languages	58.7	59.5
Cantonese	16.4	15.9
Chinese, n.o.s.	13.4	13
Mandarin	7.7	10.9
Panjabi (Punjabi)	3.9	3.1
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	3.5	3.9
German	1.2	0.8
Spanish	1.1	1
Japanese	1.0	1.1
Russian	1.0	1.1
Hindi	0.7	0.6
Multiple responses	2.0	3.3
English and French	0.1	0.1
English and non-official language	1.9	3
French and non-official language	0.0	0.1
English, French and non-official language	0.0	0.1
Total %	100.0	100
Total population by mother tongue	173565	189740

Source: data compiled from Statistics Canada Census of Population 2011 for the City of Richmond.

To summarize, the settlement patterns of Chinese immigrants in Vancouver have changed significantly over the last 25 years. While Chinatown has become less Chinese, the suburbs have become more Chinese and also more multicultural. The story of the night market phenomenon in Vancouver mirrors this shifting social geography.

5.2 Act II: History of Night Markets

The “cultural form” of the night market can be traced back as far as the late Tang Dynasty (8th and 9th centuries) and flourished with the economic growth of the 9th and 10th centuries, coming to play a prominent role in Song Dynasty society (970-1279). These traditional markets involved a range of activities: “fortune-telling, gambling, juggling, performances” and prostitution, and a wide array of products for sale: handicrafts, garments, vegetables and fruit, “Bhuddhist icons, tea, and prepared ‘snack foods’” (Yu 2004:134). While morning markets were traditionally associated with necessity, night markets were reserved for socializing and “strolling” (Yu 2004:137). Since WWII, the PRC, Hong Kong, and Taiwan have taken divergent modernization paths that have, among other things, led to differences in cultural taste, food preferences included. Night markets have very specific histories in these places that are important to understanding the development of Metro Vancouver’s night markets.

Night markets resurfaced in post WWII Taipei. As the economy recovered, many people migrated from southern parts of Taiwan to work in manufacturing. Markets popped up in the city’s core that catered to these migrants. Vendors offered regional food dishes from home (i.e. Zhangua meatballs) with low-quality ingredients, for sale at low prices that migrants could afford (Yu 2004). Afternoon-markets, such as the one at Da-Dao-Cheng, extended their hours into the evening to capitalize on the needs of this migrant population. (Chang and Hsia 2011). These markets spread outwards: from city centre to suburbs, then to other cities in Taiwan as well as rural areas. By the 1960s, a network of night markets had emerged, which brought goods from the urban core to the periphery (Yu 2004:132).

Taiwan's 1970s "economic miracle" had a major impact on the night markets. The handicrafts traditionally sold were replaced by toys, clothing, shoes, and other light industry goods being mass-produced in Taiwanese factories. The markets also had new clientele: a new class of "salaried urban office worker" with money to burn and a need for "ready-made" clothing (Yu 2004:136). When the global recession hit at the end of the decade, the night markets blossomed, flooded with canceled orders and "returned exports" from the West (Yu 2004).

With Taiwan's modernization, informal markets came increasingly under attack by city officials (Chang and Hsia 2011; Yu 2004). Street vendors were seen as symbols of Taiwan's burgeoning informal economy. They were characterized as "tax evaders" who eschewed the costs of setting up a legitimate (permanent) business. They thereby disadvantaged formal commercial enterprise. Night markets were viewed as "anti-modern," "backward" and as "tumors" in Taipei's landscape. They have thus been continually marginalized and subject to intense police regulation (Chang and Hsia 2011; Yu 2004:133).

The 1980s "stock-market boom" precipitated the development of permanent commercial districts around the markets. These districts attracted McDonald's restaurants, 7-Elevens, and eventually department stores in the 1990s. Counterfeit goods were increasingly regulated by police, and were pushed out of the larger night markets and into the more peripheral ones. The goods on sale also came to reflect Taiwan's loss of competitive advantage in labour-intensive production. Much of the merchandise was, and continues to be, imported from the Mainland and Korea (Yu 2004:132). Neon signs and loud music became integral to the night market's "energy." The more popular night

markets: Shilin, FengChia, Liouhe, and Keelung Temple attract large numbers of international tourists (Hsieh and Chang 2006; Lee et al. 2008). Locals use the market to socialize, search for particular products, and to find “bargains” (Lee et al. 2008).

Despite their problematic relationship with the state and its vision for modernization, Taiwanese night markets have become symbolically associated with indigenous Taiwanese culture (*xiangtu*). Yu (2004:146-147) argues that they have been harnessed as “motifs” in the project of disassociating Taiwan from “Chinese cultural heritage.” They represent a politically motivated “nostalgia” for the “genuine human relationships of the type found only in rural villages and towns” in pre-1895 Taiwan. The social space of the night market symbolizes Taiwan’s “freedom.” Night market food, known as “*xiaochi*” (or “small eats”) has deeply embedded cultural significance. These typically include Cantonese dim sum, Chinese dumplings, steamed buns, rice cakes, and pork and fish conge, but traditional western style foods are found as well, often mixed with Taiwanese recipes (i.e. steak or western-style fried chicken). *Xiaochi* carries regional connotations, and is associated with intimate, family relationships, as well as “cultural authenticity.” In this way, food has been “adopted as the source for raw materials upon which a Taiwanese identity could be constructed” (Yu 2004:144). According to Lee et al. (2008) the night market can be seen as the “true expression of modern Taiwanese nightlife.”

Hong Kong’s Temple Street night market (Figure 5.1) has also become symbolic of its urban landscape. This market dates back to the Qing dynasty, beginning as a string of vendors lining the pathway to a Tin Hau Temple. Pedestrians, both local and tourist, flow through streets lined with vendors selling clothing, AV equipment, toys, jade, and

CDs and DVDs unwanted by retail chains (Davis 2003:167). The sensory experience of this space is created visually through its textures, colours – the blue and red peaked tents, polyester in all shades, faux leather, animal print, mesh, plastic, movie posters, and prints of scenic images of Hong Kong's Star Ferry. It is also created through sound: Cantonese opera, karaoke, fortune-tellers, and the bubbling buckets of water in which crustaceans languish. The smell and taste of noodles, grilled meats, and sweets are integral to the experience, as are the crowds of people. In the night market, a particular version of capitalism that is both old and new plays out against the backdrop of Hong Kong's cityscape. The market exists within the palimpsest of central Kowloon and its complex mixture of high-and-low-rises, shop-houses, giant malls, mixed-use retail spaces, and 7 – Elevens.



Figure 5.1 Hong Kong's Temple Street Night Market (photo by author)

In contrast, Mainland night markets have an altogether different history than those in Taiwan or Hong Kong. They have only resurfaced since the 1980s, with the relaxation

of government food policy. In 1980, the Chinese state began to allow the sale of food “produced” outside of the quota system to be sold. It was in this context, that night markets, such as Beijing’s Donghuamen Street night market, emerged (Jenkins, *The New York Times*, 28 May 1986). Donghuamen now capitalizes on “extreme” (and largely contrived) food tourism, by offering tourists exotic food such as scorpions. Other night markets, however, are now more locally popular in some areas of the PRC, such as Guangzhou.

Guohua (2010) frames mainland night markets within “wave after wave of popular commercialized forms of nightlife” that spread inland from Guangzhou and Hong Kong from the mid-1980s. Following China’s re-opening, the state actively supported a “new discourse of leisure culture in urban China” that had been repressed for three decades following the Cultural Revolution. The move to a 40-hour workweek, and creation of the two-day weekend, or “double leisure day,” in 1995 was a major catalyst. As Wang (2001:75) notes, leisure “became the hottest topic in newspaper columns and street and office conversations.” The Chinese state actively supported nightlife development zones (such as Sanlitun in Beijing and the Xintiandi Complex in Shanghai) as strategies for local development.

Despite the clear differences between the history, economies, and significance of night markets in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the PRC, important commonalities (Yu 2004) are shared by the night markets in Metro Vancouver. First, *temporality* is a key element of the night market form. Yu highlights that, as early as the Tang Dynasty (8th century), Chinese people sought social interaction with others after dinner in outdoor public spaces. This association contrasts with early Western concepts of the night as something to fear

that needed illumination. Yu juxtaposes the Chinese emphasis on leisure and publicness with Western leisure activities that are more private or “individualistic.” Thus, while Chinese morning markets were associated with necessity, the night was reserved for socializing, “strolling” and the “fair” (Yu 2004:137). Further, while night markets can involve permanent shops or restaurants, they are most often located on ordinary urban and suburban streets by the day that are transformed into social spaces as well as economic ones by night (Lee et al. 2008). They typically begin in the late afternoon and end around or just before midnight, although some run all night.

Night markets also have a “transient” quality. In Taiwan’s Shilin night market, for example, market “streets can magically disappear in a matter of seconds when the cops show up to write tickets” (Hou 2010:111). Hou thus argues that

A night market is still best characterized as an in-between, crossover space between the public and private, temporary and permanent, formal and informal. The flow and accretion of activities defies any established boundaries of time and space. They are by nature a contested landscape that requires a constant negotiation of power, space, activities and meanings (2010:112).

Second, night markets also entail very specific conceptions of space. Yu (2004:138) defines the market space using the Taiwanese word *renao*, which translates as “hot and noisy,” and signifies “enthusiastic human interactions.” Chau (2008:486) refers to this as “red hot sociability,” a mixture of *renao* and *honghuo* (which means red fiery). Seemingly disorganized vendors, as well as the display of items such as “raw meat” and animal organs are part of *renao* (Yu 2004:138). The attraction of this environment, argues Chau (2008:488) is the “satisfaction” derived from being an “active” participant in the creation of this “sensorially rich social space.”

5.3 Act III: Urban Change in Vancouver

Chinatown has been historically central to Vancouver's nightlife and nighttime economy. That Chinatown was once the "place to go" at night, is a common lamentation among Vancouver city planners and area merchants. Ironically, the elements that made early Chinatown a bustling nightlife destination are fundamentally related to the marginalization of the 19th century Chinese population. Chinatown's early reputation as a "vice town" centered on the "presumed proclivities" of the Chinese for a list of sins including gambling, prostitution, and opium (Anderson 1991; 1996:204). From its beginnings on the banks of False Creek, white Vancouverites imagined Chinatown as a "hive of sinister and illicit behavior" (McKellar 2001:88). This "sin city" discourse also derived from its perception as a harbour for "strange and threatening minorities who made the White middle classes even more uneasy about the city" (Lees and Demeritt 1998:336). In the pre-war period, whites ventured only to Chinatown "on the sly or dare" (McKellar 2001:88).

Although the "vice town" reputation persisted in the post-war period (Ross 2009; Yee 2006), nightlife in Chinatown became increasingly mainstream. Bus tours in the 1940s provided a "conscious bridge" for whites into the area, acquainting them with the "adventure of visiting its contents" (McKellar 2001:88). In *Neon Eulogy*, Vancouver artist Keith McKellar describes these tours:

Tour buses slink through its streets, 'the titillating spectacle', almost a threat to see the bunkrooms of Hong Kong Street and Canton Alley. Get the neon glint of the Far East in your eyes. A quest for the forbidden experience. What wickedness lurks in those windows. Strange sightings of rituals and ceremonies. (McKellar 2001:88)

In the 1940s a number of “swing” and “jive” clubs, such as the Canton Club, Forbidden City, and the Mandarin Garden Cabaret, began attracting whites to Chinatown (McKellar 2001:88). By the early 1950s, Chinatown streets bustled with nightclubs and restaurants where a wide swath of Vancouver society “partied all night.” As Yee (2006:132) quotes Vancouver journalist Larry Wong, “on any Saturday night, traffic along Pender and Main was bumper to bumper with people having a good time and getting drunk...at night these noisy elements came down and treated Chinatown like a playground” (Larry Wong, cited by Yee 132). People spilled out of popular nightclubs with names like Kublai Khan, Harlem Nocturne, New Delhi Cabaret, and the Smilin’ Buddha Cabaret, their faces lit by giant signs which flooded Chinatown’s after-dark landscape with neon light. These clubs played to “thrill-seeking” white Vancouver’s consumer appetite for the exotic, offering an “all-you-can-eat-Chinese smorgasbord” that included burlesque and jazz (Ross 2009:59-61). While these clubs attracted whites with a penchant for the “Orient,” their clientele were also relatively diverse (Ross 2009).

The Hastings area prospered through the 1970s. Artists and bohemians were attracted by the area’s variety of retail and nightlife. By day, there were banks and busy department stores such as Army and Navy, Woodward’s, and Woolworths. By night, there was a variety of entertainment. Restaurants and teahouses skirted the city’s after-hours liquor laws by selling beer in teapots. Nightclubs such as The Kit Kat Club and City Night Theatre were popular (Carnegie Community Action Project 2001:3). The Smilin’ Buddha had opened in 1953 at 109 Hastings St. and was known as the “place to go” (Stan Chong, cited by McKellar 2001:26). Tina Turner and Jimi Hendrix famously graced its stage in the seventies. The Buddha’s neon sign has since become an icon of

blown glass neon signage in Chinatown. The “raised neon liquid-light line-drawing” featured Buddha with “faded purple robes, a puff of white neon steam rising from a bowl of abundance” (McKellar 2001:25-26). Chinatown’s neon signs have since become symbols of the neighborhood’s “heyday.”

5.3.1 “Ghost Town”

But, beginning in the 1980s, a series of factors precipitated the decline of Chinatown and its nightlife. As one Vancouver City planner puts it: the “stars lined up the wrong way” for the neighbourhood. By the early 1990s, Chinatown had become known as nighttime “ghost town” (Chow, *Vancouver Sun*, 19 July 1996). This decline is integrally related to the “collapse” of Hastings, beginning in the mid-1980s. A Carnegie Institute report attributes this acute decline to suburban development. Facing competition from newly opened Metrotown (1985-87) and Pacific Centre malls (both accessed via Skytrain), retail stores on Hastings began closing. A number of banks, including Toronto Dominion, Bank of Nova Scotia, and CIBC, on Hastings closed in the 1980s. By 1996, the street’s famous department stores, Woodward’s, Woolworth’s, Fields, and Fedco had all closed. These closures had serious consequences for smaller businesses, which no longer benefitted from their customer draw. Other businesses closed as well including “The Western gym, Coin City Arcade, City Night Theatre, St. James Billiard, and Franks cabaret” (Carnegie Community Action Project 2001). The Smilin’ Buddha was destroyed by fire in 1993 (McKellar 2001:27).⁸

⁸ Its neon sign ended up as the backdrop for 54-40’s touring album ‘Smiling Buddha Cabaret, and has been featured in 1999 and 2011 by the Vancouver Museum (McKellar 2001:27).

At the same time, other areas of the downtown were experiencing the post-Expo “investment boom” (Carnegie Community Action Project 2001:9). Vancouver’s 1986 World Expo had put the city on the map for international investment. Vancouver’s property market became increasingly linked to Hong Kong’s in particular. Capital flows between Hong Kong and Vancouver intensified in the lead-up to Hong Kong’s handover to China. The primary shareholder involved in the \$3 billion purchase of the 1986 Expo Lands was Li Ka-Shing, one of Hong Kong’s wealthiest developers.⁹ The Li family purchased the Expo lands as a way of ensuring their family’s economic security through portfolio diversification (Olds 1998). The Lands’ development into the Concord Pacific Place condominiums had dramatic consequences for Chinatown, and Vancouver’s property market more broadly. The Concord development precipitated the building of large numbers of single family units for Asian immigrants outside of Vancouver’s Chinatown. Although Chinatown had showed signs of downturn, the “decline became very obvious after Expo” (personal communication, Vancouver City Planner).

The deepening issues of poverty, drug addiction, and mental illness in the Downtown Eastside were also “legacies of Expo 1986” (Haggerty et al. 2008). In the lead up to, and following, Expo, “landlords expelled scores of poor residents from long-term housing to transform those units into tourist accommodations, exacerbating the existing poverty and homelessness problems” (Haggerty et al. 2008:39). As Hastings declined, the drug scene exploded. The Carnegie report suggests that the collapse of businesses on Hastings created a “vacuum into which the existing drug trade could expand” (11). Crack

⁹ Olds (1998) examines the Li family motivations for involvement in the Expo Lands’ development. He shows that their goals were both “material” and social. In particular, Li Ka Shing wanted the development as a way for his son to get a foothold in the real estate business.

and heroin-use dramatically increased in the 1990s. By 1997, the Downtown Eastside was declared a “public health emergency” (Wood et al. 2003).

Of further detriment to Chinatown’s nightlife was the development of the Granville entertainment area. Lees and Demeritt (1998:341) describe South Granville Street in the 1990s as a “rambling strip of boarded-up buildings, empty lots, sex shops, strip joints, and sleazy bars.” Like Chinatown, the street was a prosperous entertainment area in the 1940s and 50s, but experienced gradual decline through the 70s and 80s (Haggerty et al. 2008). The north end of the street was dominated by movie theaters, while sex shops and strip joints dominated the south end.

In 1997 the City hatched a plan to rebrand Granville as the “Theatre Row Entertainment District” (Boyd 2010:145). The City lifted the moratorium it had placed on liquor licences in the area in 1992, and made 1,000 new “liquor licence seats” available. The City rezoned the area around Granville to support the development of residential high rises and changed zoning restrictions in order to reduce the burgeoning number of sex shops (Haggerty et al. 2008:44). At the same time, Yaletown’s former industrial spaces were being converted and sold as condominiums. Efforts to “centralize nightlife” continued into the 2000s. Bar operating hours on Granville were extended to 4am in 2004. By 2006, there were 5,000 “liquor licensed seats” concentrated on Granville. The development of Vancouver’s “new ‘fun zone’” had a significant impact on nightlife in other areas of the city, which were not “granted extended hours” (Boyd 2010:145).

Finally, Chinatown was also relatively quickly losing its place as the centre for the city’s Chinese community. Chinese immigrants began settling elsewhere, establishing new hubs in other areas of Metro Vancouver. Richmond’s demographic and physical

transformation was in full swing. Already, (at the time of the Chinatown market's inauguration) half of Richmond's residents had been born outside of Canada. Most Chinese immigrants entering British Columbia over the next five years would settle there (Cunningham et al. 2000). The first of Richmond's large Asian-themed malls, Aberdeen Centre, opened in 1990. In 1996, the mall's developers announced a planned expansion and joined four other malls on No. 3 Road in "branding" the area as "Asia West" (Ley 2010).

5.3.2 Enter the Night Market

The Chinatown Night Market was a project dreamed up by the area's merchants to "put Chinatown back on the map" of the lower mainland. Figure 5.2 shows the location of the Chinatown Night Market and the Richmond Night Market in relation to the City of Richmond and the City of Vancouver's West and East sides.

The event was launched in the summer of 1996. The Vancouver Chinatown Merchants' Association (VCMA) marketed the event directly to new immigrants from Hong Kong. It was designed as a space which, integrated with local businesses, would connect Hong Kong and Vancouver. The Hong Kong Bank of Canada (Weyfung House) on Keefer St., for example, extended its hours on Sunday nights to allow stock trading with Hong Kong. The goal was to attract new immigrants to Chinatown who retained stocks in Hong Kong (Chow, *The Vancouver Sun*, 16 July 1996).



Figure 5.2 Location of the Chinatown Night Market and the Richmond Night Market in Relation to the City of Richmond and the City of Vancouver's West and East Sides

The project was initially a success. In 1997, the Chinatown Night Market (CNM) was touted by *The Vancouver Sun* as another way in which Hong Kong immigrants were making important contributions to Vancouver's landscape (Chow, 3 May 1997). In the market's first few seasons, the VCMA expanded the event from one city-block to three, hosting over 200 tented vendors' booths, which flanked both sides of Keefer St. A main-stage with a small seating area was located at the West end of the market (see Figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3 The Chinatown Night Market (photos by author)

The vendors were and continue to be predominantly Chinese, and sell Chinese food and low-cost jewelry, clothing, household items, toys, and other novelties and overstock from wholesale import businesses. Booth rental fees now range from \$2,300 to \$3,450 for a four-month season, although shorter-term rental contracts are now often available due to decreasing demand. The crowd of approximately 1,000 per night consists of several main groups: tourists going through a checklist of ‘free things to do and see in Vancouver’; residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods of Gastown, Strathcona, and Chinatown; and young hipsters. A significant contingent of elderly Chinese residents comes for the entertainment at the main stage, conducted almost entirely in Chinese.

The market was profitable for the VCMA in its early years and was seen as evidence of a positive change in Chinatown (Parry, *The Vancouver Sun*, 25 May 1998). In 1998 its organizers estimated the event would attract \$11 million to Chinatown and its surrounding area. An estimated 20,000 customers per night, most of whom were Chinese-Canadian, reportedly attended (Chow, *The Vancouver Sun*, 19 April 1997). The market was advertised in Cathay Pacific Airways’ “in-flight magazine” as a tourist destination. The VCMA also began promoting the event to “mainstream” Vancouver, and courted the participation of other ethnic groups, including the city’s Greek, Italian, and Indo-

Canadian communities. By 1998, the night market had become a regular feature of Vancouver's "to do" listings. Mia Stainsby of *The Vancouver Sun* offered these directions on "doing" the Chinatown Night Market:

Walk the two blocks. Absorb the atmosphere amongst the stalls, which unfortunately favour plastic and polyester merchandise. For the real feel of an Asian night market, check out the produce stores, bakeries and restaurants in the vicinity. Buy a delicious dragon fruit (hot-pink dragon exterior with fleshy white interior with black dots), or seek equal thrills from the mangosteen, cherimoya, rambutan, guava or jackfruit. Watch the merchant carve up the noxious durian. Better yet, save the fruit for dessert. Eat supper at the Gain Wah for the feel of old Chinatown. Hon's Wun-Tun and Park Lok won't disappoint, either. (2 July 1998).

It is worth noting that Stainsby's vivid description of the exotic fruits of the night market reads as a contemporary version of Victorian poet Christina Rossetti's (1862) "Goblin Market." This Orientalist narrative poem tells the story of a young white girl, Laura, who is unable to resist the thrill of sampling fruits, from "unknown orchards," offered to her by mysterious goblin merchants. As Rossetti writes, "morning and evening Maids heard the goblins cry: Come buy our orchard fruits, come buy, come buy." Peaches, figs, and "melons icy-cold," Laura is unable to think of anything else and her obsession drives her to the brink of death. She is ultimately freed from the goblins' hold, as she learns to safely consume the spectacle of the "Eastern bazaar" (Lysack 2005:146). Stainsby's instructions for consuming the Chinatown Night Market suggest the persistence of Orientalist discourses of Chinatown (as exotic and Other) in Vancouver's media. I will return to these representations in Chapter 6.

The media's enthusiasm for the Chinatown Night Market, however problematic, was short lived. In 1999, there were no references to the Chinatown market in *The Vancouver Sun*, perhaps indicative of its decline. Figure 5.4 shows the frequency of

references to the Chinatown Night Market, in comparison with the Richmond Night Market and Summer Night Market, in *The Vancouver Sun*. From 1996 to 2012, there were 161 articles published in the newspaper that referenced one of the city's night markets.

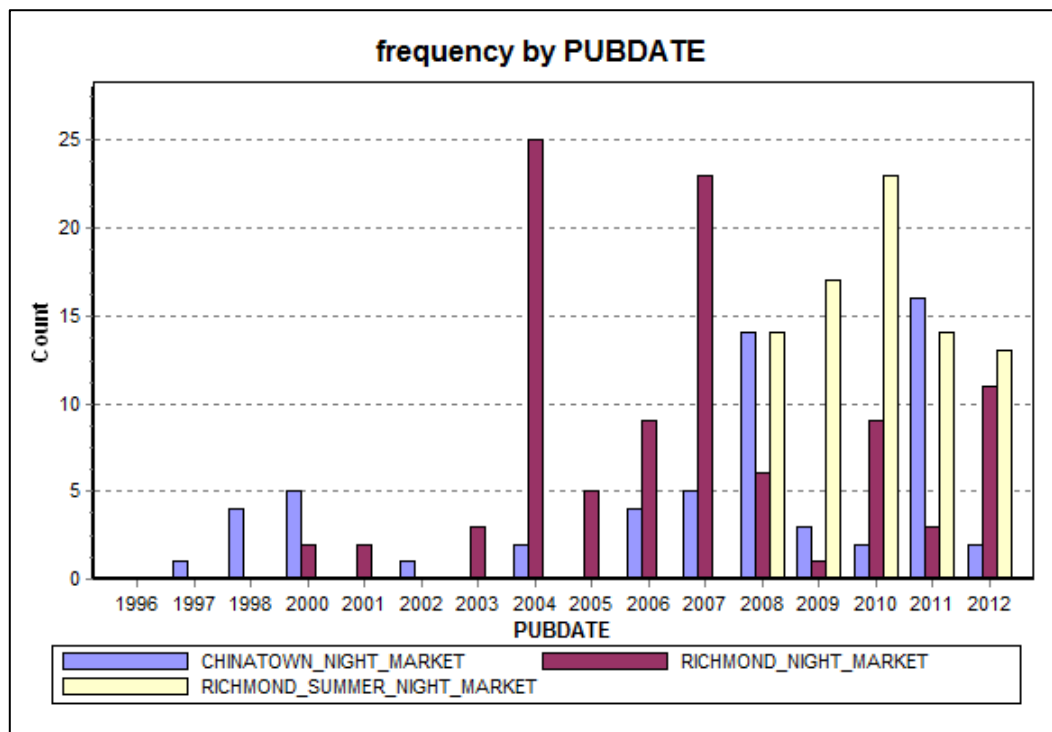


Figure 5.4 References to Night Markets in *The Vancouver Sun*, 1996 – 2012

Chinatown came to be portrayed, by the media, as a neighbourhood “run down and ravaged by crime” (Mickleburgh, *The Globe and Mail*, 17 Feb 1999). Its longstanding association with danger, fear, and crime also resurfaced. There were reports of “bodybags” carried out of Chinatown restaurants and drug overdoses in public washrooms. The cruise ships warned people to stay away. The “tour buses don’t even stop,” wrote *The Globe and Mail*. The last neon sign (that of Ho Ho Chop Suey) came down in 1997 (Mickleburgh, *The Globe and Mail*, 17 Feb 1999). The Chinatown Night Market has since been reduced to 1 city-block and roughly 100 booths. Chinatown

merchants began hiring their own neighbourhood security patrol. By the 1990s, the “sin city” discourse of Chinatown had been fully revived, its nighttime landscape again a place of fear.

5.3.3 “Calculated Transformation¹⁰:” The Era of Revitalization (1998 – present)

In July 1998, Vancouver’s City Council established a framework for the renewal of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. The Chinatown Revitalization Program began in 1999 as part of the broader Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program.¹¹ Between August 2001 and April 2002, a committee of Chinatown’s key stakeholders¹² organized and implemented a public consultation process involving over 600 people. This committee consisted of seven subcommittees: the Chinatown Vision; marketing and promotion; arts and culture; sports organization; parking; housing; and youth network. These subcommittees evaluated current land-use in the neighbourhood, demographic changes, as well as the revitalization schemes of other Chinatowns in North America in order to establish immediate and “long term” goals for the neighbourhood.

The consultation process gave rise to the “Chinatown Vision,” which was adopted by City Council in 2002. Broadly, the vision stated that “the future Chinatown should be a place that tells the area’s history with its physical environment, serves the needs of residents, youth and visitors, and acts as a hub of commercial, social and cultural activities” (*City of Vancouver*, 22 July 2002). The subcommittee’s report highlighted

¹⁰ (Killen, *WestEnder*, 19 January 2012)

¹¹ \$2.5 million of the City’s 2000-2002 Capital Plan was devoted toward the neighborhood’s revitalization.

¹² This Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) was formed in January of 2001 and included S.U.C.C.E.S.S., the Chinese Cultural Centre, the Chinese Benevolent Association, Vancouver Merchants’ Association, the Chinatown BIA, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, the Chinese Community Policing Centre, and a number of family associations.

Chinatown's high vacancy rates as key factors in the vitality of the neighbourhood.¹³ It stressed a pressing need to attract residents, and particularly young people. The committee also highlighted the need to balance support for both "culture" and "retail" in Chinatown (*City of Vancouver*, 22 July 2002) and the competition from other commercial nodes in Metro Vancouver, such as Richmond, Coquitlam, and the Victoria/41st St. area. More specifically, the Chinatown Vision outlined eleven directions, titled:

- 1) Heritage Building Preservation;
- 2) Commemoration of Chinese-Canadian and Chinatown History;
- 3) Public Realm Improvement;
- 4) Convenient Transportation and Pedestrian Comfort;
- 5) A Sense of Security;
- 6) Linkage to the Nearby Neighborhoods and Downtown;
- 7) Youth Connection and Community Development;
- 8) Attraction for Vancouverites and Tourists;
- 9) A Community with a Residential and Commercial Mixture;
- 10) Diversified Retail for Goods and Services;
- 11) A Hub of Social and Cultural Activities (*City of Vancouver*, 22 July 2002).

The transformation of Chinatown's nighttime landscape has been a major focus of the Chinatown Vision, and crosscuts a number of the above vision directions.

More recently, the City of Vancouver announced the Chinatown Economic Revitalization Action Plan, hiring San Francisco-based consulting company AECOM in 2010.¹⁴ AECOM's report stressed two major "business implications" of the shifting

¹³ In particular, the "fragmented" nature of property ownership in the area meant that very few property owners held more than one or two properties, and owners often resided outside of Chinatown.

¹⁴ The first phases of this plan consisted of "research and consulting," including a survey, a public workshop, stakeholder interviews, and analysis of population change in the Chinatown Market Area. AECOM submitted its report in November 2011.

demographics of Chinatown, arguing that: “First, Chinatown needs to broaden its restaurant offerings beyond largely Cantonese. Second, it needs to offer specialty restaurants and shops that appeal to niche Chinese or Asian markets in order to attract clientele from longer distances.” AECOM also emphasized the competition between Chinatown and Richmond, arguing that Chinatown’s “pedestrian appeal” should be used as a tool of competitive advantage over the suburbs.

In the last several years, the VCMA has been involved in a citywide debate about gentrification, and in particular the tension between city and private revitalization schemes, developers of surrounding condominium towers, and the nearby low-income community of the Downtown Eastside, whose hub at the corner of Main St. and Hastings St. is only a few blocks away. The VCMA’s December 2011 proposal to turn the night market into a permanent pedestrian “food street” in the next ten years was met immediately by strong criticism by those wary of the long-term consequences for those dependent on the neighbourhood’s low-income housing.

5.3.4 The Richmond Night Market & the Summer Night Market in Richmond

Despite its considerable diversity, over the last two decades Richmond has become known as the “New Chinatown” of Metro Vancouver. This reputation was not only driven by the aforementioned migration patterns, but also by the development of “Asian-themed” sites of consumption in the 1990s, including malls (see Lai 2001), karaoke bars, Chinese restaurants, and bubble tea-shops (Miller 2003). These are geared towards Asian consumers and designed to “evoke Asian origins” (Ley 2010). This discourse of Richmond’s authenticity as a place where ‘real Chinese people live’ is found throughout tourist guides and the Canadian popular press. Upon a (2011) visit to

Richmond, Pauline Frommer (of *Frommer's Travel Guides*) blogged enthusiastically that the suburb was “more like modern Asia than any I've encountered in North America” (Pauline Frommer's Daily Briefing, 2 June 2011). Similarly, Carolyn Jack of *The Globe and Mail* notes “you don't have to spend hours on a jetliner to get to Asia. You can zip over in less than a half-hour from downtown Vancouver” (13 October 2011).

The spatial and temporal realities of suburban life, however, constrain Richmond's ability to replicate “Asia.” The active 24/7 culture of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and cities of the PRC is absent in Richmond; malls, restaurants, and movie theatres all close early. Vancouver, in particular, is reputed as a city of beauty and quality of life, but lacking in nightlife. It was dubbed the “no-fun” city in 2000 after a federal law prohibited cultural events, such as the “Symphony of Fire” fireworks display from being sponsored by tobacco company Benson & Hedges (Ditmars, *The Globe and Mail*, 4 July 2005). The city's strict bylaws on noise and liquor licensing, and the restriction of late night activities to the Granville Entertainment District (see Boyle and Haggerty 2011) are often cited as additional reasons for its “no-fun” status (*The No Fun City*, 2009).

The bustle and “fever” of Hong Kong culture provides an important contrast to urban and suburban Vancouver. An editorial printed in the *Richmond News* highlighted the confusion and disappointment of a new immigrant from Hong Kong:

Being a new immigrant to Canada, one of the few things I am not quite used to is the types of entertainment. In Hong Kong, where I come from, the city is so lively after 6pm... In some of the busier districts you can enjoy all sorts of pastimes, even after midnight. On the contrary, Richmond is so quiet at night and there is not much entertainment available after 9 p.m. (Ho, *Richmond News*, 19 August 2009)

The Richmond Night Market (hereafter, RNM) was founded in 2000 to serve Richmond's growing ethnic Chinese population. Although this community has been most associated with immigrants from Hong Kong, it is important to note that this is a heterogeneous community of sub-ethnicities, distinct cultures, languages, and dialects, as well as different economic classes, and immigration streams (see Lo and Wang 1997).

The Richmond Night Market's Hong Kong-born founder, Raymond Cheung, saw an opportunity to recreate the night markets of Taiwan and Hong Kong for the nostalgia of Chinese residents of Metro Vancouver. This impetus can be placed within a broader market for Chinese nostalgia that has developed in Canada over the last thirty years. Chinese-Canadian narratives have been widely successful, such as SKY Lee's (1990) novel, *The Disappearing Moon Cafe*, and the 1994 film "Double Happiness," starring Canadian actress Sandra Oh. These fictional accounts explore issues of identity and belonging through generations. The Richmond Night Market played to this nostalgia and was an immediate success.

The first RNM was held in the parking lot of the Continental Centre in central Richmond and contained 70 booths. By 2001, the event had outgrown this lot; in its second year, the market was moved to Lansdowne Centre, comprising 140 booths. From 2003-2006, the RNM was held at Vulcan Way in a lot owned by Cathay Importers and by 2006, its size had increased to 400 booths (Hansen, *The Vancouver Sun*, 18 May 2006). *The Ottawa Citizen* placed the market as one of the top five "outdoor markets in the world" (Tam, 14 January 2006). The RNM came to be known as the "Copyright police's worst nightmare" for the plethora of fake Louis Vuitton bags, sunglass and handbag knockoffs, and pirated DVDs (Tam, *The Ottawa Citizen* 14 January 2006). Special

municipal permits for electricity and running water also earned it the reputation of “giant food court” (Gill, *The Globe and Mail* 16 June 2006). This reputation contributed to the RNM’s image as the more “authentic” Chinese night market of Metro Vancouver.

An entrepreneur himself (he was named Young Entrepreneur of 2003 by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce), the market was also intended by Cheung as a venue to support young entrepreneurs in Richmond. The RNM allowed small business owners to test “potential products” relatively risk-free while avoiding the rising cost of retail space in Richmond and rental leases that typically have 5-year “lock-ins” (Lee-Young, *The Vancouver Sun*, 8 August 2007). The RNM was marketed in part as the “perfect place for limitless business opportunities” (Richmond Night Market website). These vendors had access to as many as 40,000 customers per night (comparatively, estimates of Granville Island on a peak summer day are around 25-30,000 people) (although these estimates were self-reported and are likely inflated).

Cheung’s lease with Cathay Importers ended in 2007 and its owner, Ming Chong, whose property value had increased by 3 million dollars during the three-year lease period, raised the rent. An alternate site proved difficult to find due to zoning restrictions in Richmond, and the large amount of land falling under the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Despite help from the mayor of Richmond and the town council, a suitable site was not found in time, and on April 8 of 2008, Cheung announced that the RNM would be suspended for that year.

Shortly after, Lions Communications applied and was granted the lease from Cathay Importers and Paul Cheung (not related to Raymond Cheung) created the Summer Night Market (SNM) to capitalize on the void created by the absence of the RNM. This

stirred up a bitter rivalry on the part of the organizers, leading to a lawsuit, ironically pointed to by the press as a question of the “original” and the “knock-off”. Raymond Cheung sued Paul Cheung for copyright and trademark infringement. The “full injunction” asked for a “two year stop” on Lions Communications, as well as damages. No damages were awarded but Paul Cheung was fined \$15,000 for copyright infringement. The court found evidence of “substantial reproduction” of the RNM but allowed the Summer Night Market to continue (Bennet, *Richmond News*, 20 January 2010).

The Summer Night Market in Richmond now comprises roughly 270 booths. The vendors are predominantly of East Asian background, but with considerable diversity in terms of country, region of origin, immigration status, and language. There is, however, a noticeable presence of “token” non-East Asian vendors (of white, South American, African and South Asian origin). Vendors sell a wide variety of foods (eg Hong Kong style waffles), and cheap merchandise (accessories, DVDs, cell-phone cases). Other booths sell services (i.e. acupuncture, calligraphy, or fortune telling), or are held by community groups. The rental fees are higher than in Chinatown, but the market has more traffic; current crowds are smaller than that attending the Richmond Night Market, but can reach as high as 20,000 people per night. This crowd is diverse, attracting a wide swath of Metro Vancouver society as well as tourists. There is a significant contingent of young Chinese-Canadians, aged 15 – 25.



Figure 5.5 The Richmond Summer Night Market (photos by author)

In the summer of 2012, the original (and now trademarked) Richmond Night Market returned to Richmond, this time adjacent to the Bridgeport Skytrain station on the Canada Line. This return of the “original” market was much to the delight of local media who portrayed it as a “head to head” battle (Lynch, *Inside Vancouver*, 10 May 2012). This event was not included in the ethnography but nevertheless indicates the growing popularity of the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver. Personal communication with the Summer Night Market administrators in the early summer of 2012 indicated that this competition was cutting into their consumer base. Both markets were hurt by an unusually late arrival of summer weather.

5.3.5 Richmond Summer Night Market Survey

In collaboration with the Summer Night Market administrators, I conducted a survey of market users in the 2011 season. The survey took the form of a door-prize ballot. Market-goers could enter to win a door prize by filling out a short survey, containing questions about:

- Address/City
- Gender

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Employment status
- Language spoken at home
- Number of visits to the market per year
- Amount spent
- ATM use
- Transportation
- Parking

The surveys were collected via a door prize booth (operated by me), variously positioned throughout the market during three separate weekends, in the early, middle, and late part of the market season. Over nine evenings, a total of 500 surveys were collected.

While the survey results provide an approximation of the market's demographics, the results do not reflect a true random sample of market participants. Prize draws may be biased because they attract a segment of the population more likely to enter sweepstakes. More importantly, the ballots were only available in English, which, as I witnessed first-hand, dissuaded a number of people. Hence, the results are biased towards English speakers.

Nevertheless, the survey results reveal several important patterns. The results clearly indicate that the night market in Richmond is a young person's phenomenon. Nearly three quarters of respondents were under the age of 36, with those aged 18-25 comprising the largest proportion (39%). Half of market-goers are under 26. More market-goers were female (58.4 %) than male (40.8%). These results are summarized in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Age Characteristics of Market-Goers, Richmond

Age	Total	% Total
<18	66	13.4
18-25	192	39.1
26-35	107	21.8
36-45	55	11.2
46-55	36	7.3
56-65	27	5.5
>65	8	1.6
Total responses	491	100.0

It is also a car-oriented phenomenon, despite the addition of a special night market shuttle bus connecting to the Canada Line Skytrain. More than three quarters (76%) of respondents reported driving to the market, while 22% take the bus. While some people attend every weekend (9%), most (71%) attend less than five times per season. Only five percent of market-goers spend more than \$100 in a night, with most people (44%) spending between \$21 and \$50 (please see Appendix D for these figures). Most market-goers are attracted, first and foremost by the food, followed by shopping and entertainment. Figure 5.6 shows the percentage of market-goers (top three) reasons for visiting the night market.

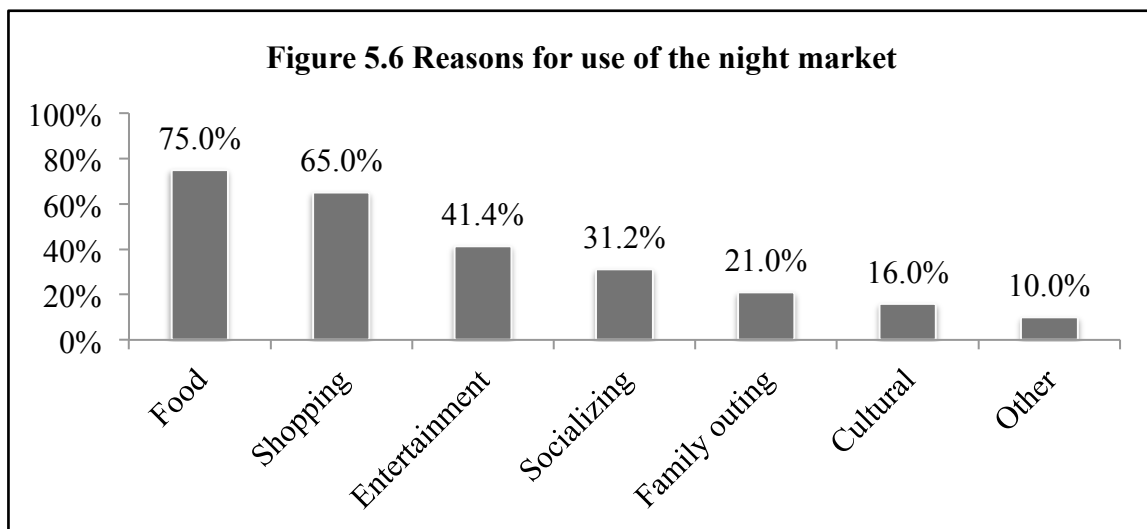


Figure 5.6 Reasons for use of the Night Market

Although the largest segment of market-goers live within the boundaries of the City of Vancouver, the event draws mostly from the suburbs. Table 5.4 shows the places of residence of consumers in the market. Nearly 29% of respondents lived in Vancouver, compared to 19.1% in Richmond. A striking 47.6% indicated addresses in suburbs other than Richmond. Residents of Surrey, Burnaby, and Delta are also using the night market in significant numbers.

Table 5.4 Richmond Summer Night Market-goers by Residence

Residence	Number	% Total
Vancouver	134	28.8
Richmond	89	19.1
Surrey	71	15.2
Burnaby	60	12.9
Delta	21	4.5
Coquitlam	19	4.1
New Westminster	16	3.4
Rest of BC	16	3.4
Langley	11	2.4
North Vancouver	7	1.5
Port Coquitlam	7	1.5
Port Moody	4	0.9
Maple Ridge	3	0.6
Outside Canada	3	0.6
White Rock	3	0.6
Rest of Canada	2	0.4
Total responses	466	100

The survey most likely underestimates the number of respondents living outside of the Lower Mainland because the door prize on offer (a trip to Capilano Suspension Bridge) could only be redeemed locally. It nonetheless demonstrates that the night market is as much a destination as a local market.

In terms of ethnic origin, the largest proportion (40.4%) indicated East or Southeast Asian origins. It should be noted that nearly a quarter of respondents left this

question blank and are not included in the total. Of the respondents indicating ethnicity (383), roughly a quarter defined themselves as Caucasian or white, while 30% self-defined as Chinese. Forty-two percent reported other visible minority ethnicities, including Korean, Filipino, and South Asian. The results are summarized in Figure 5.7.

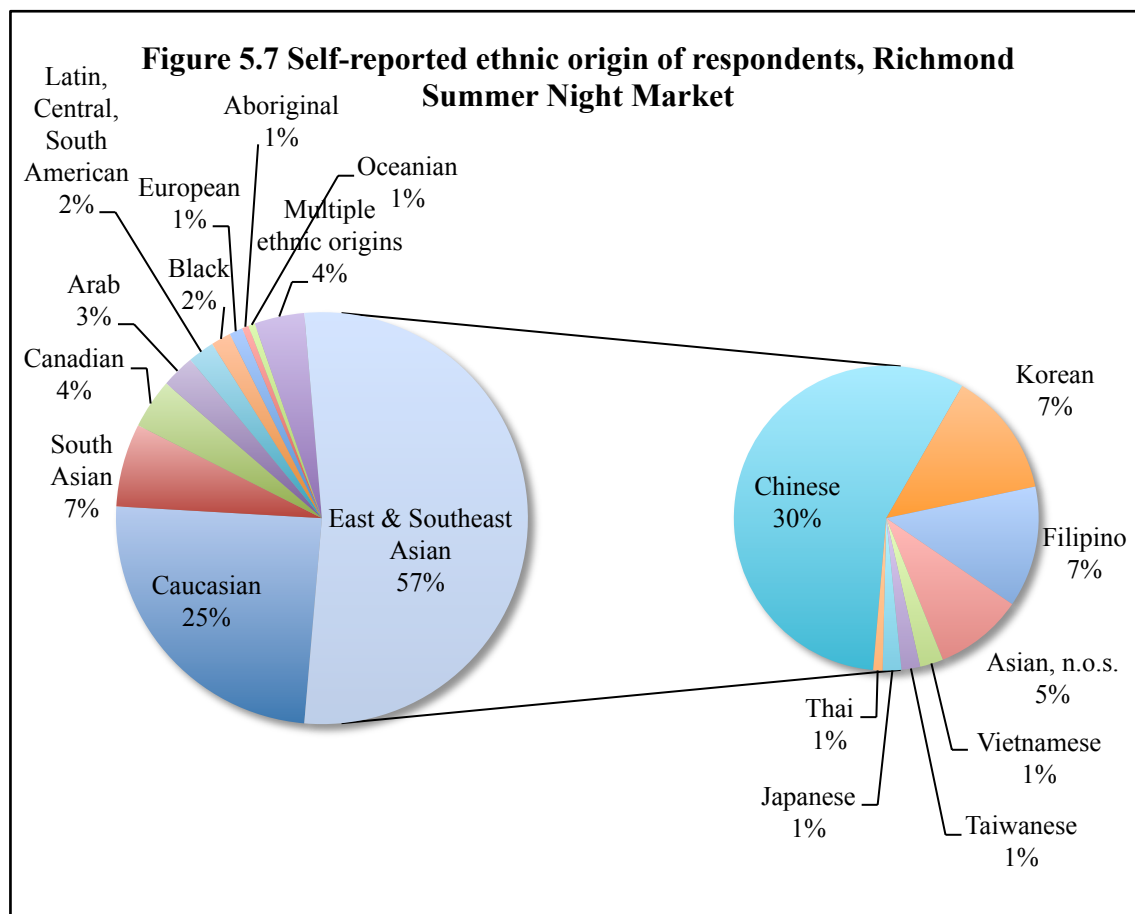


Figure 5.7 Self-Reported Ethnic Origin of Respondents, Richmond Summer Night Market

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter links the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver to the area's changing social geography of immigration, the history of night markets as a cultural form, and to the shifting economies of Vancouver's downtown and suburbs. The story of Vancouver's night markets mirrors the shifting social geography of the region, including changes in the characteristics of the Chinese population, and the suburbanization of this

community. From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, Chinatown was the centre of Vancouver's Chinese population. By the 1970s, this role began to change, as new residential patterns emerged outside of the downtown. Changes to Canada's federal immigration policy, alongside an array of local factors (including Chinatown's historical connotations, the urban economy of downtown Vancouver, and quantifiable and unquantifiable amenities of the suburbs) precipitated the migration of wealthy immigrants from Hong Kong to Richmond.

Night markets have specific cultural lineages and histories that distinguish them from other types of marketplaces. They also have different meanings in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the PRC. In Taiwan, night markets have become symbols of Taiwanese indigeneity and distinction from Chinese culture. On the Mainland, night markets are associated with freedom and the relaxation of restrictions surrounding production since the 1980s, as well as nighttime leisure activities. In Hong Kong, they embody the grey area between state regulation and illicit, or informal economic activity. Despite these different meanings, common to all night markets is a particular temporal and spatial definition of public leisure culture. Vancouver's night markets are projects in recreating this "red hot sociability" but have, over time, developed their own meanings in the downtown and suburban contexts. In the following three analytical chapters, I explore what the night markets mean in the context of Vancouver's Chinatown and diversifying suburbs, and multicultural policy in Canada.

Chapter 6 – Anderson Redux: The Production of Metro Vancouver’s Night Markets after Vancouver’s Chinatown

In this Chapter, I use the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver as a platform for thinking through changes to the social geography of race in the last twenty-five years. In particular, I extend the framework developed by Anderson in *Vancouver’s Chinatown* into the spaces of the Chinatown Night Market and Summer Night Market in Richmond. *Vancouver’s Chinatown* has become a required citation for analyses of Chinatown and for the social geography of race as a whole. There is a feeling that Anderson (and the debate which followed) closed the door on Chinatown: a scholarly consensus was reached that race was socially constructed through material space, but individuals have agency to negotiate and reject those constructions. As Chow puts it (2007), Chinatown has a “dual personality.” It is “constructed by Chinese Canadians for themselves and for and by a white settler society.”

The time is ripe for a more engaged re-visiting of Anderson’s framework in the context of Metro Vancouver. There have been huge changes to the social geography of the Lower Mainland since 1988, which have stemmed largely from new patterns of migration across the Pacific-Rim. As we saw in Chapter 5, the night markets tell the story of these changes. At the same time, the night market phenomenon revolves around versions of consumption and ethnicity that are very obviously steeped in Orientalist discourses.

The first part of this Chapter is an exercise in applying the Foucauldian, Gramscian, and Orientalist framework developed by Anderson to the Chinatown night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver. A quarter century later, how is the market constructed by and for a Western audience? How does this happen at different scales, from the city, to the entrepreneur, to the space of the market itself? The Chinatown Night Market is partially produced as a “Chinese” space for consumption by a Western, and largely tourist audience. But, a reading that stops at external constructions, would fail to see how such discourses are challenged and negotiated in the night market. In section 6.1.2 I examine the distinct, overlapping social spaces in the Chinatown Night Market, which I argue, are created by the interplay between externally constructed discourses and personal agency in a rapidly gentrifying area.

In the second section (6.2), I shift my analysis 13 kilometers to the south, to the Summer Night Market in Richmond. While persistent externally constructed discourses shape this space, its material manifestation is more reflective of a diasporic re-spatializing of suburban social (and economic) nighttime space to reflect the interests of immigrant communities in Metro Vancouver. In the third section, I discuss the implications of these findings.

6.1 The Chinatown Night Market: Orientalism’s Last Stand?

From an Andersonian (Orientalist and Gramscian) lens, the Chinatown Night Market can be seen as embodying a particular version of “Chinese” space produced for Western audiences. Is it the East created for the West in an “Oriental streetscape,” the spatial expression of “white Canada’s culture of racial representation” (Anderson 1991:221)? It conforms to centuries of European hegemonic expectations, and also bears

the markers of over forty years of multiculturalism. Here, the category of “Chinese” is made “legible” for a Western audience by the Chinatown merchants, who “recognize their own interest in [the] implementation of idealized notions of their district” (Anderson 1991:221). This project is conspicuous and consumable in various sensory forms – green jade, dragon dancing, the smell of barbecued meats, and the trill of Cantonese opera. The market provides a space of “safe exoticism” (Martin 2004), flooding Chinatown’s dark and foreboding corners with light, sound, and smell. Consumption is corralled into this temporary, bounded, and highly policed space. The City’s hand in creating the “legibility” of Chinatown is obvious, physically towering above Keefer St. in the form of a forty-foot yellow and orange neon Chinatown Parkade sign.

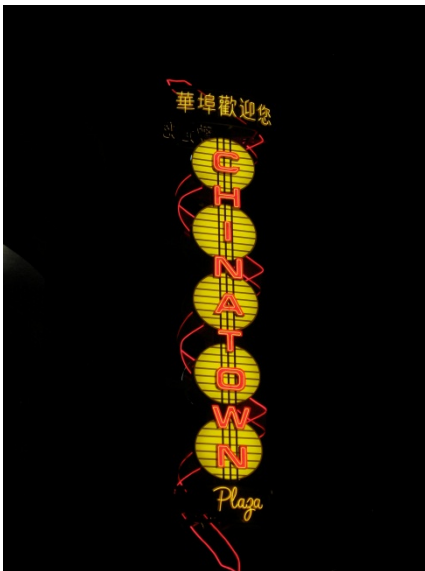


Figure 6.1 Chinatown Parkade Plaza Sign (photo by author)

The Chinatown Night Market has become widely known as a tourist market. The Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association (VCMA) describes the night market as:

A shopping experience like never before – on every Fri., Sat. & Sun. The street market contains booths with different merchandises on sale including artistic

handicrafts, creative gifts & decors, modern electronics, fashionable clothes, popular music CD, VCD, DVD, delicious snacks & ethnic food...etc. Tourists can enjoy their tour in the Vancouver Chinatown Night Market.

Despite nighttime Chinatown's negative reputation, the market has remained a popular stop for tour buses, advertised on the cruise ships that dock in Gastown, and in the lobby of the nearby youth hostel. *Frommer's* guide for Vancouver for example, describes the market as "great fun" "whether you're hoping to sample steamed dumplings, pick up a tin of oolong tea, or just poke around a fascinating scene...styled after Asian marketplaces where shopping is personal and haggling is the name of the game." According to *The Lonely Planet*, which describes the market as a "colorful downtown bazaar," the event is "like a walk-through buffet of noodles, fish balls, and bubble tea." These endorsements are, of course, accompanied by "travel advisories" warning that the market is adjacent to a "skid-row area troubled by alcoholism and drug use...[and] there's a good chance you'll cross paths with a down-and-outer here and there" (Frommers 2012).

Consequently, significant numbers of tourists come through the market each summer. They are generally highly visible because of their traveler's backpacks, maps of Vancouver, and "To Do" City checklists. Talia, for example, a woman in her forties, was traveling with her mother.¹⁵ They live in Israel where Talia teaches Qigong therapy. She came to Chinatown to buy Chinese medicine and costumes that are not available in Israel. They heard about the night market while on a guided daytime tour of Chinatown. Similarly, Andy and Beth, an older couple visiting from Scotland, read about the night market in a guidebook and were persuaded to visit because of the description:

¹⁵ The names of all interview participants have been changed to ensure anonymity.

Beth: *Just the fact that it was something a little bit different. It [Frommer's] described it quite exotically...the hustle and the bustle and all the food. Because Vancouver is a multicultural city, I thought it would be quite nice to see this side of it.*

Once in the market, these tourists are, according to the VCMA website, invited to “tempt [their] taste buds with ethnic snacks.” They can choose from an offering of Sichuan noodles, chow mein, Bubble tea, waffles, grilled meats, and deep-fried octopus balls. They can observe Chinese entertainment on the mainstage: Chinese opera, dance, karaoke, Chinese singing groups, martial arts, and “Chinese chess” competitions.

The night market has become particularly attractive to businesses catering to non-Asian tourists in Chinatown. Alex and Wan, for example, sell souvenir T-shirts, hats, and mugs in the night market, primarily to the (mainly) white tourists who come through the night market, often on tour buses. At Wei's booth, one finds Hong Kong-style barbecued meats and Dim Sum (with both Chinese and Hong Kong seasoning), which she sells mainly to non-Chinese customers. Her business is one of the market's most successful. She began in 2008, quitting her full-time job to start her market business. Her profits have increased over the last three years despite the recession. According to Wei: “the fewer Asian consumers the better for business. Asian customers bargain too much. Whites are more willing to spend.”

The array of food, merchandise, iconography, and overall sensory experience is not accidental. Administrators are heavily involved in managing the theme and content of the market. It is, in particular, designed to cater to the tastes of visitors with a specific expectation about Chinatown as a “Western landscape type” (Anderson 1987). Food vendors, for example, are instructed by the management to tone-down their flavours for Western tastes. As one vendor explains

When we applied for a license for this business, they didn't accept our old way of preparing the noodles. They asked us to change to the western way and we had difficulty communicating with them. I just want people in Vancouver to taste and accept our Sichuan style spicy-hot noodle. I only selected a few less strong flavours, which I think people can more easily accept here.

In other words, food vendors are co-opted into a project concerned with providing “digestible difference” in the framework of “celebratory multiculturalism.” In this framework, various ethnic cuisines are reformulated along a “non-hierarchical register of comfortably accommodated difference” (Parker 2000:78-80). Difference is prepared for consumption by constricting the boundaries of acceptable flavours, textures, and forms: the “meat sliced into bite-sized portions, parceled in disposable containers, made recognizable and palatable” (Parker 2000:80). In the Chinatown Night Market, food vendors provide market-goers with easily recognizable chow Mein and bubble tea, designated by English-language signs and menus. There are even mini-pizzas for the less adventurous, although, it seems unnecessary given the desire for “authenticity” by consumers illustrated in what follows.



Figure 6.2 Dim Sum Express line at the Chinatown Night Market (photo by author)

Part of this project of providing “digestible difference” relies on the smoothing out of differences in the cultural tastes and food preferences among Chinese sub-ethnicities (i.e. Hong Kong versus Mainland versus Taiwan) as well as between regions in the PRC (i.e. Sichuan versus Yunnan versus Xinjiang). While most of the vendors are from Mainland China, there are several from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The differences in food preferences across these groups are visible in the night market, but not promoted. Bubble tea, for example, originated in 1980s Taiwan and has become associated with Taiwanese culture. In Metro Vancouver, it is more generally associated with “Chinese” culture. The vendors are both Cantonese and Mandarin speaking, and hail from various parts of Mainland China that have very different foodscapes. But these differences are subsumed under the label “Chinese” in order to produce a cohesive environment for tourist consumption. The food vendors cater mainly to non-Chinese customers, although this does not necessarily dissuade Chinese consumers. Kei-Lee for example, who was born in Mainland China, and lives in Chinatown, admitted that she and her friend “like it all. We tried every one them [food vendors]...Bubble tea, rice noodle, fishballs.” Alicia, a 19-year Chinese-Canadian resident of Strathcona, buys noodles every weekend from her “favourite” vendor. Tony, who is Taiwanese, in his sixties, and lives in a Yaletown condominium, prefers the egg puffs and wheel cake to the bubble tea (the former is Hong Kong-style, while the latter two are Taiwanese). Generally, the Chinese and Taiwanese market-goers I interviewed were more interested in the food at the Richmond night market because of the wider selection, but attend the Chinatown market because it is more convenient. As one Chinese participant explained, for example, the Richmond vendors “sell snacks you actually can’t buy anywhere else, and can only get if you know

the vendors or how to make it. I don't even think the Asian bakeries sell such unique snacks sometimes. You eat as much as you can until the next year comes."

In contrast, non-Chinese consumers come to the Chinatown Night Market looking for a "taste of Asia." They are seeking to consume the ethnic "Other" through "cultural treats." As one (White) participant put it, when at the market, he is only interested in:

Foods that are thematically consistent with Chinese night markets. So no mini-pizzas, and no swirly potatoes. You don't get things that you could get other places. Otherwise, it seems to defeat the purpose. So like noodles and meats on sticks, fried rice rolls, pork buns, bubble tea, deep fried ice cream.

This night market foodscape, however, is hardly seen as exotic. Rather, most participants considered the offerings "familiar" and even mundane, fully aware that the foods are prepared for a Western audience. One participant lamented the lack of more exotic fare: "where's the imitation shark fin soup?" Another explained: "there's nothing really inaccessible. It's really easy North American style Chinese food. I recognize everything here."

Despite this recurring narrative of the market's mundane food offerings, there were also clearly discernible lines around "indigestible difference" (Parker 2000:80). This line became evident in statements concerning the "unhealthy" nature of the food and in suspicion surrounding the hygiene of the food preparation. As one Iranian-Canadian woman, who had traveled from Surrey with her family to attend the night market, explained: "I am just here for the atmosphere with my kids. I would never eat this food. It's probably not safe, like, do they clean the oil? I don't know." Purchasing goods in the night market was also framed as risky, and the vendors untrustworthy, through statements like: "you get what you pay for." One father, who attends the night market routinely with

his family, confessed: “I don’t let my kids play with any toys from here...it’s just not safe, I don’t trust it.” Both of these sets of concerns can be placed within a persistent construction of Chinatown through discourses of “vice” and “microbes” (Anderson 1991). The fear of unsanitary cooking practices is reminiscent of Anderson’s discussion of the highly publicized debate in the 1970s Chinatown over the risk of salmonella in storefront barbecued meats. The characterization of Chinese merchants as endangering children by profiting from the sale of lead-infused toys also cannot be removed from the longstanding depictions of Chinatown as an “amoral” space “represented through the filter of European imagining” (Anderson 1991:5). These statements are also revealing of the ways in which these old fears mingle with new anxieties concerning China’s rise in the era of advanced capitalism.

Significantly, many white participants criticized the Chinatown market for its lack of “traditional” items. The “weird bra booths,” mechanical barking dogs, and LCD light-up T-shirts were not seen as representing “real” Chinese culture. Talia, the Israeli Quigong therapist, for example, complained that the market did not have “more traditional things” for sale, such as Chinese medicinal products and costumes. As she explained

They [the vendors] don’t bring here anything that is really about their culture...well maybe some of the foods. As I told you because the goods that they are selling, they are something that you can find mostly everywhere. It’s not so unique. Even if you go to Chinatown, there are shops that have more traditional things, but here it looks like they try to bring things that people will buy. That’s it.

Talia’s statement reveals a static notion of Chinese culture held by many market-goers. Even though most if not all of the goods in the night market are imported from China by

Vancouver wholesalers, these goods are considered too “modern” to reflect authentic Chinese culture, symbolized by Chinese medicine, traditional costumes, and other artifacts. Another participant similarly noted: “I don’t see the weird bra booths or the barking dogs as having much to do with Chinese culture actually. If you want to really learn about Chinese culture you’re better off going to the Chinese gardens.” Both of these comments indicate an assumption that “authentic” Chinese culture is somehow untouched by the processes of global capitalism (Connell and Gibson 2004).

The highly uneven power dynamics between vendors and market-goers also reveal hegemonic racial constructions. Several of the vendors described their experiences in the market using eerily similar terms as Anderson (1991) or Hage (2000). These vendors likened the market to a “one-way street” where white patrons pick and choose ethnic snacks that are tailored for Western audiences. The language barriers between vendor and consumer intensify this one-way dynamic. Zhen Yuan, for example, who runs a noodle business, did not feel able to have significant verbal interactions with her non-Chinese customers because of her low-level of English and her knowledge of “only a few sentences to communicate with people.” Mei, who works for a sport-apparel wholesaler, echoed this sentiment. She saw the language barrier as producing a “one-sided” exchange between the vendor and the consumer. As she explained: “they cannot learn, they only come here, see things at surface, can’t go deep into the other culture” [sic].

Limited English language capabilities were viewed as trapping vendors within the ethnic economy, and more specifically, within a shrinking marketplace. Alex and Wan, who sell souvenirs, explained how important language was to running a business in Vancouver. Their English skills pose serious limitations on the possible locations of their

business. As Wan explained: “We don’t speak very good English so it is very challenging for us to run business in downtown or other places...English is our major barrier to get into mainstream society. We are afraid we can’t handle it, and it’s hard to communicate.”

The Chinatown Night Market is also produced, more broadly, through the City’s critical infrastructure. Zukin (1991:201) defines the critical infrastructure as the array of individuals who “produce and consume, and also evaluate new market-based cultural products” and thus mediate the consumption of culture. These are entrepreneurs, publishers, advertisers, “lifestyle gurus,” tourist bureaus, critics, journalists, and other cultural and knowledge sector employees (Kingsbury 2011; Rath 2007). They appraise new cultural products and experiences and set the “boundaries of legitimate taste,” deciding what is in vogue (Bell 2007:12), and also what is authentic (Bell 2007:12; Rath 2007; Zukin 1991). As Rath (2007:8) argues, the critical infrastructure establishes the very “significance of consuming.”

In the last several years, there has been a marked “buzz” around “old Chinatown’s fashionable up-and-coming fringes” (Gill, *The Globe and Mail*, 10 Feb 2010). These “fringes” include the night market and a number of new trendy bars, restaurants, and nightclubs such as The Keefer, Bao Bei, Wild Rice, London Pub, and Fortune Sound Club. Restaurant reviews of these establishments rely on familiar tropes of exotic Chinatown. Two of these – The Keefer and the Chinese brasserie Bao Bei – face directly onto the night market. These private spaces capitalize on the ambiance created by the market. The Keefer’s brand, for example, is “dark and exotic.” Its summertime patio is only physically separated from the night market by a minimal wooden fence. There, patrons can be seen sipping “apothecary-inspired drinks incorporating everything from

ginseng and lemongrass to magnolia bark and Chinese yun zhi mushrooms” (Usinger, *The Georgia Straight*, 29 June 2011). The branding of these establishments unmistakably harnesses the exotic in service of the project of gentrification.

Thus, the Chinatown Night Market serves as a playground for leisure seekers and the Downtown Eastside’s new wave of gentrifiers. It has become part of the language of “urban regeneration” that “increasingly emphasizes the value of the night and visitor economies to cities seeking to improve their fortunes” (Bell 2007:13). Business, such as Bao Bei, are lauded for “trying to stay true to their heritage while edging the food forward in a modern environment where they’d feel comfortable bringing their hipster friends” (Gill, *The Globe and Mail*, 10 Feb. 2010).

But the narrative of the night markets as “East” produced by “West” can only tell part of the story.

6.1.1 A Modern Iconography?

In the 1970s, new sign guidelines were distributed to Chinese merchants. These brochures depicted “old Chinatown scenes,” including “horse drawn wagons,” that puzzled many of their recipients. The City’s vision for Chinatown bore little resemblance to the contemporary urban landscapes of Chinese cities, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Singapore where buildings were no longer being constructed in the “old temple style, but rather in their own forms and fronts” (letter of Chinese merchant to City of Vancouver, cited by Anderson 1991:227). But these modern landscapes were not part of the vernacular of the North American Chinatown. They would not be legible by white Canadians.

What's different about the Chinatown Night Market? As a highly modern and globalized cultural form, night markets have never been part of the iconography of Chinatown as "Western landscape type." The VCMA devised the market, outside of City interests, as a strategy of attracting new immigrants from Hong Kong to the downtown and away from Richmond. In fact, as we will see in Chapter 7, the night market has been highly problematic for the city's revitalization project because it creates *additional* nighttime retail space. The CRP is concerned with filling existing permanent space through encouraging "active storefronts."

In *Vancouver's Chinatown*, Anderson is too dismissive of the broad array of interests of the area's merchants. She makes the claim that "whatever the motivation" (of interests within Chinatown which seized upon these representations) "the acceptance of European forms of racialization has been testimony to their very hegemony and part of their contemporary reproduction" (221).

Instead, the market reflects the new logic that the "preserved and culturally themed heritage landscape [of Vancouver's Chinatown] is not part of the urban imaginary of recent middle class migrants from East Asia" (Ley 2004, cited in Bertrand 2008:45). Chinatown's Night Market, at least in its origins, must be read as a project in infusing Chinatown with the energy of contemporary form. As such, the VCMA must be seen as active agents in the production and negotiation of the character of Chinatown, rather than passive recipients of the state's version.

Hearing Multiple Voices

In the 1970s, tensions arose between the Chinatown Property Owners and Merchants' Association (CTPOMA) and the City's plan for heritage preservation in

Chinatown. The former lobbied to the City to expand parking infrastructure in Chinatown. Their proposed canopied parking scheme was “quashed,” however. The City opted instead for projects of “visual enhancement” in line with their “beautification” vision for the neighborhood (Anderson 1991:223). As Anderson shows, this project imposed a particular iconography of difference onto Chinatown that was defined by white European ideals of Chinese aesthetic – pagodas, large-scale gates, lanterns, and neon signs. This case is illustrative of the ways in which the City of Vancouver’s planning process disregarded not only internal voices, but also needed physical infrastructure within Chinatown at the expense of visual changes to the built environment in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the last quarter century the municipal planning process has become much more reflective of the diverse range of voices in the city. For one, there has been a clear shift in pedagogical practices in planning. *Vancouver’s Chinatown* was also hugely influential in planning circles (a search of UBC’s thesis archives yields a number of planning theses on Chinatown which deal, in one way or another with Anderson’s work) (for example see Tang 2004). The work of Leonie Sandercock (2003), which sees the urban form as reflecting multiple uses and voices, has also been very significant. There is a new generation of social planners that have a keen understanding of the deep processes of racialization at work in Chinatown.

Bertrand (2008:51) illustrates this shift with respect to Vancouver’s Chinatown. Bertrand demonstrates that, since the 1980s, Chinatown planners have shifted their emphasis from the aesthetics of the built environment to the “complete community.” This notion of the “complete community” requires the inclusion of multiple voices in the

community. It has necessitated changes in the structure of the planning process. The Chinatown Revitalization Program is illustrative of this shift. It has had the dual effect of setting a development agenda for the district and enhancing trust among key players, thereby securing the community's support for subsequent development initiatives" (Bertrand 2008:67). Business owners, seniors, young people, Chinese, non-Chinese – planning increasingly approaches Chinatown from an inter-cultural, inter-generational, anti-racist perspective. There is also the sense that this shift in planning has been constructive and democratic. As Bertrand writes: "To my surprise, when prompted to comment on the City's recent interventions in the district, interviewees from the Chinatown community unanimously replied that they had been involved, or at least consulted, in devising and carrying out the different initiatives" (2008:70). I will analyze these themes in more detail in Chapter 7.

Challenging the Notion of the "Chinatown Community"

Further, while it is true that the vendors are in many ways constrained and obliged to parrot a particular version of Chinese identity that smoothes over sub-ethnic differences and caters to non-Chinese expectations, they also have a complex set of motivations for participating in what they see as a dying "tourist trap" market. This applies, in particular, to the dry-good vendors, whose motivations included everything from dumping over-stock to practising their English.

Most of the vendors, for example, do not have businesses based in Chinatown. A significant contingent of the market's dry-goods booths are opened in order to clean out old company inventory. Mei, for example, was hired by an online surf, skate, and swim

apparel company to sell overstock from its warehouse in the market. The overstock consists mainly of clothing in large sizes, or items with unpopular designs. They target the market's white customers, who are seen as more likely to buy larger-sized clothing. This strategy (and that of the other businesses catering to whites) reflects the multiple lines of exoticization in the night market, where whites are cast as dupable, frivolous, and even large.

The overstock strategy was further echoed by Zhi, who has been selling toys and shoes in the night market since 2002. In 2003 she opened a permanent retail location in Vancouver. She continued to run her booth in the night market, for the sole purpose of cleaning out aged stock, which she sometimes sells at less than cost. Zhi tells her friends: "come here to clean your aged stock, but don't expect to earn money."

The vendors and their employees are extremely savvy about the relationship between race and space. This knowledge is evident in their business strategies that are highly tailored to the racial connotations of particular place (eg. Chinatown versus Richmond versus Granville Island). For example, one vendor who sells personalized Chinese calligraphy explained that he would rather be selling his paintings in Granville Island's more "more mainstream" public market, where he felt his work would be appreciated for its artistic value rather than for its "Chinese" motifs. Many of the vendors admit to "capitalizing on ethnic difference" in Chinatown by selling souvenirs for whites. The tourist consumer base of the market attracts Chinese vendors whose business plans target non-Chinese consumers. Some of the Chinese vendors even felt that the Richmond market was "too Chinese" for their targeted market. As one (PRC born) food vendor explained: "Hong Kong people are not that interested in my food. Most customers are

non-Chinese in here, they like my food. This is a tourist destination. It attracts lots of foreign tourists. I just had customers from Switzerland and Germany...”

The market is also seen as a way for new entrepreneurs to test business ideas with minimal risk (the market’s image as a nursery for small-businesses is emphasized by the VCMA). Several of the vendors interviewed had gotten their start in the night market before opening permanent locations elsewhere. For Pam and Timothy, a young Chinese couple who immigrated to Canada in 2008, the night market allowed them to get a taste of Vancouver’s retail sector. Pending the success of their booth (selling women’s accessories and jewelry), the couple was considering starting a permanent business. Somewhat counter-intuitively, the small size of the Chinatown market was also framed as beneficial. As Wei, one of the food vendors, explained: “fewer booths mean less competition.”

Market as Crossroads

Finally, it is clear that different groups use the night market for different reasons and in ways that challenge any cohesive notion of Chinatown. Contrary to this “tourist trap” reputation, there is a significant, and diverse, contingent of people in the night market for whom the market plays a routine social role. In fact, most participants reported attending the night market on a regular or at least semi-regular basis. In reality, the night market lies at the crossroads of contested space in downtown Vancouver.

A significant contingent of Chinese seniors live in Chinatown and use the night market as a social space. Chinatown has a large population of senior citizens of Chinese origin. In the three Census Tracts that roughly comprise Chinatown, 22.9% of the

population are over 65. In comparison, seniors make up 13% of the total population of Metro Vancouver, and 12.6% in Richmond. Age also intersects starkly with income. In Chinatown, 49.1% of households are low-income (Li and Li 2011:20; Census 2006). On any given night at the market, a group of seniors, many of them elderly, occupies the entire seating area in front of the main stage. This group, which is mostly female, comes for the entertainment, the lion's share of which is conducted in Mandarin or Cantonese. One woman, Kei-Lee, was nostalgic for the night markets in her hometown. As she explained: "this market reminds of the West Lake night market in Guanhzhou except that is open four seasons not only summer time." Across from the stage there is also a "back area" where Chinese men socialize and gamble at long tables.

For other residents of Chinatown and nearby Strathcona, the market is a convenient, seasonal food court. Alicia, a 19-year old, second-generation Chinese student, attends the market once a week. She lives in Strathcona with her parents and goes to the market with her friends or her boyfriend for "snacks" on the weekends. They always run into people they know because, according to Alicia, "everyone comes down [to the market] before dinner or after dinner and snacks."

Non-Chinese residents of Strathcona echoed this sentiment. Andrew, who defines himself as a "recently graduated bicyclist" is 23 and lives around the corner from the night market. He and his roommate James could be classified as Strathcona "hipsters." Hendlin et al. (2010:3) define hipsters as young "trendsetters" typically between the ages of 18 and 35 with some post-secondary education. They are characterized by their rejection of "social expectations" and in doing so, their creation of different norms: "they are antiestablishment, reveling in their marginalization while celebrating antiheroes. They

enjoy kitsch, because admiring the absurd and antique reinforces the legitimacy and value of their own eccentricities” (Hendlin et al. 2010:3) Of course, Andrew and James would not label themselves as such because a “true hipster never admits to being a hipster” (Hendlin et al. 2010:3). Andrew attends the night market at least once a week, stopping by for food on his way home from work, or meeting friends:

You always run into people you know. We know a lot of people that live in the neighbourhood and they all come here. Everyone, most people I know. People come here and just don't even buy anything, and just sit around. It's a nice thing to do. If you're not really – if you want to be out, but you're not going out with anybody you can go here and not feel like such a lonely person.

Andrew, who is white, sees himself as part of the community of Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside more generally. To him, the night market plays an important community role. As another participant, James, puts it, “There is a good sense of community here and this [market] is an extension of that.” The night market appeals to hipsters who seek out hip urban scenes. They are well versed in the language of urbanity – neighbourhoods, gentrification, and social capital. They feel their difference in the night market, and feel that the market allows them to participate in something outside of the norm.

Another segment of night market users are residents of surrounding condominium towers. The night market offers a place for them to walk around at night, through a neighborhood where they might not always feel safe. Tony and his wife, for example, live in a nearby condo tower. They buy an occasional wheel cake, but mainly use the market as a pedestrian street. They are from Taiwan and feel that the night market is “too Chinese” and would like to “see the market become more multicultural.”

Other residents of Metro Vancouver also use the night market on a semi-regular basis. Danica, a self-described “white Chinese person,” lives in White Rock, and attends both the Chinatown and Richmond night markets several times a season. She went to school in Cheng Du, lived in Beijing and Hong Kong, and speaks fluent Mandarin. She now works at a private insurance company where all clients are Mainland Chinese investors. She comes to the night market for the food, choosing items that remind her of the time she spent in Szechuan. Danica converses with the vendors in mandarin, one of whom used to live ten minutes away from her University at Cheng Du. According to Eric, her boyfriend, “she is always talking to [the vendors] in Chinese.” The night market is an important space for her because it reminds her of her time in China. The food, in particular, has cultural meaning for her. As she explains

Different areas in China have different foods, and every once in a while when I'm here I see them and I'm like oh yeah, I used to live in Beijing and used to get lambsticks. Or when I lived in Hong Kong I got dim sum, or in Cheng Du I got these noodles...Are they important to my culture, no. But they are kind of important to me.

Of course, there were also consumers who “happened” to come across the night market, or who were visiting it for the first time. There are also quite a few families in the night market, who attend once or twice a year.

The Chinatown Night Market is a physical and symbolic crossroads between low-income Chinese seniors, condo dwellers, tourists, Strathcona families, hipsters, and other residents of Metro Vancouver. These groups all use the space for different reasons. Some are there to consume Chinese culture and some are not. The material space of the market is transformed by these groups, but in a way that may have little to do with hegemonic racial definitions of the “Chinese” race. Consequently, there are two visibly separate

spaces within the Chinatown Night Market. There is a buffer zone between the vendor corridor and the mainstage. Tourists can be seen standing with open-mouths, observing Chinese opera, karaoke, and dance troupes. Tourists rarely sit in the mainstage seating area, preferring the comfort of ‘culture’ intended for their consumption.

6.1.2 Summary

In summary, the Chinatown Night Market project can be seen as a challenge to the traditional iconography of Chinatown. It was intended as a modern and globalized space that would appeal to new immigrants from Hong Kong who increasingly chose to settle, work, and play in Richmond. It was not a project imposed by the City of Vancouver, but rather, was an endeavor in shifting Chinatown’s “urban imaginary.”

The application of Anderson’s framework reveals how, ultimately, the VCMA’s night market was co-opted by the “cultural baggage” of Chinatown as a Western landscape type. The project did not bring immigrants from Hong Kong to Chinatown. Over time, the market has become a packaged “Chinese” experience that they were originally trying to avoid. The Vancouver Chinatown Merchants’ Association, through the night market, can be seen as mediating between a transnational form, a diaspora population, and “traditional” Western expectations of Chinatown. The mediation of these dynamics is a theme that will be taken up further in Chapter 7.

6.2 The Summer Night Market in Richmond – A Highly Produced Space

The Summer Night Market in Richmond is also a highly produced space of cultural consumption. Like Chinatown, its administrators also tightly control its cultural content. The menus and merchandise are subject to the approval of the administrators.

Food vendors, for example, are allowed only five items each and must make formal requests to change any item. The food generally reflects “pan-Asian” styles (chow Mein, Japanese takoyaki, Thai curry, and Korean barbecue). Significantly, however, as I will explain further in Chapter 7, this control has increasingly been devoted to promoting an image of “diversity” rather than “Chineseness.”

The Richmond market has become known as the more “authentic” night market of Metro Vancouver. As such, it provides a stage for the conspicuous cultural consumption of the “exotic” Other by allowing a conveniently packaged foray into Richmond’s ethnoburban landscape. Emily, a white 30-something white woman from Port Coquitlam, attends the night market on a regular basis with her friends to buy “ethnicky stuff.” She explained that the Richmond market (compared to Chinatown) is “more like markets in China...they’ve brought that culture over here.”

As another white, Edmonton-born market patron explained: “we just don’t have this Chinese stuff in Edmonton.” He described the market atmosphere as “frantic.” Gesturing to one of the vendors, he said “you know, just look at these guys. Everybody’s hustling.” The purchases he makes in the night market will later provide fodder for jokes at the office where he works:

You know the little ankle socks they sell here, with the crazy designs? That’s all I wear [laughs] and it’s a cause for conversation in the board because a lot of the times I’m in a suit. I put my legs up to cross and people go – he’s got musical note socks!

Richmond is often portrayed as the “new Chinatown” of Metro Vancouver. Through this discursive representation, the space of Chinatown is extended into suburbia. The Summer Night Market has become part of the media’s iconography of Richmond as

an “effortlessly Asian Metropolis” (Cernetig, *The Vancouver Sun*, 30 June 2007). It is routinely suggested, in the media, and by tourist guides, that one can “zip over to Asia” just by taking public transit to Richmond. *The Vancouver Sun* described the Summer Night Market in Richmond as a “feast for the senses that can whisk you away to the busy night bazaars of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Seoul, or Kuala Lumpur” (Luk, 20 May 2010).

But this discourse of “new Chinatown” cannot exist without its “old” counterpart. The local media links Richmond and Chinatown through the two markets. These journalists publically evaluate the markets, pitting them against each other to offer visitors a “Taste of Asia.” The Richmond market is seen as “drawing patrons away” from Vancouver’s Chinatown (Chow, *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 2000). This quote from the *Vancouver Sun* is illustrative of the discourse of competition between the two markets:

In Metro Vancouver, we are fortunate to have two of these great shopping and dining experiences, the Vancouver Chinatown Night Market, now in its 13th year, and the Summer Night Market in Richmond. They're similar in style, but when it comes to food, there's no comparison in the variety of offerings (Fong, *Vancouver Sun*, 13 August 2008).

Within these narratives, Richmond is seen as “pulsating” with life, while the Chinatown market is portrayed as a dying market, if mentioned at all.

The local media’s portrayal of the night markets in Richmond also reveals discourses surrounding the spatial manifestation of racial difference in the suburbs. Coverage of the lawsuit between Paul Cheung (the owner of the Summer Night Market) and Raymond Cheung (the owner of the original Richmond Night Market) centered on the battle for territory between two immigrant entrepreneurs. The media’s coverage of the lawsuit is revealing of the resentment of many white suburbanites against upwardly

mobile immigrants from Hong Kong. These entrepreneurs were portrayed as cut-throat and intensely competitive.

6.2.1 What's Different?

The limitations of the 'Andersonian' analysis become even more evident when we turn our attention to the suburbs. In Richmond, increasing diversity resulting from immigration has led to an increasingly complex intersection of race and place. Scholars of Chinatown can no longer (if they ever could) think solely about the division between white "Vancouver" society and "Chinese" society. Chinese sub-ethnicities have expanded, as have other immigrants groups in Richmond. Many of my participants in the night market were non-white and non-Chinese, including Filipinos, Persians, Latinos, Koreans, and South Asians. We also cannot read Richmond as the result of white society constraining Chinese people to live together. Classic "ethnoburbs" form from the economic strength of well-established or upwardly mobile immigrants.

While there has been conflict over land-use change associated with immigration, at the present time, the "salience" of the "Chinese takeover" narrative is relatively muted. To put this statement in perspective, a movement to muster support for a ban on Chinese-only signage in the suburb has received little support. This anecdote is by no means intended to suggest that racism and racialization do not exist in Richmond, but simply to support a case for the occurrence of "multicultural drift" in Richmond over the last twenty years. The "monster homes" debate and other land-use conflicts were successfully diffused by multicultural planning procedures at the local scale (Ley 2010).

In 2013, visible immigrant cultures are an accepted part of Richmond's landscape. The City's Number 5 Road, with its parade of diverse places of worship, is an

international source of pride, nominated as a new “wonder of the world.” Going for “dim sum” or bubble tea are no longer seen as forays into the exotic. The suburb’s night market is seen as something that is “distinctly Richmond” and worth fighting for. In 2010, when it looked as though the night market would be canceled indefinitely, Richmond residents were angry. The mobilization of Richmond residents to protect an Asian night market would probably not have occurred in 1991. In the last twenty-five years, Richmond has gone from a white, European suburb, to a multi-ethnic city characterized by “fixities and fluidities” and fuzzy boundaries. More a “space of flows” than an actual bounded space, it allows people to “maintain ethnic identity” on a number of fronts.

The night market has become hugely important as an enclave space with a diasporic function. The Richmond Night Market was originally intended to replicate the night markets of ‘home’ for Richmond’s growing diaspora population in the 1990s.

Administrator: A good majority [of Richmond’s population] are new immigrants or at one time were new immigrants that come from Asian cultures that have night markets. So [the night market] gives them sort of a resemblance of home, so that, when they come out, they can feel right at home again.

This late-night, outdoor activity allowed Richmond’s Chinese population to carry out an alternative sense of space and time in the suburbs. The organizers play to the nostalgia for the “late day” and after-dark culture of public sociability.

The limitations of Anderson’s framework become more apparent when we consider consumers in the Richmond night market. It is clearly a site for the negotiation of migrant *and* Canadian identities. In particular, I argue that the Andersonian approach misses the re-spatializing of the urban social (and economic) nighttime landscape to

reflect the interests of diaspora and transnational communities in Metro Vancouver. This re-spatializing is far removed from Western expectations of “Chinatown.”

The night market has become a stage for the exploration of conceptions of nostalgia and authenticity. It plays to people’s nostalgia for “authentic” Asia in cultural, but also temporal and spatial senses. According to its administrators, the market provides a “resemblance of home” for first (and second) generation Asian immigrants (personal communication, 2010). Its food and atmosphere remind many market-goers of their childhood. Jane, for example, immigrated to Canada with her parents from Hong Kong at an early age and was too young to remember the city’s night markets. She, however, recalls attending the Richmond market with her parents since first arriving in Canada. For Jane, “getting brought to the night market” was an important way in which her parents ensured that she stay connected to their Hong Kong identity.

Jane’s parents also used the night market to instill her with an alternate sense of time. A significant part of this nostalgia is temporal – the yearning for an after-dark culture of sociability. Annie, a 19-year old born in Hong Kong, expresses this in her frustration over the lack of 24/7 culture in Richmond:

Annie: I mean it’s [Richmond] not not a good place, but it’s not a good place for people to do things at night because it’s just closed and you can’t go. I think a lot of people wish it would be open later...well there are 7-Elevens but most close early for some reason.

The night market administrators¹⁶ acknowledge that the intersection of culture and time is a significant part of their success:

¹⁶ The administrators interviewed for this research project are not the original owners of the night market in Richmond. The ethnography was carried out after the market changed hands, and was re-branded as a multicultural event. Nevertheless, the administrators recognize the important “ethnic” appeal of market.

The Hong Kong people, I should say even the Cantonese people ... people out in Guangzhou China, the mainland, they are very accustomed to a late day. So they start their day late, but they stay up very late. So businesses don't open 'til like say 11am, and they stay open 'til like 12 midnight, and then they're into the midnight snacks. So for the people locally it's just right.

The market also provides a place for people to walk around in Richmond at night, a suburban landscape where most aspects of life are “compartmentalized” by the car (Miller 2004). The offer of the “stroll” at night in an area where it is “bright and you actually feel safe” is another important part of the night market’s suburban appeal (night market organizer, personal communication, 2010). The Richmond market survey indicates that the event is a car-oriented phenomenon. More than three quarters of market-goers drive to the market, while 22% take the bus. Nearly half of market-goers park in the night market lot (49%), while 34% and 16% park on the street or in neighbouring lots, respectively.

Young people of Chinese ethnic-origin (18-30) use the market to engage with different kinds of authenticity. These negotiations were demonstrated through evaluations of the ‘authenticity’ of the night market itself (smells, feel, emotion, noise, crowds, chaos, etc). For example, the chaos and disorder of Asian night markets was often contrasted with the strict management of the Richmond market and its orderly rows and many rules: dry-goods vendors cannot put anything outside of their stall and food-court menus are tightly controlled, subject to approval by the administration and health department.

Further, Richmond’s “out-of-the-way” location means that it is a destination, whereas in Asia, markets are a normalized and ambient part of the urban landscape. Unlike many Asian night markets, fences streamline crowds through two entry points.

Jess, a 25-year-old Chinese-Canadian woman born in Vancouver (but who travels to Asia often) for example, noted,

I would say it's very different in the sense...the night market in Richmond, the purpose is going to the night market, whereas in Asia, there's just so many different markets, a lot of times you're just sort of passing through them...and then, in all honesty, I just... I feel like the food probably in Richmond has better health standards [laughs] than in Asia to be completely honest, although that never really deters me in Asia.

For these young participants, their sense of comfort in the night market was also linked to language ability in Cantonese and Mandarin (and knowing when to use these). The market served as a place where the intricacies of bilingualism and tri-lingualism were worked out through interactions with vendors. Knowing what language to order in, and whether vendors addressed you first in English were seen, for example, as important indicators of authenticity.

Annie: I think I do order in Chinese, because I just feel like they will be nicer to you if you do. Because I think it's like, it brings a sense of familiarity...it's like, oh this is my mother tongue...this is their mother tongue. They're most familiar with this language. It seems to be more difficult, whenever you speak English to them and they don't understand you, the attitude is different. The attitude they give you is different depending on what language you speak. I don't know why their attitude change but I guess it's just a natural reaction they have if you speak English and you're culturally English then they'll be welcoming but if you're Chinese and you speak English to them sometimes I feel like they're like oh, why aren't you speaking Chinese to me?

This 'savvy' was also claimed through knowledge of the authenticity of commodities in the night market and through familiarity with trends in Asian pop culture, food, and fashion. A number of participants advised me that Richmond was well behind the trends of night markets in Asia. For example, Richmond's hugely popular "Hurricane potatoes," (seasoned, spiral-cut potatoes on a stick) were dismissed by several

participants as “so last year” (by Taiwanese market standards). Such evaluations of authenticity express “degrees of transnationality” (Jackson et al. 2007). In essence, authenticity was associated with a transnational “space of flows” that connects Richmond to eastern Asia, the night market a place where the knowledge and language of transnationality is practised.

The intense social nature of the night market tradition contrasts with the setting of the night market in Richmond – a vast parking lot, tucked behind a square of big box chain stores. It represents the intersection of culture and patterns of migration with the temporal and spatial constraints of suburban life in Richmond. Through its original conception as an enclave market, it has come to play an important role in the sense of belonging of both first and second-generation immigrants living in Richmond.

6.3 Conclusion

I have shown here, how night market spaces are mediated by an array of actors involved in the critical infrastructure. Importantly, the markets are also produced by their users. In Chinatown, the production of the tourist market creates a situation where different social spaces operate simultaneously but separately. Of course, as Anderson once might have argued, this micro socio-spatialization is highly constructed and influential to white Vancouverite experiences and understandings of the categories of ‘Chinese’, ‘Asian’ and ‘multicultural’.

Fundamentally, however, the night market phenomenon illustrates changes to both our *experience* of the social geography of race, as well as our *intellectual* approach in the last twenty-five years. Changing migration patterns have challenged the centrality of Chinatown to Metro-Vancouver’s Chinese community. Plurality is a demographic

reality in both city and suburbs. Immigrant and ethnic groups are increasingly “superdiverse” (and recognized as such): cross-cut by language, class, immigrant status, gender, and ethnicity (Vertovec 2007). Urban planning and institutions have also become more inclusive. Theoretical debates have also consequently expanded. The understanding of minority relations has shifted significantly to emphasize agency and complexity. It is now assumed that phenomena cannot be fully understood by looking at solely one aspect (i.e. discourses of white hegemony). My own fieldwork could not have been conducted without a Cantonese and Mandarin-speaking interpreter. Of the fourteen interviews conducted with vendors in the Chinatown Night Market, seven were interpreted in Mandarin, and five in Cantonese. Without the interpreter, I would not have had access to this group (for a complete list of the language of the interviews, please see the appendix).

The night markets are both about “remembering” and “forgetting” Chinatown (see Law 2011). Both markets began as projects to attract and profit from the “urban imaginary” of new waves of immigrants, particularly from Hong Kong and Taiwan. In other words, they were projects that tried to remove themselves (and the spatial associations of the Chinese with Chinatown) from a Western hegemonic vision of what a North American Chinese settlement should look like. Instead of seeking to produce essentialist notions of Chinese culture, they sought to transport a trans-local form from the hyper-modern cities of Hong Kong and Taipei, transplanting it in historic Chinatown, and then in suburbia.

In Chinatown, somewhere along the way, the market’s message changed as the space was mobilized in the service of gentrification and tourist attraction. A trans-local form was transplanted into a space of “cultural baggage.” In Richmond, the form was

super-imposed into a suburban landscape seen by many people as lacking authenticity and sociability. Anderson's contention that the definition and experience of race is highly subject to discursive constructions is still relevant. The ethnography of these two marketplaces, however, reveals that Chinatown and Richmond are "multicoded" landscapes that are also constructed through their use.

Chapter 7 – Multicultural Imagineering

Our everyday geographies of encounter are shaped both purposefully and inadvertently by regimes of regulation. As the form of the night market has moved across national boundaries, it has become variously embedded in new cultural, economic, and socio-institutional landscapes. In Taiwan, the night markets were harnessed in service of a project of Taiwanese cultural differentiation. In Mainland China, night markets developed an altogether different connotation because of the state's regulation of market commerce. Hong Kong's Temple St. emphasizes international tourism. Singapore's night market is symptomatic of the strong Singaporean state, and is highly gentrified (Yu 2004).

In this Chapter I examine the role of the municipal governments and of the market administrators in regulating the night markets. What does a night market become when transplanted into the context of Canadian municipal multiculturalism, and with what implications for the relationship between culture and consumption?

I begin by outlining the broader context of multiculturalism in Canada (section 7.1).¹⁷ Multiculturalism's multiple meanings at various spatial scales are integral to understanding the role of the state in shaping the experience of Vancouver's night markets. I trace the evolution of multiculturalism policy and discourse in Canada since 1971 to its inception at the municipal level in Vancouver and Richmond.

¹⁷ Parts of section 7.1 have been published in a co-authored book chapter with Dr. Rima Wilkes: 'Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Canada' in *Anti-Immigrant Sentiments, Actions, and Policies in North American and the European Union*, by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes 2012).

In section 7.2, I tease out two competing normative visions of urban multiculturalism from within this policy evolution. The first vision sees the city as composed of a mosaic of cultural neighbourhoods. The “multiculturalism” of the city derives from this patchwork of mono-cultural parts. The second vision requires each neighbourhood to exhibit the diversity of the whole. A city is therefore only seen as multicultural when it is diverse at the micro-scale. These models have clear implications where the night markets are concerned. The first model would envision a Chinese ethnic enclave-type night market, while the second would favour a more heterogeneous marketplace. As I show in this Chapter, neither marketplace fits perfectly into this binary. Rather, both reveal different sets of regulatory tensions.

7.1 The Many Facets of Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism in Canada, refers to policy at three levels of government and within the private sector, as well as an ideology reproduced through discourse and negotiated and re-negotiated at the grassroots level. Canada adopted Official Multiculturalism in 1971 with the goal of recognizing cultural groups in Canada. Until then, Canada was conceived as a country of two founding nations: French and English. By the 1960s, the convergence of several political and ideological shifts led to the expansion of this bi-national imaginary. Societal ideas about race and racism changed. Canada’s white immigration policy ended, initiating new flows of immigrants from non-European source countries. Long-established ethnic groups became more vocal in their demands for recognition. At the same time, concern grew about the divisiveness of a bi-national framework. Diversity was interpreted as a crucial to Canadian unity.

Multiculturalism, as a policy, encouraged immigrants to “visibly and proudly express their ethnic identity” (Banting and Kymlicka 2010:50).¹⁸

The meaning and implementation of multiculturalism has shifted over time (Banting and Kymlicka 2010; Bromley 2011; Kobayashi 1993; Ley 2008; Yan et al. 2010). Yan et al. (2010) usefully describe Canadian multiculturalism as a “floating signifier.” Since 1985, the Multiculturalism Directorate has been housed in four different ministries.¹⁹ Due to the relatively vague wording of the Multiculturalism Act, the directorate’s activities have been highly subject to the vision of the Minister of the day. There has been a discernible policy shift away from the symbolic support for cultural groups, to a policy geared toward equity (Kobayashi 1993), to one emphasizing civics and integration (Bromley 2011). As a federal policy, multiculturalism continues to denote a commitment to four principles: “the recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity; removing barriers to full participation; promoting interchange between groups; and promoting the acquisition of official languages” (Banting and Kymlicka 2010:50). At the federal level, it represents the government’s adherence to a set of goals and guiding principles intended to guide the policies and activities of federal government bodies.²⁰ The Directorate also continues to fund a limited number of activities and programs.

As Banting and Kymlicka (2010:52) note, the official federal policy “initiated a long march through institutions at all levels of Canadian society.” At a societal level,

¹⁸ Multiculturalism was given statutory standing by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988.

¹⁹ Federally, multiculturalism has been housed in the Ministry of Multiculturalism (1985-1989); the Ministry of Multiculturalism and Citizenship (1989-1993); the Ministry of Canadian Heritage (1993-2007); since 2008 it has been housed in the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (see Dewing 2009; Yan et al. 2010).

²⁰For example, federal government departments must issue yearly statements of “compliance” which are overseen by the directorate (Yan et al. 2010:52).

multiculturalism signifies a demographic reality about the changing composition of society through immigration, as well as a (debated) rallying point for Canadian identity. The private sector also engages with multiculturalism in various ways – from equity policies and training, to sponsoring public events and festivals, to capitalizing on the “diversity advantage.” It is also, as Kymlicka (2007) notes, an international brand. The policy became one of the most important Canadian exports as governments struggling with the question of immigrant incorporation around the world looked to Canada for guidance (Kelley and Trebilcock 1998). Canadian delegations were invited overseas to instruct European governments on how to make multiculturalism work. By the early 1990s, multiculturalism discourse had become pervasive. By the 21st century it was a globalized policy imperative, such that “on virtually any given day of the year, somewhere in the world an international organization is sponsoring a seminar or publishing a report intended to publicize the ideals and practices of multiculturalism” (Kymlicka 2007). Of course, in the last decade, there has been a marked “retreat” from multiculturalism in Europe coupled with the rise of right-wing anti-immigrant policies (Joppke 2004:238). No such retreat as occurred in Canada, where public and political opposition has been relatively muted.²¹

²¹ Multiculturalism has been declared “dead” by a number of European leaders, including by David Cameron in the U.K. and Angela Merkel in Germany. While debates over multiculturalism in Canada have always existed, the only significant political attempt to dismantle the official policy came from the Reform Party in the early 1990s. Under the current Conservative Harper government, there has been no attempt to revisit the Reform Party line where multiculturalism is concerned. Triadafilopoulos (2012) attributes the right-wing embrace of multiculturalism in Canada to a particular convergence of demographic change, electoral politics, and citizenship policy that requires all political parties to court the “ethnic vote.” The Harper Government appears to have embraced the discourse and imagery of multiculturalism. Of course, it must be noted that at the same time as the government has remained officially wedded to multiculturalism, it has also instituted new exclusions. For example, while funding the ethnic media they also monitor the ethnic media as a way of policing “abuses” of Canada’s immigration system, such as marriage fraud (see Cheadle and Levitz, *The Canadian Press*, 2012).

Multiculturalism has also been variously implemented by provincial and municipal governments in Canada. Many provinces have chosen to follow the same principles as outlined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (Yan et al. 2010). The province of British Columbia, for example, instituted the British Columbia Multiculturalism Act in 1993, and followed this with a joint multiculturalism and anti-racism project. BC provides funding for community organizations that fit into the BCMA mandate. At the municipal level, multiculturalism has been inconsistently implemented (Good 2007; 2009). Some cities have chosen to mirror the federal policy, while others have seen diversity management as a key element of urban entrepreneurialism.

7.1.1 Vancouver

The City of Vancouver has approached multiculturalism by incorporating diversity initiatives in the City's Social Planning Department and its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office. The focus of the Social Planning Department is on "addressing social issues that affect the communities and disadvantaged groups and individuals" (City of Vancouver). A group of social planners focus entirely on the Downtown Eastside, which encompasses Chinatown, and the Chinatown Revitalization Program (CRP).

The social planning department has a full-time position designated as the "Multicultural Social Planner" devoted to issues of "social development, diversity, and diverse populations" (Wong, interview 2010). This position works with non-governmental organizations, funders, and other city groups to develop programs that foster long-term integration of immigrants and refugees in Vancouver. This planner is also involved in the grant approval process for funding service delivery organizations in the City. The social planning group provides funding to neighborhood houses and NGOs.

In order to receive funding these groups must be “inclusive of the whole community” (Wong, interview 2010). The goal of this work is to provide front-line groups with the tools and resources to “provide a complementary and supportive role to encourage civic participation” (Wong, interview 2010). The Multicultural Social Planner also sits on the Multicultural Advisory Committee and liaises with the City’s Working Group on immigration.

Vancouver’s Multicultural Advisory Committee advises City Council on matters of multicultural diversity. The goal of this committee is to ensure the representation and engagement of ethno-cultural groups in the municipal planning process. They also undertake outreach to different communities concerning issues of multicultural diversity, with the goal of fostering broad involvement, and collaborate with various agencies in program development. For example, this committee is involved in a number of “multicultural” public realm events, including the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Cultural Harmony Awards, Diwali celebrations, and the Pride festival. The Mayor’s Working Group in Immigration (active since 2005) is responsible for activities such as the Vancouver Dialogues Project, which encourages communication between the City’s aboriginal and immigrant communities.

7.1.2 Richmond

In Richmond, the Coordinating Committee of Ethnic Relations (CCER) was formed in 1990 as a response to the increasing numbers of Chinese immigrants settling in the suburb. The committee was mainly concerned with reforming the “civil service” to reflect this new population and their needs. The formation of this committee led to the adoption of a Multiculturalism Policy for Richmond in 1991, and a subsequent

Framework for Action in 1992. This Framework emphasized “cross-cultural training” for civil servants, translation services, and included the development of an “inventory” of the language abilities of “city staff.” At the same time, the Richmond Hospital and Library also implemented multiculturalism policies, in line with city objectives. The City began funding the Richmond Multicultural Concerns Society and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (Good 2009).

By the mid-1990s, there was a “backlash” against multiculturalism in Richmond. Good (2009) attributes this backlash to several developments. Many long-term residents of the suburb argued that too many resources were being devoted to immigrants, and that the landscape of Richmond was changing too rapidly (for example, through the construction of the Aberdeen Centre, and the increasing number of Chinese-only signs). There was also a “heated community conflict” following the proposal to put a Group Home in a Chinese neighbourhood in Richmond. The City attributed the conflict to “intercultural misunderstanding” and launched the “Group Homes Task Force.” Multiculturalism developed a connotation of “divisiveness.” According to Good, there was a growing sense that multiculturalism was being “used to refer to immigrants rather than – more broadly and inclusively – to the overall population, which has always included ethno-cultural minorities.” Thus in 1995, the Advisory Committee on Intercultural Relations was formed, for which the emphasis was on “promoting harmonious cultural relationships.” Richmond “redirected its efforts...to facilitate intercultural bridges between the Chinese community and the original residents.”

The City of Richmond adopted an Intercultural Advisory Committee in 2002 (RIAC). The goal of this committee is to “enhance intercultural harmony and strengthen intercultural co-operation in Richmond.” The term intercultural is intended to signify a

“culturally interactive and vibrant process, as the next step to Canadian multiculturalism” (RIAC 2011:3). As stated in the 2012-2015 Richmond Intercultural Strategic Plan and Work Program, the committee’s vision is “for Richmond to be the most welcoming, inclusive, and harmonious community in Canada.” The 2011 report emphasizes Richmond’s expanding diversity. Since 2004, the City has “come to experience even greater cultural diversity with arrivals in Richmond coming from a greater number of countries than ever before” (RIAC 2011:4). Included in this expanding diversity are immigrants from Mainland China, the growing Filipino community, more active aboriginal groups, as well as a “more diverse refugee population” (ibid.).

The Strategic Plan’s emphasis is on diversity and cross-cultural interaction. It stresses the importance of “organizing cultural events to eliminate silos between communities” as well as the creation of programs centered on finding “commonality” between cultures. It proposes the development of intercultural programming at events at “community centres and schools,” and more opportunities for “interfaith dialogue,” and programming that is “cross-generational.” A proposed “Richmond Day” would “celebrate diversity in the whole of Richmond” (2011:10). These actions are seen as ones that “address the perception and reality of racism and discrimination in the community.”

7.2 Two Models of Municipal Multiculturalism

7.2.1 The City as Mosaic

From within this evolution of multiculturalism policy, there are two discernible visions of what Hackworth and Rekers (2005) term “multicultural urbanity.” As we saw in Chapter 2, the city’s conceptualization as a mosaic predates multiculturalism. The Chicago School sociologists of the early 20th century saw urban heterogeneity as

producing separate social worlds. Multiculturalism harnessed the mosaic metaphor at the urban scale to produce a positive vision of the multicultural city as a patchwork of cultural neighbourhoods. Each neighbourhood contributes to the city's social fabric. Even if the neighbourhoods are themselves mono-cultural, the city is multicultural because of the sum of its parts. The emphasis is therefore, on group characteristics.

This vision of Canada as a “grand design” of multiple “elements” is rooted in the post-war bi-national Canadian imaginary. In the 1960s, however, the multi-nation identity was harnessed to contribute to a new vision of the country that included ethnic groups as the “third force” in Canada's mosaic (Anderson 1991:218). The Canadian federal government began supporting ethnic neighbourhoods in the 1970s in service of the recognition of this urban mosaic. In practice, this vision entailed the funding of projects that emphasized the visible “ethnic” characteristics of neighbourhoods (Anderson 1991). The City of Toronto has developed a “montage” of mono-culturally branded neighbourhoods that includes Chinatown, Little India, Greektown, Schnitzel Row, Koreatown, Hispania, Little Jamaica, and Little Jaffna (Hackworth and Rekers 2005).

But, as Hackworth and Rekers (2005) emphasize, such mono-cultural designations are super-imposed on heterogeneous communities. For example, Toronto's “Little Italy” gained this designation even though only 10% of its residents had Italian origins. Over time this Italian population has been replaced by Vietnamese, Chinese, and Portuguese immigrant groups, such that, as one journalist commented: “mainly what's left is Little Italy the brand name, the trademark, the logo, the ethnic ‘swoosh’.” Despite residential change, Little Italy's brand has become stronger due to government involvement through the Little Italy Business Improvement Area (BIA). Phan and Liu

(2008) make a similar argument with respect to Toronto's Chinatown. The designation hides Chinatown's increasing super-diversity. Such branding produces a "constructed multicultural urbanity." The urban landscape becomes a series of "ethnically labeled" neighborhoods that seek to "package and reproduce ethnicity for consumption" (Hackworth and Rekers 2005:232). But, as we will see in the following chapters, there is perhaps more to these neighborhoods than Hackworth and Rekers allow.

Regina, Saskatchewan's "Mosaic" festival illustrates the mosaic line of thinking about urban diversity and its implications for the public realm. This festival is an annual celebration of the city's immigrant and aboriginal groups. During this weekend-long event, each of Regina's cultural groups occupies a separate pavilion in the city. In each pavilion, groups display their "culture" through food, drink, music, and costumes. The evening is designed to allow patrons to immerse themselves in each of the cultures that comprise Regina's "mosaic." In the Greek pavilion one eats souvlaki while listening to the Zorba; in the Caribbean pavilion one eats jerk chicken while being entertained by a fire-breathing folk dancer; the Kyiv pavilion sells perogies and vanity plates with sayings like: "Parking for Ukrainians Only. All others will be towed."

I do not wish to be too dismissive of this event. Many residents of Regina are proud of the festival, and for many people the event is an important temporary social meeting space. But many critical observers would likely see this festival as the "ghost of 1970s multiculturalism" at its best, conjured up to encourage consumption, one cultural group at a time. In other words, the mosaic festival, with its compartmentalization of cultures celebrated through "steel drums, saris, and samosas" is the physical

manifestation of the old model of multiculturalism. The event literally allows people (read: the white, majority) to “eat their way around the world” (Hage 2000).

As such, events like Regina’s “Mosaic” festival are increasingly falling out of fashion. Public realm events, now, more than ever, celebrate diversity through hybridized music, fusion food, and inter-cultural dialogue. The Vancouver band *Delhi 2 Dublin*, which mixes Bhangra beats with Celtic melodies played at both the City’s Celtic Festival and Surrey’s Fusion Festival in 2012. The Vancouver Bhangra Festival hosted the internationally successful non-Punjabi Danish Punjabi singer, Anita Lerche. In Metro Vancouver, even the “flashmobs” are designed to be intercultural. This cultural mashup is occurring as the old model of multicultural urbanity is replaced by one favoring micro-scale diversity. The question remains as to whether or not the latter accomplishes more than the latter in terms of cross-cultural engagement.

7.2.2 The City as Micro-Fabric

This second model assumes that, for a city to be diverse, every part of it must be diverse, down to the micro-scale. Rather than a mosaic, in this version the post-modern city is seen as a heterotopia; its landscape a “collage” of heterozones (Lees 2003:621; Quastel et al. 2012:1068). Through this lens, homogeneous or mono-cultural neighbourhoods are viewed as deterrents to micro-scale diversity. Immigrant enclaves are blamed for encouraging “parallel lives.” Intercultural contact is celebrated. Individuals with “plural affiliations” are seen as better able to negotiate these interactions (Amin 2012:62). Diversity is therefore seen as an individual-level characteristic. This model is endorsed by Wood and Landry’s (2008) *The Intercultural City* in which they stress that “living with difference *requires* interpersonal and intercultural encounter” [my emphasis].

As Amin (2012:59-60) notes, the “engineering [of] human mingling in public space” is now seen as a way of addressing conflict in plural cities. Such a model is associated with a number of policy changes geared towards creating cross-cultural opportunities. School desegregation policies seek to encourage inter-racial contact between young people. Mixed-use housing complexes are designed as shared living spaces, with cross-cultural interaction in mind. There has also been an increasing emphasis on multi-use public spaces. This model is also evident in the transition to government funding of multicultural organizations, rather than mono-cultural organizations. The built environment is increasingly mobilized in service of this project of micro-scale diversity, as neighbourhood revitalization strategies encourage the “social mix” of neighbourhoods.

As a number of scholars emphasize, there are many reasons to be critical of urban development in the service of “social mixing” (Atkinson and Bridge 2005; Walks and Maaranen 2008; Hannigan 2010). In theory, social mix policies promote the creation of neighbourhoods that support a broad range of people, of different economic backgrounds, professions, ethnicities, races, genders, sexual orientations, and so on. As Lees et al. (2007:199) explain, however, social mix thinking is inherently contradictory as revitalization schemes often have the opposite effect of neighbourhood composition. Although these policies are touted as projects in diminishing “socio-spatial segregation” and boosting the “‘social tissue’ of deprived neighbourhoods,” these policies always involve gentrification via displacement of the poor. Gentrification is generally accompanied by diminishing, “rather than improving, levels of social mix, ethnic diversity and immigrant concentration” (293). Neighbourhood revitalization and social mixing policies

are nonetheless promoted as tools of social cohesion. As I will show in the following section, both of these models are found in the discourses of City planners as well as in the entrepreneurial production of the night markets.

7.3 Chinatown

Vancouver's Chinatown has traditionally embodied the first model of urban multiculturalism. In the 1970s, for example, the federal government provided Heritage funding in support of visible Chinese culture in the public realm. The Chinese Cultural Centre exemplifies this legacy of symbolic support for Chinatown. The City of Vancouver, from the 1960s onwards, sought to recognize the contribution of the Chinese to the City of Vancouver. Among such policies was the funding of mono-cultural settlement service associations in Chinatown and the promotion of group cultures through festivals and celebrations. Chinatown continues to be branded as a mono-cultural neighbourhood, although, as we will see, that is changing.

The Vancouver Chinatown Merchants' Association uses the language of multiculturalism to designate the market as a piece of the mosaic, rather than to denote ethnic or cultural pluralism within the space itself. As we saw in Chapter 6, the night market in Chinatown began as part of a project to attract new cohorts of Asian immigrants back to Chinatown, and away from Richmond. Initially, the VCMA also tried to invite other cultural groups, such as the Greek community, which proved unsuccessful.

The market now exemplifies the "old model" of municipal multiculturalism, beckoning outsiders to come and "enjoy the multicultural performances: Folk dancing, singing, magic shows, martial arts, lion dance, pop bands" (VCMA 2004). The content of these performances is revealing about the VCMA's conception of the term multicultural.

During the 2012 season, all of the Mainstage entertainment was Chinese-themed, including performances of “Guangdong Opera Night,” “Chinatown opera,” Yue Shen Variety Show, “Wushu B.C. Kung Fu, the “Orient Express Golden Night,” as well a Chinese Chess competition. In this case, the term “multicultural” is employed to designate that the market represents *one* fabric among Canada’s many fabrics.

This project, however, has been complicated by the shifting social and economic geography of Chinatown vis-à-vis the rest of Vancouver. Chinatown is no longer the centre of the Chinese community of Metro Vancouver. As the neighbourhood’s economic and social issues intensified, the City of Vancouver instituted the Chinatown Revitalization Program (CRP).

One of the major strategies of the CRP has been use the public realm to engineer change within Chinatown. The public realm is seen as a key area of municipal government leadership in urban development. Public realm policy is conceptualized by City officials as a “tool” which bridges between the activities of the municipal government and private business. As one City planner explains, “we want to work with businesses but we also don’t want to dictate or control everything. The public realm is one of the biggest tools that we have used to improve the area.”

Many of the City’s public realm changes concern the look and “feel” of Chinatown’s streets by night. A great deal of attention has been devoted to lighting. Neon signs, character street lamps, and other forms of “ambient lighting” serve the dual purpose of completing Chinatown’s historic character, while making the streets feel safer. The Chinatown Pedestrian Lighting Improvement Project, for example, installed heritage lampposts and awnings throughout the area, as well as conducting street clean-ups. The

City also funds neon signage in Chinatown, such as the Chinatown Parkade's giant "welcome" sign (overlooking the night market), and the Bao Bei Brasserie's marquis.

Efforts have also been made to improve the neighbourhood's "sense of security" and "pedestrian comfort" through street patrols, cleanups, awnings, and the "Silk Road," a well-lit pedestrian corridor connecting Chinatown to Library Square. Further, the Chinatown Active Storefront Program provides incentives for property owners to put a tenant in the ground floor apartment by offering a grant to "renovate" the building's façade. These public realm developments are seen as ways in which the City can "provide a stage for activities to happen" in Chinatown (Senior Planner, DTES).

The public realm has also been an "avenue" through which the City has attempted to steer the types and composition of businesses in Chinatown. Herbal shops, hair salons, and "knick-knack shops" are not seen as having the "21st century sense of doing a good business," according to one senior planner for the Downtown Eastside. These types of businesses close early and do not typically bring young people into the neighbourhood. According the City's multicultural planner, "they are still relying on a very old model of: we can sell this to the tourists, mentality. That is not what Chinatown should be anymore. It is better for Chinatown to be attracting the young Chinese or others to come back to the neighbourhood."

The City's position is that Chinatown cannot attract the younger generations necessary for its survival, by continuing to rely on the packaging of "traditional" Chinese culture for tourists. The City is intent on combating the mentality that "Chinatown is not for the young and does not cater to or care for their needs" (City planner, personal communication).

In contrast, City planners look favourably on new restaurants and bars in Chinatown, such as Bao Bei, which are seen as attracting young people to the neighbourhood and extending the area's hours. These increasingly popular new modern Chinese restaurants and bars are seen as symbols of the future of an ideal Chinatown. Bao Bei's owner, for example, is a young, hip, second generation, Chinese-Canadian. The restaurant's motto is "Made in Chinatown, filled with love." The following comment was made by City's Multicultural Planner with regards to Bao Bei and is illustrative of the type of development the City would like to see in Chinatown:

Bao Bei is a very good example because it's so fresh, and serves slightly different clientele from the traditional Chinatown clientele. I think it will be interesting to see Chinatown serving a very eclectic group...no matter if young or old, or just diverse cultural groups. We start to see that happening gradually now. (Senior Planner, DTES)

Ultimately, however, the City's planners admit that support for nightlife and the public realm has limited capacity to bring change. "If Chinatown is not doing well, nobody will go there during the evening. Chinatown needs to be thriving overall as a neighborhood."

Thus, we can see how the City's position on Chinatown is shifting. As one planner puts it, "we used to plan Chinatown for Chinatown, now we plan it for the global," and "Chinatown is for everybody." There is a strong push to make Chinatown hipper, younger, more global, and more diverse. The City has attempted to institute such a change through various public realm initiatives.

In the planning discourses, there is a strong juxtaposition between the "knick knack" tourist-focused shops and the new, younger, hipper businesses popping up on Pender Street. The central tension is between the need to attract new residents and new

businesses into Chinatown, while at the same time remaining loyal to the legacy of Chinatown as a heritage district. One planner sums this up: “What is Chinatown when Chinese people no longer live there?” The city wants to shift the balance towards the second model, but at the same time staying true to Chinatown. Both visions have challenges of exclusion. So where does the night market fit into this story?

The Chinatown Night Market occupies a rather problematic position within these two competing models for Chinatown. The City has no direct or official role in the management or objectives of the night market, in contrast to other public realm events in the City that are organized by the Multicultural Advisory Board. The Chinatown Night Market is wholly organized and operated by the VCMA. As one official explains, “the city is one step removed from the market.”

They are nevertheless connected through the Chinatown Business Improvement Association (CBIA). The CBIA relies on the City for support in the City Council approval process. The BIA must be approved by City Council in order to charge its funding levy to area property owners, without which it cannot operate. The City sees the BIA as a key partner in the promotion and organization of activities and events that support the “overall vision” for Chinatown (City Planner, DTES). It is important to note that the interests of the BIA often conflict with the Social Planning Department, which is responsible for the Downtown Eastside as a whole. In the past, conflict has arisen between the competing objectives of economic development in Chinatown and protecting the highly vulnerable low-income community of the Downtown Eastside that includes Chinatown in most designations. This context provides an important backdrop against which the market must be placed.

The City's social planners view the night market in two ways. On one hand, the night market has the potential to support the CRP. City planners see the night market as a venue to "showcase what the neighborhood is about." As one planner explained, market-culture celebrates Chinatown's entrepreneurial roots. As she puts it,

Chinatown has always been a very entrepreneurial neighbourhood. We started off with a bunch of people with entrepreneurial spirit and I think the night market, as a kind of open market, hawkers stands...they really represent the entrepreneurship and people who have some good ideas. They want to give it a shot, but setting up a retail storefront is kind of pricey. So this is a very good way to show innovation and entrepreneurship. (Senior planner, DTES).

The night market also aligns with city objectives to bring more nighttime activities to the area in order to change the public's conception of Chinatown at night.

Further, the market also has the potential to put Chinatown in conversation with the global and to attract young people back to Chinatown. The market's iconography is also seen as a potentially powerful symbol for young Chinese Canadians who have "global" identities. According to one City planner: "these days there are a lot of different subjects competing for the young generation's interests, you know, from global warming, to globalization, so how can Chinatown be part of that?" The market is seen as one way to "take the dialogue about Chinatown out of a very typical ethnic enclave type of discussion, and out into the global. Because today's generation is a global generation." As one of the only open air nighttime events in Vancouver, the market draws people to the neighbourhood. It also adds to Chinatown's "desirability," particularly for young people. As an international phenomenon, the market connects Vancouver's Chinatown to Asian cities, as well as North American Chinatowns both materially (through goods sold) and symbolically.

But, on the other hand, the night market is also problematic from the CRP perspective. City planners see it as being “too business focused” and not reflective of community interests. Many of the vendors come from outside of Chinatown, and thus, it is not clear to the City if the market supports the neighbourhood in a way that has benefits outside of its short weekend, seasonal hours. According to the City’s multicultural planner,

When you look at things like the night market, does it really fill in that gap of the vibrant businesses and needs for the community? I don’t know. It is maybe one way of looking at it. But ultimately it is not speaking to the whole need of the whole community. It is also very business-focused. It is not really driven by the local community itself, other than for economic benefits and reasons.

Perhaps most problematic, from the City’s perspective, as seen in Chapter 6, is the fact that the market creates additional retail space at night, in a retail landscape where businesses are already struggling. The market is thus in direct conflict with the City’s Active Storefront Program which supports the transition of empty storefronts into residences.

Thus, the Chinatown Night Market is both ideologically and physically positioned at the cross-roads of competing policy objectives, where multiculturalism and economic development are concerned: between Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside, between the old model of multiculturalism and the new model. But with what implications?

The Chinatown Night Market materializes in a matter of minutes. Before six o’clock, Keefer appears to be an ordinary street in Chinatown. At six o’clock exactly, the street is closed to traffic. The tents are brought out and assembled in seconds. Pileons at each end close the street to cars, and set the market boundaries. This public-private transition was put to me quite bluntly the first time I tried to conduct interviews. As I

stood there with my clipboard and recorder (and all required ethics documentation), surveying the crowd for someone who might be receptive, I noticed a private security guard making his way toward me.

“Do you have permission to do that?” He asked gruffly.

“Excuse me?” I was confused. He repeated the question. I explained my project and that I had all the requisite papers from the University.

“You need to get permission from management to do anything in the market,” he said.

“But isn’t this a public space?” I bristled.

“No. Not during market hours. If I see you doing that [he gestured to my clipboard], I’ll boot you out of here.”

Several private security guards patrol the street, standing at either end of the market for extended periods of time. They field questions from market-goers, mainly asking for directions to the nearest ATM or public washroom. The guards also enforce rules about the market’s clientele. Not everyone is welcome. The heavily patrolled boundaries of the market are part of a broader project of separating Chinatown from the Downtown Eastside. As one of the security guards explained frankly, his job is “to keep out the homeless drug addicts and answer questions.” Recall Springer’s (2011) argument that a crucial quality of public space is that the “criteria” for entry are negotiable. While these criteria were negotiable for a researcher, they will likely never be negotiable for the low-income community of the Downtown Eastside. The security guard made clear that he polices a specific set of behaviour, including: “People asking for money. Drug addicts trying to steal stuff. People trying to sell stuff who don’t have a vendor’s licence.” When necessary the Vancouver Police Department is called. Significantly, however, elderly

Chinese “binners” (a colloquial term for people gathering recycling in and around garbage bins) are allowed, when they might not be tolerated in other parts of the city. The market’s regulation re-writes “Otherness,” including those who would normally be excluded by the dominant order of Vancouver society. The market walks a tightrope between social inclusion and social exclusion. This tightrope will grow longer, and thinner as the Chinatown Night Market is subsumed by the expanding path of gentrification.

Furthermore, the market itself feels “out of vogue.” Its physical space is literally shrinking. As one vendor, who has held a booth in the market for the last nine years, explained: “At the beginning, this market was two streets, full of people, and was very crowded. It lasted about three years. Then two streets became one street, and now only half a street.” From interviews with vendors, it is clear that the market has been impacted significantly by the recession of the last five years and by competition from the suburbs. Most have experienced significant losses in sales. One vendor reported a 30% decrease in sales from the 2010 to 2011 seasons. Others complained of an overall decline in visitors, a reduced number of American tourists, the unfavourable U.S. exchange rate, and lower consumer purchasing power.

Vendors who had been in the night market for a number of years emphasized the gradual decrease in the size of the market, and its profitability. “I feel the products are worse year by year. When the market was open a long time ago, the products they sold were ok, but not anymore – lower quality, less choices now, things are different.” A number of the vendors expressed a desire to move their business either to the Richmond market or Granville Island (a permanent, covered daytime market, which were seen as

having larger customer volume, and a customer base more willing to spend money. As one vendor explains, “I don’t want to run my business in here anymore as I can feel the businesses are depressed. I am thinking of moving my business to Granville Island. Because my business is selling jewelry and I also like to paint Chinese scripts and paintings, I think my business has more potential in Granville Island. My paintings will be admired by more people than in here.”

7.4 Richmond

The Richmond Night Market also began as an enclave night market. As we saw in Chapters 5 and 6, at its outset, the event was geared towards immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. These newcomers had come from countries with active nightlife cultures, and in which night markets were important urban fixtures. In contrast to the Chinatown Night Market, the Richmond market was an entrepreneurial endeavor, rather than business-improvement association project. The event grew rapidly in popularity, such that, by 2008, Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie stated that the Richmond Night Market had “become a community institution” (18 May 2008, City of Richmond). A large part of its success concerns the fact that it provides a place for people to walk around in the suburb in the evening, in a suburban landscape that is, for the most part, not pedestrian friendly. In Richmond, as Miller (2003) explains, the automobile governs “spatial practice.” Life in the suburb is “compartmentalized:” people drive from one place to another, from work to home to play. As Miller puts it, “unlike old Chinatown, the experience of Chinese space in Richmond is mobile. Drive there, do (“Chinese”) things, and drive back to the other side of town.” The cultural form of the night market centres on nighttime sociability in public space, for which the act of “strolling” is integral. From

this perspective, the Richmond night market can be seen as an act of reclaiming an old suburban industrial area. Thus, in contrast to Chinatown, the night market in Richmond injects publicness into a private suburban parking lot. The history of the market, and its shuffling across various parking lots over the years, speaks to the lack of public spaces that can support large-scale events in the suburbs.

When the Richmond Night Market changed hands in 2008, it prompted something of a crisis of authenticity for the new organizers. The new city permit was granted only on the condition that counterfeit merchandise – a central element of the original Richmond market, as well as a defining feature of Asian night markets – be eliminated from the market. Richmond’s City Council had been persistently lobbied by the Canadian Anti-Counterfeiting Network about the sale of counterfeit merchandise in the night market. City Council saw the change in ownership as an opportunity to re-negotiate the terms of the permit.

In 2008, Richmond’s City Council approved the application by Lion’s Communications Inc. for a Temporary Commercial Use Permit only after the organization demonstrated that “provisions to shut down vendors conducting illegal activity had been put into the contract between the applicant and the vendors” (Richmond City Council 21st April 2008). Lion’s Communications Inc. stated that it was

fully committed to ensuring that counterfeit products would not be sold. Any activity related to the sale of counterfeit products would result in a shutdown of the vendor and be reported to the RCMP. Vendors would be made aware of this by a clause that had been translated in Chinese to be read by all vendors. (ibid.)

Of course, this requirement raised a conundrum for the new organizers because counterfeit merchandise had been a considerable part of the appeal of the previous market.

As the new administrator explains, “The [previous] market had been quite well known for counterfeit products.... what we then needed to do was to make this market attractive in a different way” (personal communication). The new market was thus forced to undergo a significant reinvention process. At the same time, the idea of the “enclave market” had become suspect, for both for its perceived role in exemplifying cultural difference and in limiting profitability.

In 2008, the new Summer Night Market was launched as a multicultural, rather than Chinese market, with the tagline – “the most diverse night market in Canada.” The new organizers have actively moved towards a multicultural vision in terms of marketing and promotion, by selecting non-Asian vendors, by partnering with a multicultural radio station, and by hosting cultural community events. As the administrator explains,

The people that once knew what this market was all about, found that with us running it, it was something completely new to them and something that they had to sort of re-learn. It wasn't a typical night market of Asia where you know you go down there and really it's food and all counterfeit. And we are a really very multicultural festival type of a market now.

This re-branding project coincided conveniently with the desire, on the part of ethnic entrepreneurs, to “break out” of the ethnic economy as well as City objectives to implement intercultural events. The new night market represented both the objectives of Richmond’s Major Events Strategy (to “increase community vibrancy, tourism, and economic development”) as well as to encourage interaction across “cultural silos.” Thus, whereas at one point, the most exciting thing about the market was counterfeit, now according to a Richmond City Councilor, “the most exciting thing about the night market is that it breeds multiculturalism” (Richmond City Councilor, Night Market 2010 Promotional Video).

This statement reflects the continued positive connotation associated with multiculturalism in Canada (Ley 2008). This statement also reflects the increasing concern of multiculturalism and diversity management policies and discourses with the micro-scale (Wise and Velayutham 2009). The city councilor's statement is symptomatic of this shift in emphasis – from top-down state-level multiculturalism, which many see as failing to address the everyday realities of living in a plural society – to bottom-up cross-cultural interaction. “Breeding multiculturalism” implies a social engineering of diversity management at the level of the individual psyche. It implies that multiculturalism can be biologically engineered through the micro-scale.

The Summer Night Market has embraced this ideology. This branding as “the most diverse night market in the world” is perhaps most evident in its Mainstage performances. While there are periodic evening celebrations of different cultural groups (i.e. Filipino Idol Night, Korean days, etc), the entertainment segments themselves are routinely “diverse.” For example, a weekly eating competition challenges volunteers to eat as many mini-donuts as humanly possible. The contest almost always features a multi-ethnic group of teenagers. The breakdancing competitions host multi-ethnic troupes of B-boys and B-girls. The prom fashion shows, even when showcasing local Asian designers, always have models of other ethnicities. According to the administrator:

In the past, the market attracted very local sort of Asian crowds. And since we took it over we focused on other municipalities as well as very many different cultures and truly make it multicultural. And I think by the third year it showed, because we could see and from the feedback we were getting obviously, other people than just say Chinese, or the local Asians here.

The food now generally reflects ‘pan-Asian’ styles (chow mein, Japanese takoyaki, Thai curry, Korean barbecue). Non-Asian vendors (i.e. Italian meatballs, Greek

food, Ecuadorian and African handicrafts) are also actively recruited. The market partners with a multicultural radio station to host a mishmash of events on the main stage, including for example: Flamenco, Latin salsa, Christian rap, belly dancing, hip hop shows, Chinese oldies, Korean martial arts, Pilipino youth 'Idol' singing competitions, heavy metal bands, "South-Asian night," and multi-ethnic fashion shows, break-dance competitions, and eating contests.

Thus in Richmond, in contrast to Chinatown, the regulation of the market has increasingly been devoted to promoting an image of "diversity" rather than "Chineseness." As in the Chinatown Market, the menus and merchandise are subject to the approval of the administrators. Food vendors, for example, are allowed only five items each and must make formal requests to change any item. These rules serve both the purposes of 'diverse' image marketing, while protecting vendors from "piggy-backing" on successful items.

Significantly, this project has required heavy surveillance. Every aspect of it is subject to intervention by the administrators. Keeping up the appearance of public space in a private parking lot is a difficult endeavor. In addition to private market security, there is a constant municipal police presence. As stated by the administration, the police are there to "prevent anything that would create negativity to the market." They, for example, "swing by to see if there's any issues. At the same time, they act like community police, where they interact with the crowds. They get close to the kids, ask them questions, talk to them. Before any issues can arise they're there on the spot." A counterfeit goods inspector also makes random checks on the dry-goods vendors to ensure compliance with the market's "no counterfeit policy." Food vendors are subject to the frequent and random health inspections. These checks are partly to protect consumers from unsanitary

and unsafe practices of food preparation. But they also serve another important purpose – they make sure that the vendors are complying with their pre-approved five-menu item limit. In other words, this is how the administration ensures variety among the food vendors. The market administrators vet all content, from toys, to food, to entertainment. Indeed, a recurring theme of the vendor interviews concerned the management’s lack of transparency and heavy-handedness in “dictating” the market’s rules. According to one vendor, who sells clothing and jewelry, “it feels almost like rules just keep popping up everyday based on the mood of the person in authority.” Many of the vendors stressed that rules are applied unevenly across the market, with allowances made for certain vendors if they were in good graces with the administration. Another vendor explained, for example, “The line is really flexible. They come down on certain people and not on others.” Thus, like in Chinatown, the re-creation of the spatial and temporal form of the night market in the suburb of Richmond relies on particular strategies of regulation. These strategies are both formal and informal.

Another implication of this transition to a multicultural market is a changed notion of authenticity. The night market embodies the “experience economy,” capitalizing on the past experiences and nostalgia of the Chinese diaspora in Richmond. Statements about its authenticity were judgments of whether or not the market was true to the roots of one culture. The Summer Night Market’s reputation as an “authentic” Chinese night market is at odds with its multicultural rebranding. As the demographics of Richmond have shifted, so too has the economy of experiences. These changes have imposed themselves on the nature of the market. The transition raises a key question: how

can the night market simultaneously be authentic to its Chinese heritage and also be a multicultural space?

Chinese participants expressed ambivalence about the use of the market by other cultures, and its re-orientation as multicultural. Interestingly, several participants reconciled this tension by expressing that the Summer Night Market had become distinctly “Richmond.” Peter, for example, described meeting a friend in the market who had brought along family visiting from Hong Kong:

You would think that the whole idea of a night market came from Hong Kong...what do you do if someone came [to visit you] from Hong Kong? You take them to night market, as if that would be totally different and Canadian.

While nostalgia remained an important element, at the same time the market had taken on a new role, and ways of evaluating authenticity changed. As in Jackson et al’s (2007) analysis, the “authenticity” of the market (as true to the roots of one culture) became less important than how it has been “appropriated” over the years. As subsequent groups of migrants and generations choose to settle or remain in the suburbs, the ideals of authenticity changed. Judgments about authenticity progressed “laterally,” evolving to express the ways in which the cultural form of the market has changed with the city’s shifting demographics. It is important, thus, as Zukin does, to see authenticity as a lived experience, an ongoing cycle of “living and working, a gradual building of everyday experiences” (Zukin 2009:544). Layers of migration, its landscape shaped differently by each generation, have built Richmond, like any city. The Summer Night Market can thus be read as the expression of an alternate notion of time-space, built through the assemblage of several generations of lived experiences in Richmond. It is also worth mentioning the success of this model. As demonstrated by the survey, the market attracts

a large number of visitors from outside of Richmond who travel considerable distances to attend the event.

7.5 Conclusion

The night markets operate within the broader regulatory context of multiculturalism as a strategy of diversity management at the municipal level. As shown here, there are competing interpretations of this policy in the City of Vancouver and Richmond. Within these interpretations, there are also competing normative visions concerning what a multicultural city should look like.

The night market administrators operate within the opportunity structure that is produced by these competing visions. Both visions of “multicultural urbanity” are evident in Metro Vancouver’s night markets. The Chinatown Night Market represents the mosaic model, enabling conspicuous consumption through the celebration of a tidy version of Chinese culture, packaged for tourists. As such, it harkens back to the legacy of 1970s multiculturalism. Increasingly, however, this model is falling out of fashion. Both new and old normative visions are found within the discourses of city planners where the night market is concerned. The former remains committed to celebrating the heritage branding of Chinatown, while the latter seeks to encourage “social mixing” by drawing in diversity. The Chinatown Night Market is a site of negotiation between these two models.

The Summer Night Market in Richmond now represents the second normative vision for urban multiculturalism that favours micro-scale diversity. In the case of Richmond, this vision developed out of the conjunction of state regulation (and lack of available public space) and the desire of ethnic entrepreneurs in the former enclave-type market to branch out of the ethnic niche market and into mainstream Vancouver.

The concept of the authentic has taken a much more ambiguous form following the renegotiation of the market's lease and its reorientation as a "multicultural" space. A new night market form has been born out of the intersection of municipal and entrepreneurial interests. These interests have coincided with two complementary critiques of the night market in its former form, namely, that the ethnic enclave model limits entrepreneurial profitability while at the same time promoting an out of fashion model of multiculturalism at the city level which sees multiculturalism deriving from a patchwork of culturally homogeneous and separate neighborhoods. The new project of the market has been to brand itself as authentic to this Chinese heritage, which is both local and transnational, and at the same time reflects the multicultural diversity of Richmond. Despite this shift away from an enclave market, the "ethnic" experience has persisted for its "diasporic" users. The extent to which the market is an authentic representation of an Asian night market has become less important than the context of its use. Thus, multiple layers of authenticity can be mobilized at any one time. What began as a project in reproducing the experiences of diasporic "origins" has come to express the pathways of cultural diversity in Richmond.

Chapter 8 – Red Hot Sociability

In this Chapter I return to the overarching question driving this research: can spaces of consumption (and marketplaces, specifically) support inclusive public life? Here, I draw primarily on the literature on markets and diversity (Chapter 4) to examine the experiences of vendors and consumers in the night market, and how they understand their exchanges, both social and economic.

It is clear that the night markets set the stage for contact between different groups. What is also clear, from Chapters 6 and 7, is that even before people meet, their interactions are shaped by unequal (and racialized) power relations, state ideologies of multiculturalism, and the particular myths of sociability attached to these spaces. The type of experience expected in the night market differs widely from farmers' markets, flea markets, or daytime markets in general. The night market is defined by a specific social ambiance, colourfully conceptualized by Chau (2008) as “red hot sociability.”

Multiple groups of people occupy the markets, from young Chinese-Canadian diaspora users, Filipina teens, Chinese elders, to hipster gentrifiers. These groups have very different reasons for participating. Ultimately, both markets are composed of a set of distinct, overlapping social worlds. To return to Robert Park's metaphor, these worlds may rarely touch.

This analysis steers away from asserting a view of sociability that encourages mixing for “mixing's sake.” As shown in Chapter 2, mixing is not always constructive because it occurs within a contextual set of power relations. At the same time, people's understandings and experiences of mixing remain important, particularly if some people

feel they are able to reach across social worlds, while others feel they are not. Thus, turning to the night markets, to what effect do different groups meet on an equal playing field? What kinds of social interactions occur around the consumption process in these “conspicuously” cultural marketplaces? This Chapter aims to get in-between the binaries of interaction and non-interaction. It contends that the night markets both express and contribute to the normalization and regularization of encounters with difference in everyday spaces. They thus have an important role to play in intercultural understanding, even if market-goers do not necessarily see their participation in the market as such.

8.1 Meeting on Common Ground: The Chinatown Night Market

8.1.1 Vendors

Vendors participate in the Chinatown Night Markets for various reasons. As we saw in Chapter 6, a recurring theme was that they were only there to dump overstock, rather than to make a profit. Others felt trapped within a shrinking marketplace because of their limited English skills. Do these vendors feel that the market is a socially interactive space? Overwhelmingly the answer was no. Most of the Chinatown vendors, like Wei (who sells Chinese dim sum) expressed that the night market was not a good place to learn about Chinese culture. As she explained, “I don’t think whites can learn about Chinese culture. There are lots of Chinese vendors here, but they are focused on business. Non-Chinese come here, they can enjoy Chinese food, but only learn a few things about Chinese culture.” Wei felt that the profit motivations of vendors precluded the potential for cross-cultural exchange. Pam, who sells handicrafts and other accessories, commented that most Vancouverites would not learn much about Chinese culture at the night market because they are already exposed to it on a daily basis:

“Because Vancouver is a multicultural city, I think they already know some Chinese culture before they come here.”

At the same time, however, the vendors constantly reflect on their interactions with customers, other vendors, and administrators. The vendors in the Chinatown Night Market bond over complaints about the weather and bad business. Culture and cultural difference was a large part of the business plans of vendors. Each vendor has very specific ideas about their target demographic. In Chinatown, while some vendors cater to Chinese customers, most are geared towards non-Chinese consumers. Their cultural calculations have very specific profit motivations, such as “International students are willing to spend money;” “local people are very careful with their spending;” and “Caucasians like to buy.” The vendors often made statements about the bargaining habits of their customers, including: “People from Mainland China like to bargain. Caucasians never bargain;” and “they have too many Asian customers in Richmond. They like to bargain.” Thus, even though they describe themselves as feeling constrained in their verbal connections with consumers, they hold a vast amount of intercultural knowledge (as well as mis-knowledge).

8.1.1 Consumers

With little exception, market-goers in the Chinatown Night Market did not see their experience as a “cultural exchange.” The responses fell into two camps of people. The first camp was adamant that neither cross-cultural nor social interaction had anything to do with their visit to the night market. As Alicia, a Chinese-Canadian 19 year old Strathcona resident made clear, “No, we don’t have much interaction at all. We just order food and pay them.” Similarly, Tony and his wife, a Taiwanese couple in their 50s who

live in a nearby Yaletown condo, use the night market purely as walking space. They rarely buy anything, food or otherwise.

Families of various ethnicities attend the night market from all over the Metro area as a fun, evening summer family outing. A dominant theme of this set of interviews was the avoidance of both consumption *and* social interaction. As we saw in Chapter 6, many parents feel that the goods sold in the night market are not safe for their children, and also that the food may be unsanitary. Of course, other parents are simply trying to avoid spending money altogether, and are using the night market as a free form of entertainment. Firouzeh is Iranian-Canadian, and traveled from the suburbs with her family. Firouzeh not only avoids consumption, but also interaction, because she feels that strangers cannot be trusted. As she explains, “Because you don’t know anybody here, you wouldn’t trust anybody to interact, just like on the street.” Further, Firouzeh maintained that the market was not “traditional” enough to provide an “authentic” learning experience of Chinese culture. According to her, “there’s nothing to learn about the culture. This is basically the market, selling the stock, and nothing traditional going on.” But, if she were not at the night market, she would be “sitting at home watching TV, because there is nothing else to do in Vancouver.” Some people are thus unwilling or ambivalent participants in these spaces.

Other Chinatown market-goers see themselves principally as consumers. The night market is attractive to a segment of East Vancouver hipsters who, while reveling in the market’s kitsch, gaudy, and out-of the norm experience, are highly educated and extremely critical of consumption behavior. Laura, for example, has a degree in humanities, is in her mid-20s, lives in East Vancouver and attends the market several

times a season. As she explains, “I don’t view it as a cultural experience. I view it as a strictly consumerist, cheap food, and cheap objects. But that’s fine. I’m not here for cultural exchange.” For Laura, the market is purely about consumption, like a food court or a supermarket. Along similar lines, Jason (a hip, White East Vancouverite in his 30s), challenged me, questioning whether cultural interaction should be a goal at all: “What do you mean by coming into contact with other cultures? Is that a goal? I guess that’s the question. You would want to experience other cultures?”

When I asked this group of consumers if they felt they could learn anything about Chinese culture, their answers usually took a sarcastic tone:

Laura: “*Oh yes, I learned amazing karaoke dancing.*” [rolls eyes in direction of mainstage].

James: [Gesturing to mainstage] “*I don’t know, is that popular? Would I consider that good? I don’t know how to contextualize this performance.*”

Laura further explained that the “Chinese culture” in the night market was “watered-down” for the North American audience. Learning potential was limited by the perceived lack of “real culture” put forth by the Chinese. As Laura puts it: “it’s a quick blanket experience of what it might be kind of like, but it’s really watered down because otherwise I don’t think people would feel nearly as comfortable or willing to approach it.” Similarly, Jason argues, “you might learn that they [the Chinese] have different types of food. You’re probably not going to learn any language between now and 10:30.” Jason adds that the Richmond night market has “more of that stuff.” On the one hand, thus, these market-goers express, what Pardy (2005) calls, an “indifference to otherness.” Their expression of apathy towards cultural difference is part of a critical awareness that they – as educated, open, progressive, leftist consumers – should reject the typical mainstream

multiculturalist or cosmopolitan subject position that derives personal enrichment from consuming ethnicity.

But, at the same time, this group of consumers is attracted to the market *because* it is different. As Jason explains, it is an “alternative to mass-produced Tinseltown or the mall, not enlightening from a cultural perspective, but not harmful either.” These participants also revel in feeling somewhat “out of place.” That they were brushing up against somewhat “exclusive” spaces, such as the mainstage or the “back area” of the market where Chinese men gamble at long tables, was part of the appeal. This sentiment is evident in Jason’s description of the gambling area: “There is that booth of people playing that game. We were really interested in what it was, but we weren’t going to go over. It was all older Chinese people.”

The mainstage events were seen as exclusive to Chinese market-goers, knowledge of Mandarin or Cantonese necessary in order to contextualize and understand the performances. Most of the non-Chinese speakers would not stop to watch the shows for any significant length of time. Many participants also described spatial behavioural codes that they, as non-Chinese market goers, did not understand. These codes, for example, revolved in particular around the appropriate use of different night market spaces. As James puts it

I never know quite how things are operating. People seem to operate in different ways here. Different sorts of, I don't know, probably rules that they're going by, and I don't know if they're always communicated across that line, but yeah I don't feel restricted in any way. But there are obviously some semi-exclusive things here that don't speak to me.

Other statements revolved around questions of lining up. Andrew, for example, was never sure whether or not to stand in line. As he explains, “it’s like sometimes there is a line

and sometimes there isn't a line. Sometimes it's like a mob. And of course, lines are something you were taught at a very young age, so I don't know...with the night market you just expect that certain rules are out the door because it's an open market. There's no protocol."

Thus, while they exhibit an apparent apathy to cultural difference, they nevertheless are attracted to the market's often-bizarre assemblage of social worlds. This appreciation of the opportunity to "rub shoulders" with difference is still a far cry from other accounts of cosmopolitan consumption of "cultural chic" (Pardy 2005:109). If it is cosmopolitanism they are after, it is, to borrow from Pardy, a distinctly "mundane" form.

Other people come to the market in search of the myth of sociality and leave disappointed. Talia (the Israeli Chinese herbalist) often travels to Asia to buy Chinese medicine and has seen many markets. She is familiar with the night market as a cultural form and its association with dense crowds, noise, and social warmth. Talia was unimpressed by the Chinatown Night Market. "No, this is just people selling things. I'm disappointed actually," she explains.

Kei-Lee, who was born in Guangzhou and often sits in the mainstage area, felt she was not able to interact with people of other cultures in the night market because of her poor English skills. "When I come here I'm really only able to talk to other Chinese people." It is important to note, here, that this is only the view of one person who can be defined as part of the community of Chinese elders who use the market as a gathering place. It may not be representative of the views of this group as a whole. Kei-Lee and her friend were the only participants from this group who were willing to speak with me. Likely, this group is content to have their particular area of the market and do not care

much about what the youngsters, tourists, or hipsters are doing, and there is no reason to say they should. At the same time, that Kei-Lee feels that she is constrained within this particular micro-social world is significant. It highlights the point that spaces and boundaries should be traversable for those that want to cross between them.

Non-Chinese, non-white market-goers attributed the lack of cross-cultural interaction to the “Chineseness” of the market. Tony and Mei, the Taiwanese couple who live in Yaletown, told me that the lack of opportunities for cross cultural exchange in the market stemmed from the fact that the market was “too Chinese.” As Mei put it bluntly, “We feel it’s too Chinese in here. No I don’t interact with other people.” Significantly however, while Mei admits that, in their daily lives, they “mostly interact with other Chinese people,” she suggests that she would participate in the market in a more social capacity if it were “more multicultural.” Daniela, a recently immigrated Filipina 19-year old expressed a similar frustration: “It’s really hard to find people that you can meet here [in the market]. Maybe they don’t speak English. Sometimes the Chinese, they don’t know how to speak English so it can be hard to communicate.” Such statements reveal the complexity of urban social relations and ethnic stereotyping in situations of super-diversity. Taiwanese participants feel alienated from the market’s apparent “Chineseness” as do other immigrant groups.

When pressed on the subject, market-goers noted that the only potential for social interaction came from conversations with food vendors or with other patrons about food. Eric, who is in his 40s, Filipino-Canadian, lives in the suburbs, and attends the Chinatown Night Market semi-regularly with his family, told me “well, yes I do interact with other people sometimes I guess. Like when we’re talking about food...oh this is

delicious. Or where did you get that?” Bargaining was seen as another potential avenue for social interaction. One participant, Joe, described this type of exchange as an “opportunistic” social interaction. “You can haggle. You hear what one guy paid for something, so you know you can get it for at least that. It’s opportunistic I guess, but not in a cut-throat way.”

There were two exceptions to the generally non-social characterization of the marketplace. Danica, the self-described “white Chinese person” comes to the night market *for* cross-cultural exchange. She is the typical cosmopolitan, with expert knowledge accumulated through world travels. Danica speaks fluent Mandarin and converses with the vendors. Danica described the process of buying noodles in the market. She noticed the woman was selling Szechuan noodles and struck up a conversation about Chengdu. As it turns out, the vendor is from Chengdu where Danica went to University, and they lived within a ten-minute walk of each other. In terms of interaction in the market, Danica sums this up in the following statement: “It’s really nice to come out in a city like Vancouver and be able to share things. I find that in other areas of the city, there’s no interaction among people and here everyone is a little bit more open. Everyone is here for the same purpose right?”

Andrew, the early 20s, White resident of Strathcona, sees himself as part of the Chinatown community. To him the night market plays an important community role that is not about consumption. He sees the neighbourhood as being an area with higher cultural mixing. As he explains “Chinatown-Strathcona definitely has a mixing and it’s not like a tolerance thing. All kinds of people live here and really get along well in this area. That’s what’s cool about the night market.”

But cross-cultural learning is only seen as possible if “you go out of your way” to do so. In other words, if the intention were to learn about Chinese culture, then a market-goer would have to make an effort to engage with others in the market. Learning would not happen by simply being in the space. As Andrew explained: “if you wanted to come here and learn about Chinese culture, if that was your goal, you would need to ask somebody.” This sentiment is echoed by Eric who notes that a person can only learn “if they’re willing to ask, but if you’re sort of shy then you’re not going to learn anything. You could walk by, and just buy something from every place and not really know anything.” Thus, while some non-Chinese participants felt that they had learned about Chinese culture by participating in the night market, most emphasized the limitations of the space for this kind of learning.

8.2 Richmond Summer Night Market

8.2.1 Vendors

Turning to Richmond, it is clear that the night market is being used by an altogether different set of interests. The vendors are more diverse, younger, and more upwardly mobile. The more flexible retail arrangement invites a wide range of economic participation and motivation, appealing to young entrepreneurs, family businesses, as well as retired people. For young people in the Richmond night market in particular, the market provides a venue to test business ideas, new products, and designs without being shackled by the risk associated with long-term contracts. As the administrator explained,

They can come here for a week. They can come here for a month, or for the whole season. It allows them to test their products, give their entrepreneurial skills a try, and see if they like it or not. They can walk away without losing too much, or be very successful and carry on their business elsewhere.

This sentiment was echoed by many of the younger vendors in the night market. Julia and Miles, for example, are Chinese-Canadian university students in their early 20s. They rented a booth in the night market to earn money to pay for school. As Julia puts it, “I study linguistics and Asian studies and we were just bored in the summer, so we decided to do this. We saw that the market had a 500 dollar off option for the booths, so we just took advantage of it.” At their booth, they sell a novelty item they call the “Mystery Box,” (basically a grab bag). Customers pay between 5 and 15 dollars for one of these boxes, selecting either the ladies or men’s version. The booth guarantees that the value of the box will equal the money paid by the customer. This item is characteristic of the type of entrepreneurship emphasized by the night market’s administrator, who himself began by selling personalized stickers at Chinese New Year festivals in the Lower Mainland.

From the perspective of the vendors, the marketplace is also emancipatory in the sense that it is freeing from the confines of the mall. According to Mary, who immigrated from Hong Kong in 2007 and sells women’s clothing and jewelry: “with malls or other retailers you have to sign a contract for three years. You have to be there everyday. This is one season. You get to back out if it doesn’t work out.” Similarly, another vendor, who sells desserts, maintained “if you have any questions about the correct kind of venue or strategy for your business, this will at least answer a whole lot of questions for you.” Thus, although there is not much real room for bargaining because of the high overhead costs paid by the vendors, the market can be read as emancipatory because people directly shape the value of goods by providing feedback, both directly and through patterns of consumption.

At the same time, this retail environment also appeals to people who have more social motivations. As the administrator put it, “there are a lot of retired, older people that immigrated here and pretty much wanted to retire but at the same time were looking for something to keep them busy, so for them it doesn’t even have to be profitable.” Ken, for example, is a retired Korean-Canadian who sells Chinese calligraphy in the market. As he puts it “I am retired, so I just enjoy. There is no other place like this for retired people. This is the place. I make some money but am spending time, relaxing, talking to the people.”

Like in the Chinatown Night Market, the vendors all had very specific ideas about their target cultural market. Julia and Miles, for example, sell their “Mystery boxes” mainly to white Westerners. As Julia explains, “I think that’s because Asian people do not want to get ripped off. Western people are more in for the fun of it.” Miles expressed that Chinese people could learn a lot about Western culture from the night market. As he puts it “I think some Chinese people, they come here, and they expect that the market is going to be like in China, where they can bargain to a crazy price but because some of the booth owners are white, they have a strict price and everything so, yeah, they can learn the difference here.” Such a statement indicates that Miles sees himself as a mediator of “Canadian” and “Chinese” cultural consumption practices.

The Chinese vendors were positive about the changing consumer and vendor base, seeing it as a chance to expand their reach and increase profits. As one vendor put it: “the people that are new to the market, are the ones that buy the most. The ones that have seen it for their whole lives, it’s like, ok, we can come another time.” Mary explained that she

was surprised by the market's diversity. She had applied for a stall in the night market expecting a Chinese cultural event, but "no, it totally is not. It is really multicultural now."

In Richmond, this picture was even more complex because of the concerted effort, on the part of the administrators, to recruit non-Chinese and non-Asian vendors specifically. Mariela's booth, which sells Ecuadorian handicrafts, also has a specific ethnic niche. "For us it is the Japanese and Caucasian people that appreciate handmade stuff. They seem to like our incense burners a lot [she laughs]. A lot of younger people too."

But, many of the non-Chinese vendors expressed ambivalence about being part of a market that is branded as multicultural. As Ken, a Korean-Canadian vendor explains, "multicultural. Well that's what they're saying now, but I think it has to change to Canadian night market, for 'everybody' rather than multicultural. I don't like to say multicultural market." For Ken, the multicultural branding has a negative connotation. The "multicultural" spin of the Richmond market is also not going as smoothly for the white vendors, who, in particular, expressed difficulty attracting Asian clientele. As one explained, "well, we came in here really blind. We didn't know what to expect, and like here we are...we definitely stick out." Similarly, Jan, who sells mini-donuts and sees herself as a "token Caucasian" in the market expressed frustration at her inability to attract Asian customers to her stall: "I would be doing way better in a non-Asian market. But there aren't any other night markets right now. This is it. This is the only game in town, so far."

Generally the Chinese vendors did not see the market as a good place for non-Chinese people to learn about Chinese culture. Several vendors explained that this was

because the market was becoming more multicultural. Another asked me pointedly, “Well, what is Chinese culture actually? I don’t think so. I think they don’t learn Chinese culture from here. I think they enjoy food and things like that.”

The non-Chinese vendors, however, felt that they were having substantial learning experiences concerning Chinese and Asian cultures more broadly. Jan saw cross-cultural learning as one of the major benefits from her participation in the night market. As she explained

I remember the first year I was here; I had put up stanchions, like you know you put up for line-ups. Somebody clued me in on the fact that they [Asian customers] perceive that as a barricade, as a barrier between you and them, and they’re very shy by nature. I never knew that as a culture they are actually, for the most part – this is what I was told by Asians – that they’re very shy, and that they will probably not approach you, you have to approach them, or you have to really openly invite them. And that [stanchion] was seen as a visual misinvitation, or non-invitation.

Jan confessed that she was hoping for another market to start up “out in the ‘burbs somewhere,” particularly in Surrey. Her competition with Chinese businesses in the market reinforces feelings of difference. Such a tension was evident in the way in which she positioned herself with respect to Chinese family businesses: “the simple fact is that I have to pay my employees. It puts me at a disadvantage.” She also feels her dessert business does not do as well as it could in the night market because

Asians don’t have the same sweet tooth that Caucasians have...one of my staff...I was just getting their feedback on you know, business and sales, and things like that, because they work out front, they see. I got a couple of really good staff, they’re really smart and they’re really observant. And this one gall who is not on tonight, she’s from Hong Kong, she said [Jan] have you ever noticed all of your customers are either kids or Caucasians, with the odd Filipino, and some East Indians. And it’s true. All my friends who are from Surrey and East Indian, they totally love the product, like they would love to have me there, right, in Surrey.

By employing young Asians to work the till and provide the face of the company, Jan tries to bridge the cultural consumer gap.

There was a high level of camaraderie among the vendors. This was more evident in the Richmond market, but was also true in Chinatown. The vendors go around and visit each other's stalls, giving mutual discounts, and commiserating about the management. In Richmond, interacting with other vendors was a huge part of the night market experience. The size and spatial organization of the parking lot lends itself to the formation of pockets or neighbourhoods. Vendors will often request booths next to friends, or to booths selling similar products. As Mariela explained, she and another vendor had been next to each other for three years, "but we all know each other. They're all really friendly. We all know that we're here, so we give discounts between us."

Similarly, Julia and Miles, the UBC students, went around the market and introduced themselves to everyone on their first weekend. As Miles puts it "we can easily just stay in our booth and not approach anyone, but because we've talked to people, we're making friends with the vendors." Julia describes their social exchanges with other vendors, "we have lots of interactions...you know, if we will be back next year? Where? Which stall? If you want to be next to a certain vendor in the same nature of business so you can attract the same groups of customers..." In Richmond, many of the vendors also said they maintained habitual relations with customers who routinely visited their stall. As Mariela explained, customers keep coming back because "they know that the price is better here than on our website...they can deal with us right."

In summary, in contrast to Chinatown, all of the vendors expressed that the Richmond market was a highly interactive space, albeit not necessarily a space of cross-

cultural learning for the consumers. They themselves, however, felt that they were learning, needing to think constantly about drawing in customers of different ethnicities in an increasingly diverse marketplace.

8.2.2 Consumers

Young, Chinese-Canadian residents of Richmond form a large segment of the Richmond night market's consumer base. As we saw in Chapter 6, Jenny, for example, has attended the night market since she immigrated to Richmond from Hong Kong as a young child. Her description of a typical evening in the night market is distinctly interactive:

You go through that aisle, and then you go down this aisle, and then back down this aisle...and you're eating at the same time while you're browsing all the stores, and I think that makes social interaction amongst friends and people that might be beside you. Sometimes when you talk the person talks to you, like not the person who is selling the clothes or anything, but just the person beside you will be discussing the item or the product at hand with you, just because you're there.

For this group, the night market is a place where certain social mores are suspended. The market is seen as a relative space of freedom away from their parents' watchful eyes. The market became known as a "good place to take girl." As one participant mused about a recent rendezvous with his girlfriend in the night market, "we felt pretty free while we were there. We held hands; we cuddled; we linked arms." The market was a safe place that parents allow you to go, but where you can freely show signs of affection (that might be frowned upon by parents with more traditional Chinese values).

It should also be noted that this group operates within a completely different set of consumption rules. In particular, language skills and social capital allows them to access under-the-table goods that are not presented to non-Chinese consumers. The market's

anti-counterfeiting campaign has pushed counterfeit merchandise “under-the-table.” Inspectors enforce the rules selectively. Vendors assess the “risk” posed by different customers, deciding whether or not to present counterfeit merchandise. While vendors did not volunteer this information, it can be extrapolated from interviews with market-goers. Asian consumers described the market as being a “good place to get pirated DVDs,” while white consumers complained that they can “no longer find any good knock-offs.” These two sets of social rules likely have existed, but have been further emphasized by city-driven pressures to re-shape the market. Thus, an unforeseen consequence of the market’s “multicultural drift,” has been an intensification of separate social spaces. This system of overlapping, but distinct social spaces highlights the ways in which certain regimes of publicness affect social behavior in public.

Interestingly, the opportunities for cross-cultural exchange were described as going both ways. One participant described a particular exchange:

There was this guy who was just standing there and people formed a circle around him and he started performing. It was good because even though most people surrounding him didn’t seem to understand what he was doing, they didn’t seem to relate to this humor because he made jokes in reference to certain TV shows that maybe Asians don’t watch. They still laughed with him.

This statement reveals a crucial point about power relations in this marketplace: the white performer is positioned as the outsider whose message gets lost in translation.

In Richmond, market-goers were more positive about their social interactions than in Chinatown. White market-goers tended to have more social interaction around the food court. “You talk to people outside the food stalls about what’s good. If they’ve had something, you compare notes.” Amy, who is a white market user in her 30s, from Coquitlam, attends the market several times a year. She describes the market in terms of

its diversity. As she explains, “pretty much every stall that you go up to is somebody different from somebody wherever. Especially if you go in there and get something to eat, every Asian culture is in there, so I think when you walk through the door, it’s almost like diversity itself.” This participant sees the act of consuming of food as being an opportunity for cross-cultural learning. Due to limited seating, people often find themselves sharing tables with others, which provides fodder for conversation. Interaction also occurs around novelty items, for example, with people comparing the secret contents of their “Mystery Boxes.”

White participants described the space as a setting for cross-cultural interaction. Such exchange was accompanied by a sense of necessary social unease. Amy describes this feeling:

It’s hard to go up to a stall when you know, obviously, there’s a giant language barrier. It can go either way, but for the most part I feel absolutely comfortable here. Like it’s a safe environment. There’s lot of security and that kind of thing...it’s not like going into one of Asian malls where you don’t always feel comfortable, or like, why would you go there? But I feel comfortable here [in the night market].

Such a statement reflects popular discourses surrounding Asian malls in Richmond as exclusive spaces. This sentiment is mirrored by other non-Chinese participants, who felt that their interests, cultural backgrounds, and communities were represented in the Richmond market, much more so than in the Chinatown Night Market. Several of the Filipino participants explained that they felt more comfortable in the Richmond market, partly because of the entertainment, but also because of the array of food choices and the availability of Filipino food. According to one Filipina participant, “I prefer this market because they have my culture’s food here. It just feels more open to me.” Significant

numbers of Filipino-Canadians use the Richmond night market as a community space. Its mainstage is often occupied by various “Pinoy Idol” singing and karaoke competitions, where the MC switches seamlessly between Tagalog and English.

8.3 Discussion

These sets of interviews reveal a system of distinct but overlapping social worlds. Indeed, M.G. Smith might characterize the markets as spaces of mutual avoidance. Various groups of people have territorialized these markets, from young diaspora users, to Filipina teens, Chinese elders, hip gentrifiers, tourists, and recent immigrants of various backgrounds. These groups have very different reasons for participating. To quote Louis Wirth (1938), these worlds may rarely “touch.” The crucial question is whether this matters. If everybody gets what they want from the marketplace, then perhaps it does not. As such, this analysis steers away from a normative position that encourages mixing for ‘mixing’s sake’. As such, I conceive of interaction as a spectrum, ranging from wider exclusion to meaningful engagement. On the one hand, there is evidence of verbal interaction, especially among vendors. The vendors described high levels of camaraderie in the marketplace, finding common ground in complaints about the management, weather, or decline in tourism. Vendors’ motivations for participating in the market demonstrate the ways in which the social intervenes in the consumption process. For some, retirees in particular, interaction itself is the goal of participation, rather than profit. In Richmond, verbal relationships were more likely to occur across ethnic lines, and were often driven by the need to reach across cultural barriers in order to reach a diversifying consumer base. Importantly, in Chinatown, interaction amongst vendors occurs across linguistic (i.e. Mandarin – Cantonese) or sub-cultural (Hong Kong –

Mainland China) lines. Furthermore, many of the vendors described developing habitual relations with customers who visited their stalls on a regular basis. Market-goers and vendors also verbally interact through bargaining and, of course, through the exchange process itself.

This analysis demonstrates the complex ways in which the social intervenes in the realm of consumption. While profit maximization was the goal for most vendors, this was not the case for all. Retired people, for example, rent booths in the night market for relaxation and socializing, reasons that transcend profit motives. The social and cultural also intervene in the economic realm by way of the many cultural ideas and strategies exhibited by the vendors in both marketplaces. As is evident from these exchanges, most of the time, cross-cultural interaction is framed as part of vendors' business strategies. In other words, it is good business strategy to get to know your neighbours, to get to know your customer base and their cultural and social buying habits. Maisel (1974) would argue that "at the end of the day," profit trumps sociability. Importantly, however, even if profit motivations are behind most of these exchanges, this is still social behaviour. What's more, it is clear that market-goers shape the value of goods, as Kelly (2003) argues. Market-goers provide feedback on products, by voting with their consumption patterns. Camaraderie itself attracts customers. As an Italian vendor in the Richmond market put it, even if Asian consumers are not buying their menu items, "It's fun to yell out while you're selling. 'We got meatballs and lasagna!' he laughs, "Everything's homemade!"

In both marketplaces, consumers and vendors alike drew contrasts between the experience of the mall and the market. While the mall is a permanent and mundane

feature of the urban and suburban landscapes, the market provided a fleeting and temporary experience. Unlike the mall, the market offers a “communal” space for family and social outings. According to one vendor

A lot of people come regularly, like a family event. Unlike a mall, the mall is always going to be there from the day they are born until the day they die [laughs], you know, like Metrotown. So they don't care to make it like a special event to go with a family. But this you can actually make it a family event and I have customers come to me with their families each week.

This response set also raises the significance of workspaces as sites of cross-cultural exchange. The habitual daily cross-cultural interactions between vendors in the night markets form out of boredom, but also commonality. They all have something in common: the management, the recession, or the weather. These interactions develop social relationships across different ethnicities.

On the other hand, at the opposite end of the spectrum, there is also evidence of exclusion. Low-income, homeless, or under-housed residents of the Downtown Eastside are actively excluded from the Chinatown Night Market by security guards hired mainly for this purpose. Similar policing occurs in Richmond. Both markets are subject to high levels of spatial regulation, and the abrupt curtailment of behaviour that deters from consumption. The gentrifying spaces lining the market street are closed to the low-income Chinese elders who use the night market as a social space. The patio of *The Keefer* and the interior of *Bao Bei Brasserie* capitalize on the visual aesthetic and soundscape created by the night market, in order to cultivate a hipper, younger crowd in Chinatown, where low-income residents of the surrounding area (of any ethnic background) are not welcome. There is thus reason to question the “magical” nature of these spaces and the urban developments they encourage.

There is some evidence in Chinatown that vendors are excluded from the mainstream labour economy because of their language ability in English. While entrepreneurship was not a focus of this analysis, the political economy of these marketplaces reveals important differences between the potential upward mobility of vendors in the Chinatown market as compared to the Richmond one. Many of the vendors in Chinatown expressed feeling constrained in a tourist space that purposefully recreates Chinese culture for (white) tourists. Because of low English skills, they do not feel able to leave this market and start businesses elsewhere. Significantly, many of these vendors actually live in Richmond but work in Chinatown, which suggests that the marketplaces inadvertently sort the upwardly and downwardly mobile into “new” and “old” Chinatown, respectively. It is significant that vendors in the Chinatown Night Market characterize their experiences in the night market as non-interactive, while those in Richmond feel they are having a highly social experience.

On the whole, however, the behaviour falling into either one of these two poles (of interaction/non-interaction, inclusion/exclusion) only accounts for small pieces of the sum total of the market experience. In fact, interviews with vendors and consumers as well as observation in the markets reveal that most of what is happening falls somewhere in the middle. For one, where consuming ethnicity is concerned, there is some evidence that the night markets provide a “living tableau of queerness” (as described by Said 1979:103) for whites in Vancouver. Stereotypes were revealed through the descriptions of Chinese vendors as “tricking” families into buying cheap and unsafe merchandise, food of poor or unsanitary quality. For non-Chinese market-goers, the night markets are sometimes spaces of fascination and curiosity where some people are seeking a “taste of

the East.” It is clear that some groups are in the night market searching for ‘authenticity’ in the form of traditional costumes, cultural performances, and exotic foods. For others, it is not the cultural content of the market that is important, but its difference from the mainstream. Still, there is an unsettling of cultural codes that is common to both night markets. This unsettling involves a flipping of power relations. In both the Chinatown and Richmond markets, white participants expressed feeling “out of place.” It is also clear, from the interviews with Chinese vendors and their perceptions of the buying habits of different cultural groups (discussed in Chapter 6), that cultural stereotyping and exoticization occurs in multiple directions.

In Chinatown, there is a strong division between the market and the mainstage area, where low-income Chinese elders have carved out a social space. The spaces provide an important safe outdoor nighttime gathering place for this community, demonstrating the role that marketplaces can play in social inclusion. In these spaces – the seating area surrounding the mainstage, or the long gambling tables – non-Chinese market goers, including both tourists and locals, feel out of place. These are not spaces that are meant for their consumption.

This flipping of power relations is part of the appeal for white consumers but is not embraced by consumers of other ethnicities. For Daniela, for, example, the night market reinforces her perception of Vancouver as a city where people of different ethnicities “live separately.” As she describes it,

If the people were born here then I think they can socialize with others. But people not born here live separately. I see a lot of people that are afraid to communicate. Sometimes you want to speak but they ignore you. On the bus, we have a lot of Chinese people and sometimes they're rude. It's true, they don't say, hey, excuse me, or thank you.

Daniela's response reveals the complexities of race, immigration, and everyday interaction in a super-diverse society, and that there are many ways in which new immigrants can feel isolated in the public realm.

But still, most non-Chinese consumers do not see the night markets as exotic. In fact, most people, especially in Chinatown, frame the market in relatively mundane terms, expressing a high degree of familiarity with its assemblage of food, music, goods, and people. A surprising finding was that many participants question cultural consumption or exchange as a goal at all. Such a finding challenges dominant accounts of cosmopolitan consumption that might see the night market as allowing whites to perform their embrace of the other. That the market is 'ethnic' is often not what makes it attractive to consumers. Many market-goers are simply there to participate in some element of Vancouver's outdoor summertime nightlife. Although people have different ideas about leisure – walking one's dog in a safe and well-lit environment, watching Chinese opera, strolling through a crowd, people watching, being in a diverse place, or eating convenient and inexpensive fast-food – they all share the space. Thus, the night markets both express and contribute to the regularization and normalization of inter-ethnic encounters in everyday spaces in Metro Vancouver.

Also in between these poles of interaction/non-interaction lie more internal or invisible negotiations of conceptions of authenticity, culture, and diversity. The night markets serve as spaces where these concepts are worked out. This occurs most obviously among young Chinese-Canadian diaspora users, but is also evident among non-Chinese market-goers of various ethnic backgrounds. In Richmond, even as the market has been rebranded as multicultural, the space continues to be used as an enclave market that caters

to nostalgia for home. The night market allows immigrants who come from cultures that have night markets, to use the suburbs in a particularly temporal way, and to instill this cultural sense of time/space in their children. For the Chinese diaspora population in Richmond, the market provides a space where diaspora identity is negotiated through contact not only with particular material goods, but also more broadly, with a spatial and temporal definition of leisure culture. As in Besnier's (2004) analysis, the marketplace serves as a mediating space between diaspora and homeland. Membership in the diaspora is demonstrated through knowledge of the cultural from the market, what is "in vogue" currently in Hong Kong and Taiwanese markets, and through evaluations of the "authenticity" of the night market in comparison with those in Asia. Here, I concur with Olsson (2007): marketplaces can serve as spaces where people can constructively express ethnic origins, continue cultural practices, and show these to their children.

At the same time, the night market's appeal has been crosscutting, and perhaps in ways that have surprised the organizers. The format of the night market turned out to appeal to a number of Vancouver's immigrant groups, as well as to a wide swath of Canadian born Vancouverites. These distinct consumer groups are using the market for different purposes, from food, to social outings, to free entertainment.

This ethnography also shows a need to revisit theories about consumption and the Other in super-diverse (Vertovec 2007) societies. This ethnography brings to light the many subcultures of people and ways in they use the space of the market. Scholars can no longer think of Chinatown as a Chinese space produced for and consumed by whites (the dominant view since Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown*). The same applies to other areas of immigrant settlement, including Richmond. The consumption of culture is

happening outside of the two-way street (white – non-white, Canadian – immigrant, Chinese – white). The interviews with market-goers and vendors paint a complex picture of multiple streets, sometimes parallel, sometimes intersecting. Filipina teens, Chinese elders, Korean international students, Iranian parents, Generation Y'ers of various ethnicities, or more hybrid identity groups exhibit a range of experiences, have different reasons for participating, and have different encounters with difference. Some groups, like second generation Chinese-Canadians, are more able to cross between the overlapping systems of social worlds present in (and around) the marketplace, while for others, the transition is, as Louis Wirth describes it, “abrupt.” Of particular significance in this regard is the expression of several participants that the night market at Vulcan Way was a “distinctly Richmond” experience. This indicates what Olsson (2007:56) describes as the “quiet revolution of immigrant and food [which] continues to upset and redefine the meanings of local, regional, and global identity.”

8.4 Conclusion

These spaces are produced differently and operate within different municipal opportunity structures and discourses where culture is concerned. The Richmond night market is more of an equal playing field. It is less territorialized. Its internal boundaries are more overlapping, less visible, and with more users able to leap between social worlds (if they want and choose to do so). The Chinatown market, produced as a tourist market (with a community function on the side) operates in conversation with a Western expectation of what Chinatown is and what it should be. This context plays out through people's expectations and experiences of the marketplace consumption process.

This analysis raises the difficulty of applying a lens that divides social relations into dichotomous realms of interaction and non-interaction. In other words, the central question should not concern whether interaction happens or not, but rather what happens “in-between” these poles. Such a perspective allows for a more nuanced consideration of the big question: whether the everyday matters for intercultural engagement.

The night markets both express and contribute to the social normalization of interethnic encounters in Metro Vancouver. These events consist of “layers of ethnically different individuals,” who, although may not be interacting verbally, are nonetheless “corporeally interacting” (Wise 2010:172) by virtue of participation in a shared space. Both markets bring together a diverse range of people for a common purpose. That this purpose is either leisure or consumption does not change the connective potential of the space. People attend the markets, seeking food, fun, cheap electronics, social warmth, and a myth of sociability attached to marketplaces. Propinquity may be a by-product or it may be the end-game. Either way, regardless of whether there is verbal interaction across cultures, the market assembles people who are different from one another. As one participant explained, “everyone is here for the same reason, right?” Although cultural differences may remain, the physical distance between people is collapsed. Whether or not conversations occur, the night markets are characterized by what Amin (2012) describes as “rhythms of co-presence.” The importance of sensory and corporeal experiences of spaces reveals itself in the statements of white vendors concerned with making their booths cross-culturally welcoming.

In other words, these are, as Wise and Velayutham (2009) put it, spaces of “everyday multiculturalism.” Market-goers are negotiating difference and diversity.

Discourses of multiculturalism, along with all their controversies, debates, and political baggage, are also being worked out and considered as people engage with these marketplaces. This is obvious in the responses of market-goers to questions of the night markets' authenticity, and presentation of multiculturalism or "Chinese culture." The night markets are part of the "multicultural drift" in Metro Vancouver. They expose the "incremental process" through which diversity is normalized as people make their lives and reshape their built, social, and temporal environments (Watson and Saha 2012). This begins with belonging expressed through the creation and use of a diasporic enclave space (eg. Kei Lee in Chinatown, or Jenny in Richmond), and its increasing inclusivity of other cultures (i.e. Filipina teenagers).

Of course, I do not wish to suggest that difference is somehow immediately "dissolved" by the night markets' assemblage (Valentine 2008). I would also warn against expecting too much from such spaces. To be sure, social relations are embedded in contexts, in histories, in landscapes. People's behaviour in the night markets is, to some extent, shaped by what Amin (2012) refers to as the "vernacular of racial labeling" that shapes, in the case of Vancouver's night markets, pre-existing assumptions about Chinese culture, Chinatown, and what Chinese people should "do" in public space. But such an interpretation also makes too much of power differentials in the night market. It ignores the various strategies of vendors, and it attributes too much power to consumers.

The night markets are not simply arenas for whites to access cultural capital. Importantly, many market-goers do not view their participation in the market as even approaching cultural exchange or cultural learning. In fact, people expressed a high degree of ambivalence about this. I see this as a positive development. Nowhere did I find

white Vancouverites seeking a “glint of the far East.” Undoubtedly some are seeking cultural enrichment, but no more so than the Filipino, or South Asian market-goers. The night markets have become part of Vancouver’s urban commons. Despite their transience, or perhaps because of their transience, they contribute to the normalization of inter-ethnic relationships.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

This story began by contrasting two very different nighttime landscapes – Keefer Street in Vancouver’s Chinatown and a suburban Richmond parking lot south of a channel of the Fraser River. For many years, Chinatown was a hub of nighttime activity in Vancouver, while Richmond was predominantly white and rural. Chinatown’s decline was set in motion by a shifting urban economy (including suburban development) and the gradual collapse of Hastings Street. This decline was experienced acutely at night, when surviving businesses locked their doors for the evening and abandoned storefronts sat empty. Chinatown became known as a “ghost town,” “Gotham city,” or “no man’s land.” Richmond’s simultaneous growth as a multicultural suburb was set in motion by policy changes at the federal level intended to attract wealthy migrants from the Pacific-rim.

The Chinatown Night Market appears as a brightly lit oasis in Chinatown’s nighttime landscape. It reclaims a one-block section of Keefer Street with security patrol, sound, and the social warmth of the crowd. Its organizers intended the market to appeal to Chinese migrants who were not interested in a neighbourhood of knick-knack stores, tourist shops, hair salons, or Chinatown’s association with the marginalization of Chinese immigrants in Canada. The Chinatown Night Market gestures to the modern Asian cityscape, playing up Chinatown’s public culture, and the “red hot sociability” of the night market form, in an attempt to attract new upwardly mobile Chinese migrants away from the suburbs. More recently, the night market provides a picturesque backdrop for the leading edge of gentrification. New businesses in the area capitalize on kitsch,

reclaiming the icons of “purposeful Orientalism” to attract young Vancouverites seeking out new hip urban scenes.

The Richmond night market also transforms nighttime space, amongst an old industrial suburban area of Richmond that is quiet after the big box stores shutdown for the night and the last cars leave the IKEA parking lot. The otherwise empty lot of Cathay Importers comes alive at night on summer weekends, with crowds of young people hanging on until well after 1am. This event would have been unimaginable twenty-five years ago. It embodies the changing social geography of the suburbs, and in particular, their current super-diversity. Once white and rural, Richmond has become a multicultural city. The night market represents the ways in which immigrants have transformed suburban space both physically *and* temporally.

Beyond the new geographies of migration represented here, the growing popularity of these marketplaces is also linked to the new cultural economy, shifting discourses of diversity and multiculturalism, as well as being inextricably related to the consumption of ethnicity. These processes have consequences for how people negotiate these spaces and their interactions with other people within them. The central question of this research concerns the role of the everyday for intercultural understanding and engagement. As such, I have placed the night markets at the centre of three inter-related debates in the literature: the role of space in everyday encounters with difference; the interplay of structure and agency in the construction and representation of Chinatown; and the role of marketplaces specifically in fostering meaningful intercultural exchange in plural societies. This study compares Vancouverites’ experiences with difference in the two marketplaces, drawing on 88 interviews with consumers and vendors, ten in-depth

key informant interviews (with market administrators and city officials), and hours of participant observation over the course of two years.

I begin this concluding chapter by summarizing the research findings (9.1). In section 9.2 I return to the literature outlined in Chapters 2 – 4, considering the gaps addressed by the dissertation. In section 9.3 I highlight the additional questions arising from this research as well as suggesting areas of future research, before offering some concluding thoughts.

9.1 Summary of Findings

This research has made three arguments. First, the night market phenomenon in Metro Vancouver is a project in re-writing both the City landscape and the suburban landscape in a way that challenges imposed notions of “Chineseness” by city governments and multicultural planning discourses. As such, these cases reveal the struggle between structure and agency in the representation of Chinatown. Second, the different trajectories of the two marketplaces reveal a shift in the scale of diversity management planning discourses, from mosaic to micro-scale. Third, the night markets both reveal and contribute to the social normalization of ethno-cultural diversity in Metro Vancouver’s public realm.

The overarching contribution of this research is to demonstrate that the night markets, as everyday spaces, foster intercultural interaction and engagement. These everyday encounters with difference, however, do not occur in a vacuum. They are influenced as concretely as through the built environment and the physical accessibility of the places in which different groups rub shoulders; they are also influenced more invisibly, by discourses that inform our understanding of interaction and social relations

themselves. In the case of the night markets, the spaces are physically embedded in two very different landscapes. The Chinatown Night Market lies at a physical and discursive crossroads of a bitter debate about urban development in an area with rapidly shifting demographics. The Summer Night Market in Richmond represents an act of reclaiming an old industrial section of the suburbs by immigrant groups that come from countries with different temporal and spatial sensibilities. I will summarize the three arguments made here:

9.1.1 Anderson Redux

I began my analysis (Chapter 6), by returning to *Vancouver's Chinatown* (1991), and applying Anderson's post-structural framework to the night market phenomenon on the eve of the work's twenty-fifth anniversary. Anderson argued that Chinatown was a Western construction, the material manifestation of white Canada's racialization of the Chinese. Twenty-five years later, which elements of Anderson's argument remain in the night markets? And what are the differences?

This research finds remarkably continuous strategies of "purposeful Orientalism" at work in the night markets that certainly play to Western ideas about what Chinese culture and what it should be. The night market can be read as an Oriental streetscape that packages and sells a contrived version of Chinese culture to a Western audience. The market promotes the consumption of just-exotic-enough cultural difference. Surrounded by icons of "legible" Chinatown, the market contributes to Chinatown's aesthetic character through its red tent tops and neon signs, while flattening sub-cultural differences. The exotic nature of the market is played up by the VCMA itself, in local and national media coverage, and in tourist guidebooks such as Frommer's. Many of the

vendors cater to white consumers looking for a taste of China, and particularly, to tourists in search of souvenirs. The market is assembled purposefully to generate a particular “ethnic” sensory landscape that caters to Western expectations of Chinese culture.

Along these lines, Orientalist discourses about Chinatown persist among some consumers, particularly around perceptions of unsafe barbecued meats and the trustworthiness of vendors selling cheap and potentially unsafe toys. Participants’ descriptions of the lack of “real” or “authentic” Chinese culture put forth by the market also indicate similar discursive lines. “Real” Chinese culture is “traditional,” while the light industry pop-culture goods sold in the night market, although most come from China, are not considered “authentically” Chinese. What’s more, some vendors feel trapped within a dying tourist-trap market because of their marginalized position in Vancouver’s labour market, stemming from low English-language ability. This language barrier creates a one-sided situation where Western market-goers can consume but not engage. All the while, the night market is being co-opted by a wave of gentrification in Chinatown symbolized by businesses that play up the neighbourhood’s “dark and exotic” character. Against the background of the night market, the white middle-class chooses from a martini list inspired by Chinatown’s old potion mixers.

But, at the same time, it seems almost absurd to say that the Chinatown Night Market is constructed by and for the West, as an instrument of white hegemony. For one, the white consumers, who for all intents and purposes would be labeled as seekers of cultural enrichment, continue to attend the night market even though they do not find the food or “culture” particularly stimulating. In fact (as I show in Chapter 8), they find it mundane. This line of analysis also does not take us far enough because it leads us to

discount the ways in which the night market itself challenges the iconography of Chinatown as a Western landscape type. The CNM was developed out of the VCMA's struggle to make itself attractive to new waves of Chinese immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong. It was a project intended to distance the neighbourhood from a landscape of purposeful Chinese heritage branding, and replacing it, however superficially, with the iconography of modern Asia. The cultural form of the night market is most associated with the urban landscapes of Hong Kong and Taiwan, and to a lesser (and more recent) extent, Guangzhou. The CNM was as much of a gesture to the global Chinese diaspora than a depiction of local Western notions about the Chinese as a racial category in the context of Canadian multiculturalism. The night market was an attempt to re-brand Chinatown from within, as something modern and global.

Moreover, contemporary Vancouver social planners, many of whom are Chinese-Canadians, are acutely aware of the processes of racialization operating in Chinatown. Urban planning has become much more inclusive since the days when Anderson conducted her analysis of Chinatown. The consultation process for new urban planning programs and initiatives is, today, a far cry from the imposed iconography of Chinatown's past.

The vendors in the Chinatown Night Market also cannot be seen as passive recipients or supporters of a Western notion of Chinese culture. This analysis reveals that while it is true that some feel constrained within this marketplace, most have complex reasons for participating, including dumping overstock. The targeting of white consumers based on a set of assumptions about them, including that they wear over-sized clothing, or are more willing to spend money, ensures that cultural production and consumption is

about much more than whites seeking personal enrichment through the consumption of ethnicity. Vendors and consumers share in knowledge and mis-knowledge

A better way of conceptualizing the Chinatown Night Market emerges from this comparison: the night market lies at the heart of contested space in downtown Vancouver. It is one part tourist and four parts community: Chinatown's low-income elderly Chinese residents, Strathcona families, condo dwellers, and young middle-class consumers. It is thus a crossroads for the groups currently contesting the Downtown Eastside, along with a crossroads where a modern transnational cultural form meets "traditional" expectations of old Chinatown as a Western landscape type.

Looking at the Richmond, the Summer Night Market is similarly carefully fabricated. As in Chinatown, there are strict regulations on the cultural content of the market. The organizers capitalize on the notion that it is more "authentic" than the Chinatown Night Market. Such a representation directly plays into the perception of "new" areas of Chinese settlement that involve more "effortless" portrayals of culture, and are more organic in their ability to provide a "taste of Asia." Media coverage of the event participates in the discourse of "old" and "new" Chinatown, favouring the latter as more authentic.

The Richmond case, however, brings to light the extent of the transformation of Vancouver's suburbs in the last twenty years. The Summer Night Market in Richmond provides a rich example of the ways in which a suburban nighttime landscape is being redrawn through the processes of migration, integration, and belonging. A remarkable "multicultural drift" has taken place, evident in the changing social geography, and in suburban architecture. As such, this suburb has come to be imagined as "Asia" within

Metro Vancouver and sites of consumption have changed to reflect its changing population. One aspect of diaspora culture, however, has found itself seriously mismatched with the realities of life in the suburbs. The Chinese culture of the “late day,” and 24/7 city cultures of Asian metropolises starkly contrast with the quiet Richmond landscape after 6pm. This necessary temporal adjustment has been overlooked in contemporary discourses of integration and belonging.

The night market, a cultural form that has been a significant part of nightlife in Asian cities, was recreated in Richmond to serve its Chinese population. The market caters to the nostalgia of this group and serves as a venue for the expression of cultural identity. Authenticity is mobilized by the organizers, as well as market-goers, to assert expertise and ownership of the cultural form of the night market.

As such, the market has become a space where migrant identities are negotiated, through explorations of cultural authenticity and nostalgia, particularly for young Chinese-Canadians who were born in Canada or immigrated at an early age. The market provides a way for parents to expose their children to a particular version of public nighttime culture that is lacking in the suburbs. This after-dark event also provides the context for the claiming of cultural authenticity among young people through language ability in Mandarin and Cantonese, and their knowledge of pop cultural commodities, food, fashion, and music.

This ethnography of the night market reveals how time and space are interwoven into perceptions and experiences of authenticity. I see the Richmond night market as a project in inventing suburban authenticity through a particular interpretation of sociability. This interpretation relies on the mobilization of culture, time, and spatial experience in

the suburban landscape. The Richmond market makes possible a cultural use of nighttime space – for strolling and meeting at night – in a suburban landscape quiet after 6pm. Rather than expressing local history over the longue *durée*, the Richmond market is an exercise in “big bang” authenticity – recreating a trans-local cultural form at the same time as the changing the social organization of the suburbs.

9.1.2 Multicultural Engineering

In Chapter 7, I examine the relationship of the night markets to the institutional setting of multiculturalism. Yu (2004) argues that the night market, as a cultural form, takes on the institutional characteristics of the host society, as it follows the Chinese diaspora. In the case of Vancouver, the Chinatown Night Market and Richmond Summer Night Market both operate within Canadian federal multiculturalism policy and discourse, as well as implementations and negotiations at the municipal scale. Chapter 7 thus emphasizes the multi-scalar influences of multiculturalism. It also highlights two competing normative visions of diversity management at the municipal scale in Canada. The first model relies on the metaphor of the mosaic, and sees the multicultural city as a patchwork of ethnic groups. A city is multicultural by the sum of its “montage” (Hackworth and Rekers 2005) of ethnic neighbourhoods – its Little Italy, Little Portugal, Greektown, or Chinatown – regardless of the internal heterogeneity of these neighborhoods. The public events prescribed by this model include mono-cultural festivals celebrating the culture of one group at a time.

The second model emphasizes micro-scale diversity. The individual him or herself is diverse, representing a unique assemblage of the “super-diversity” (Vertovec 2007) variables. By this token, an event is multicultural only insofar as it represents

multiple cultures and invites the participation and mingling of a diverse audience. Applying this framework to the night markets reveals the tensions created by a gradual shifting policy emphasis, from mosaic to micro-scale diversity in Metro Vancouver.

As I show, both models are evident in the planning of these spaces. The VCMA uses the language of the old model of multicultural urbanity, marketing the event as an experience of *one* of many pieces of Vancouver's mosaic. The activities of City planners, however, reflect the shifting scale of diversity management discourse. The public realm has been the key area used to implement multiculturalism in Chinatown, through various built environment or beautification projects that can be summed up as "purposeful Orientalism." In other words, Chinatown's importance as a heritage district was embedded in the built environment through heritage streetlamps and neon signs. The City of Vancouver is now attempting to use the public realm to change the type and composition of businesses in Chinatown, to encourage the replacement of knick-knack shops with a more "eclectic" and "diverse" retail environment. The best example of this push is the City's support of the Boa Bei Brasserie's marquis, a space which has become emblematic of the type of young, creative retail landscape the City would like to see takehold in Chinatown. At the same time, City planners also grapple with the need to stay true to Chinatown's legacy as a historic area. Businesses like Bao Bei represent the current compromise between these two models, its young Chinese-Canadian owner plays on Chinese nostalgia for Chinese-Canadians while catering to hip young professionals of various ethnic origins. This policy landscape places the Chinatown Night Market at both a physical and ideological crossroads.

In Richmond, the night market became an institution in the community, by serving the needs of a diaspora population, in providing a safe, pedestrian-friendly, place for strolling, eating with family, or meeting friends. The organizers of the Summer Night Market, however, were faced with a crisis of authenticity when the City of Richmond withheld the market permit on the condition that all counterfeit merchandise be removed. This institutional pressure also coincided with a desire, on the part of the entrepreneurs, to expand their market outside of the ethnic enclave audience, as well as the interests of the City's Intercultural Policy to encourage cross-cultural engagement. The City's conception of the market as a "breeding ground" for multiculturalism demonstrates the shifting scale of diversity management discourse, towards bottom-up cross-cultural interaction. The production of this image of diversity requires heavy surveillance and control. The organizers rely on various mechanisms (including policing, and food and safety checks) to ensure that the cultural content of the market supports its new image as the "most diverse night market in Canada."

Resulting from the shift from enclave to multicultural market is a changed notion of authenticity. There is discordance between the Richmond Night Market's former brand as the more "authentic" Asian night market in Metro Vancouver, and the Summer Night Market's current focus on multicultural diversity. Of particular significance, is how enclave users of the market negotiate these changes: they now interpret the event as "distinctly Richmond." This finding reinforces Jackson et al.'s (2007) claim that the "appropriation" of the event is more important than its trueness to authentic form. The market is best conceptualized through its multiple layers of authenticity, derived from not only the branding project, but also the suburb's expanding ethno-cultural diversity.

The concept of the authentic has taken a much more ambiguous form following the renegotiation of the market's lease and its reorientation as a "multicultural" space. A new night market form has been born out of the intersection of municipal and entrepreneurial interests. These interests have coincided with two complementary critiques of the night market in its former form, namely, that the ethnic enclave model limits entrepreneurial profitability while at the same time promoting an out of fashion model of multiculturalism at the city level which sees multiculturalism deriving from a patchwork of culturally homogeneous and separate neighborhoods. The new project of the market has been to brand itself as authentic to this Chinese heritage, which is both local and transnational, and at the same time reflects the multicultural diversity of Richmond. Despite this shift away from an enclave market, the "ethnic" experience has persisted for its "diaspora" users. The extent to which the market is an authentic representation of an Asian night market has become less important than the context of its use. Thus, multiple layers of authenticity can be mobilized at any one time. What began as a project in reproducing the experiences of diasporic "origins" has come to express the pathways of cultural diversity in Richmond.

9.1.3 Red Hot Sociability

In Chapter 8, I focused more specifically on whether marketplaces have the potential to serve as spaces of inclusive public life. I conceive of interaction as a spectrum, ranging from wider exclusion to meaningful engagement. On the one hand, there is evidence of verbal interaction, especially amongst vendors. The vendors described high levels of camaraderie in the marketplace, finding common ground in complaints about the management, weather, or decline in tourists. Vendor motivations for

participating in the market demonstrate the ways in which the social intervenes in the consumption process. For some, retirees in particular, interaction itself is the goal of participation, rather than profit. In Richmond, verbal relationships were more likely to occur across ethnic lines, and were often driven by the need to reach across cultural barriers in order to reach a diversifying consumer base. Importantly, in Chinatown, interaction amongst vendors occurs across linguistic (i.e. Mandarin – Cantonese) or sub-cultural (Hong Kong – Mainland China) lines. Furthermore, many of the vendors described developing habitual relations with customers who visited their stalls on a regular basis. Market-goers and vendors also verbally interact through bargaining and, of course, through the exchange process itself.

On the other hand, there is also evidence of a complete absence of interaction. For example, low-income, homeless or under-housed residents of the downtown Eastside are actively excluded from the Chinatown Night Market by security guards hired mainly for this purpose. Similar policing occurs in Richmond. Both markets are subject to high levels of spatial regulation, and the abrupt curtailment of any behavior that deters from consumption. There is also some evidence in Chinatown that vendors are excluded from the mainstream labor economy because of their language ability in English.

On the whole, however, the behaviour falling into either one of these two poles only accounts for small pieces of the sum total of the market experience. There is a great deal happening between these two poles. In fact, interviews with vendors and consumers as well as observation in the markets reveal that most of what is happening falls somewhere in the middle.

First, although there is some evidence that purposeful Orientalism encourages cosmopolitan consumption of the ethnic Other, most non-Chinese consumers do not see the night markets as exotic. In fact, most people, especially in Chinatown, frame the market in relatively mundane terms, expressing a high degree of familiarity with its assemblage of food, music, goods, and people. A surprising finding was that many participants question cultural consumption or exchange as a goal at all. That the market is “ethnic” is often not what makes it attractive to consumers. Many market-goers, including Chinese-Canadians of both first and second-generation, are simply there to participate in some element of Vancouver’s outdoor summertime nightlife. Although people have different ideas about leisure – walking one’s dog in a safe and well-lit environment, watching Chinese opera, strolling through a crowd, people watching, being in a diverse place, or eating convenient and inexpensive fast-food – they all share the space. Thus, the night markets both express and contribute to the regularization and normalization of inter-ethnic encounters in everyday spaces in Metro Vancouver.

Also in between these poles of interaction/non-interaction lie more internal or invisible negotiations of conceptions of authenticity, culture, and diversity. The night markets serve as spaces where these concepts are worked out. This occurs most obviously among young Chinese-Canadian diaspora users, but is also evident among non-Chinese market-goers of various ethnic backgrounds. This ethnography also shows a need to revisit theories about consumption and the Other in super-diverse societies. We can no longer think of Chinatown as a Chinese space consumed by whites. The same applies to other areas of immigrant settlement, including Richmond. The consumption of culture is happening outside of the two-way street (white – non-white, Canadian – immigrant,

Chinese – white). The interviews with market-goers and vendors paint a complex picture of multiple streets, sometimes parallel, sometimes intersecting. Filipina teens, Chinese elders, Korean international students, Iranian parents, white Gen-Y'ers, or more hybrid identity groups exhibit a range of experiences, have different reasons for participating, and have different encounters with difference. Some groups, like second generation Chinese-Canadians, are more able to cross-between the overlapping system of social worlds present in (and around) the marketplace.

9.2 Markets, Diversity, Consumption, and Encounter – A Synthesis of the Literature

This thesis merges three areas of literature: pluralism and the public realm, Chinatown and the socio-spatialization of race, and markets and diversity. In Chapters 2 – 4, I considered each of these themes, highlighting the gaps in each area. I will now synthesize these three areas.

What is the effect of pluralism in the public realm? Or, in other words, what happens when difference is encountered in everyday spaces? As shown in Chapter 2, there have been a number of ways of answering this question. In the policy world, the contact hypothesis has gained increasing purchase in the last decade following calls that immigrants and minorities are leading “parallel lives.” Policymakers are increasingly adopting the mantra that ‘the more we live together, the happier we’ll be’. This shift has occurred particularly acutely in the face of waning European support for multiculturalism, seen as encouraging cultural silos. Such a line of thinking also represents the policy extension of sixty years of research on the contact hypothesis (Allport 1954), which holds that inter-group interaction reduces prejudice. First applied to explain varying levels of

white opposition to desegregation in the U.S. south, over the last twenty years the hypothesis has been applied with increasing fervor to explain public attitudes towards other minorities, immigrants, and asylum seekers. Contact between the host society and immigrant, or between white and minority, is increasingly seen as a “fix all” for problems of immigrant integration.

Of course, as countless social psychologists and sociologists have noted in the vast literature on conflict theory, contact with the Other also correlates with increasing levels of prejudice. The conundrum is that rather convincing statistical evidence exists on both sides of the debate, with each side discounting the evidence of the other. Moreover, this literature also tends to ignore scholarship outside of the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and political science.

Stepping back from this debate, it is clear to most observers that contact with the Other may sometimes lead to more positive attitudes, and may sometimes lead to more negative attitudes. The literature is contradictory because the relationship itself is contradictory. To be fair, this observation has led to a large number of researchers intent on fleshing out the contributing factors (i.e. age, education-level, pre-existing friendships with minorities, and their various mediating and interaction effects). What is missed, however, as Valentine (2008) highlights, is a consideration of the role of space. How should we conceptualize ‘living with difference’ in everyday spaces?

Social relations are inherently contextual. They are influenced by a range of processes specific to place – history, the built environment, the economy, landscape, iconography, as well as cognitive race categories and normative codes of behaviour. All

are steeped with power relations. Some places will be more fruitful than others for meaningful intercultural encounter.

The literature on “geographies of encounter” has tended to privilege public space, on one end of the spectrum, as encouraging meaningful or emancipatory social interaction, while discounting commodified space in terms of social relations. The former, so it goes, allows free interaction between people, agonistic democracy, and the exercise of the right to the city, while the latter is highly contrived, under surveillance, and tolerate sociability only as a means to an end – consumption. Although a number of scholars have fruitfully pointed out the exceptions (i.e. public spaces are most often regulated and private, commodified spaces are often used as public), there has not been much written on marketplaces, which occupy a distinct grey area between these two poles. This research shows that we stand to gain much by examining this grey area.

Marketplaces are associated with myths of sociability that date back hundreds if not thousands of years. Throughout history, marketplaces – from the agora, to the souk, to medieval folk fairs – have always served as sites of exchange both in the material sense as well as the social and cultural. Marketplaces have a long and relatively entrenched history in most non-North American societies. In Europe, marketplaces continue to be hubs of activity. Thus, people have different expectations when going to the market than when going to, say, the public library. This association differs from malls that are often designed to give an illusion of sociability. Interaction is more compulsory in the market than in many public spaces, such as parks, or city streets, for example. As my research shows, habitual relationships develop among vendors in the night market and as well as between vendors and consumers.

Night markets add another layer of complexity because they carry notions of “red hot sociability.” As Yu (2004) explains, a night market’s quality depends on its social warmth and compactness of the crowd. The night market is as much about producing interaction as it is about consumption. With respect to marketplace design, it is clear that certain spaces invite more sociability than others. Carnival-like elements and shared seating areas often provide the most fodder for bridging cultural and social divides.

Markets also differ from other spaces of consumption, like the mall or the supermarket by giving people power to shape the rules and conditions of the act of consuming. The possibility of bargaining – changing the terms of sale – creates an interactive environment. Vendors and consumers meet on more equal footing. They thus have the potential to become locally representative spaces of consumption. Furthermore (as seen in Chapter, 8), markets provide low-risk opportunities for entrepreneurs of various backgrounds and generations, including recent immigrants, students, and retirees. Their participation is not dictated by stringent retail agreements. Heterogeneity is encouraged by this fluidity.

The Richmond night market demonstrates that marketplaces can be used to reclaim private spaces for public use. Since markets are often temporary or seasonal, they can also occupy other types of spaces that are unused at certain times of the year, including sports arenas, streets, parks, warehouses, and parking lots. Vancouver’s farmer’s market, for example, is held in Nat Bailey Stadium (which hosts the city’s minor league baseball team) during the winter months. The success of these strategies hinges on the cooperation of area businesses and creative arrangements concerning parking and transportation. In the case of Richmond, the arrangement is temporal – the market

occupies a space that is deserted at night, and special arrangements have been made with neighboring strip malls allowing patrons to park in those lots after those businesses shut down. Markets thus have a role to play in creating new rhythms of public life by expanding the life of the suburbs into the evening hours. In recent years, there have been similar developments in Toronto's suburbs. In Markham, for example, the "Night it up" night market has experienced a similar struggle for public space. Like the Richmond night market, "Night it up" has been shuffled from parking lot to parking lot. Of crucial importance are municipal bylaws, which often do not allow running water and electricity to be routed through parking lots or sidewalks.

While the night markets are clearly social spaces, their ability to serve as political spaces *is* limited. Behaviour is tightly controlled in order to encourage consumption. It is difficult, for example, to imagine an "occupy the market" movement taking shape in either the Chinatown Night Market or the Richmond Summer Night Market. To return to Springer (2011), the entrance criteria in these spaces may not be challengeable, particularly when it comes to the Chinatown Night Market's relationship to the Downtown Eastside. At the same time, an outright dismissal is not nuanced enough. In a sense, the Chinatown Night Market encompasses a political struggle concerning what Chinatown is, and who gets to decide, which raises the following questions of structure and agency.

A major theme of the literature on the geography of encounter, Chinatown, and markets and diversity, is that consumption and culture have a problematic relationship. This assumption implies that marketplaces serve as a place where culture and ethnicity is sold for those seeking to consume the Other or boost individual cultural capital. For

hundreds of years, the Orient has held fascination for the West: From Orientalism paintings of Turkish harems, or carpet sales in the markets of the Middle East, to Kipling's description of the 'cursed Chinese.' In a more contemporary sense, cultural marketplaces are bound up in ideas of real and fake, authenticity, and representation. It is clear that there is some potentially sinister baggage attached to an Asian-themed marketplace.

Consideration of the literature on Chinatown and the socio-spatialization of race takes us one step further. Anderson (1991) argued that Chinatown is the spatial manifestation of white hegemony, an idea created by and for the West. Since then, a constructionist approach has reigned in analyses of Chinatown, although considerable efforts have been made to incorporate multiple voices within Chinatown and to reinsert agency. A revisiting of Anderson's Vancouver's Chinatown twenty-five years later begs the question of whether the night market phenomenon has a separate meaning for white Vancouver? How much does consumption in the night market reflect the centuries of racial classification of the Chinese in Canada that Anderson describes? Perhaps these sites provide places where Oriental classifications hang on.

But, it is not enough to simply acknowledge that there are "different centres of cultural authority" (Anderson 1996:208). To say that the Chinatown Night market is at the heart of contested space in downtown Vancouver is also to say that it embodies the dialectical struggle between structure and agency; between Chinatown as a Western construction of purposeful Orientalism and Chinatown as a reflection of dynamics internal to the neighbourhood. The night market reflects both, as Bourdieu (1970:72) puts it, the "internalization of the external" and the "externalizing of the internal." In other

words, the market is simultaneously about the VCMA's co-optation into purposeful Orientalism and an attempt to challenge this construction of the Chinese as a social category by introducing a modern Asian landscape feature. The project of the night market also simultaneously supports and impedes the City of Vancouver's revitalization program. Vendors are both constrained and empowered by cognitive associations of Chinatown and Chinese culture. Structure and agency meet where this cultural form is juxtaposed against traditional expectations of old Chinatown.

Anderson did not leave much room for change. Since 1987, Chinatown's demographics have changed enormously. So too have the settlement patterns of Chinese immigrants, which have become more suburban. At the same time, the suburbs have become more diverse. Urban planning has also grown more inclusive of the multiple voices in the urban fabric and cultural planning has shifted away from mono-cultural spaces, towards multicultural ones. Public tastes have shifted to reflect these changes. These changes are all evident in the night markets. Yeoh and Kong (1994:33) remind us that landscapes are socially constructed through their everyday use. Many different groups use these spaces for reasons that have little to do with Western notions about the Chinese as exotic, or a desire to consume the Oriental Other. Metro Vancouver's increasing ethno-cultural diversity has gradually tugged at the edges of Anderson's argument.

Finally, this research also seeks to unsettle dialectical constructions of old and new Chinatown. Mitchell (1998) refutes any linear transition from traditional to modern, arguing that rather, the traditional and modern always work in juxtaposition, appearing in different generations, and serving different interests at different times. The night markets

show that there is no linear transition from old to new, or from enclave to ethnoburb. These distinctions are not as abrupt as the literature would have us believe. Ultimately, the night markets embody shifting cognitive notions of what Chinatown was, is, and should be in the future.

9.3 Continuing Questions and Areas of Future Research

This thesis raises pertinent questions for future research. What is Chinatown if the Chinese no longer live there? Can ethnic enclaves and ethnic communities continue to espouse mono-cultural designations in a policy context that demands that everyone, down to the level of the individual, be diverse? The growing popularity of markets in North America, and night markets specifically, is not unique to Vancouver. In many U.S. and Canadian cities, city governments and entrepreneurs are using the myth of sociability attached to such events for profit or as tools for transforming neighbourhoods. How can the gentrifying aspects of marketplaces be balanced by their potential to support inclusive publics?

There are a number of clear opportunities for direct and indirect comparisons between Vancouver's night markets and other night markets in North America. The most obvious addition to the research would be to expand the analysis to include the third suburban night market. The Richmond Night Market re-launched in the summer of 2012, this time adjacent to the River Rock Casino and the Canada Line Skytrain Station. The simultaneous operation of two night markets in Richmond will likely have introduced significant competition as well as a put a strain on profitability. The Richmond Night Market (the original market in operation in Richmond) catered to the ethnic enclave market-goers: primarily, Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong. The RNM sought to

transplant the urban markets of home into the new suburban environment. The Summer Night Market, however, for reasons discussed in Chapter 7, was re-branded by the administrators as a multicultural market. In doing so, they attempted to steer the event away from its previous reputation as a haven for counterfeit, and to expand the ethno-cultural diversity of the consumers and vendors. An interesting question thus concerns whether the original organizers of the RNM will pick up where they left off, or like the Summer Night Market, choose to develop the market into a more crosscutting event?

Along these lines, another point of comparison would be between San Gabriel Valley's 626 Night Market, in suburban Los Angeles, and the Richmond market. That a night market is gaining popularity in the San Gabriel Valley is no coincidence. A comparison between the Richmond market and the 626 Night Market would provide a way to consider the effect of different institutional policy contexts and political opportunity structures in the U.S and Canada.

Further, despite their relatively recent history in North America, marketplaces are quickly becoming part of the set of "best practices" in North American place design. This trend is indicated by the New York non-profit Project for Public Space's (PPS) description of Granville Island Public Market as a model for public space design. According to PPS, Granville Island shows that "great places can be created almost anywhere under any conditions with minimal expense." The trend is also evident in the string of festival marketplaces across Canada, from Toronto's St. Lawrence, to Ottawa's Byward, Montreal's Jean Talon, and Halifax's Seaport markets. As the *Atlantic Cities* magazine recently notes, farmers' markets have become the proverbial "number 1 seeds" of the "sidewalk ballet" paradigm of urban design (along with food trucks, pop-up parks,

pedestrian streets, repurposed malls, and adventure playgrounds) (Grabar, *The Atlantic Cities*, 21 March 2013).

Increasingly, diversity promotion and immigrant integration are becoming part of the rationale for this marketplace as ‘good urban design’ ideology. Such a conjuncture is evident in Syracuse, New York’s recent “World Market Square” proposal to revitalize the city’s Northside, a traditionally low-income, immigrant reception neighbourhood. The City’s Mayor, Stephanie Miner, submitted the proposal to the Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors Challenge competition, which invites City Halls across the U.S. to submit their best “local solutions to national problems.” The market proposal, in one fell swoop, targets immigrant economic and social integration, neighbourhood revitalization, and city branding. According to Miner,

World Market Square will transform a vacant intersection into a hub of opportunity for Northside residents and a unique cultural destination for the broader Syracuse community...The Square’s anchor will be The Marketplace – a large indoor commercial space, featuring local products with a global influence, which will employ residents and leverage their native skills and creativity (Miner, *The Huffington Post*, 20 February 2013).

As Miner notes, the project would allow Syracuse to “establish an identity as an urban city” and could serve as a blueprint for other cities. Named a Top 20 Finalist, the status of the project is uncertain following its loss to “Providence Talks,” a Rhode Island children’s literacy program, and Houston, Texas’s “one bin for all” recycling program.

These North American developments speak to the extent to which trends develop in urban design and how quickly they are diffused. In the next ten years, it is likely that cities and suburbs with large Asian populations (and even those without) will develop night markets. Already, night markets have entered into the planners’ toolkits because of

their ability to transform the *temporal* uses of certain spaces. An additional path of research would be to follow the night market phenomenon as it develops in U.S. inner cities, where the cultural form is now being used as a revitalization strategy. In the last two years, cities like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have tried to harness “Asian” modes of urban spatial and temporal organization in order to challenge the stigma attached to the inner city at night. Night markets are seen as tools to transform downtown dead spaces as part of revitalization schemes. Pittsburgh’s Pop-up “night market” project is sponsored directly by the City as part of its redevelopment strategy in the downtown core. According to the City’s revitalization strategy:

The Night Market will transform a Downtown parking lot into a market place, providing an opportunity for creative entrepreneurs to showcase their talents in Downtown, all the while providing a new experience into the evening for Downtown patrons. We are encouraging people to rethink public space, by temporarily creating an attraction in what is typically a pretty mundane amenity, a parking lot. (Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership 2012)

This comparison would also involve the juxtaposition between Canadian and downtown urban cultural development strategies. As I showed in Chapter 7, the CNM has been both aided and constrained by the context of multicultural municipal planning. In particular, the legacy of multiculturalism weighs it down with the baggage of purposeful Orientalism. At the same time, planning has become more concerned with planning for multiple publics. The institutional context is very different in Pittsburgh, where there is no state ideology of multiculturalism. The urban context – an inner-city rust belt is also vastly different. Inner cities in the U.S. suffer from territorial stigmatization that is very different from the myths and meanings of Canadian downtown cores. What does it mean when a temporal and Asian spatial sense is being harnessed by cities in the U.S., where

inner city images have been dominated by images of advanced black marginality, and hyper-ghettoes (i.e., Wacquant 2007; 2008)?

Another area of further research surrounds the themes of youth and gentrification in Chinatown. As discussed in Chapter 7, one of the major goals of the Chinatown Revitalization Program has been to attract young people to the neighbourhood. The most recent Census data indicate the neighborhood's shifting age structure, revealing a 3.5% increase in the percentage of residents aged 20 – 34, from 2006 to 2011.

Tannis Ling, the owner of the Bao Bei Brasserie, is the poster-child for the City's Chinatown Revitalization Program. Ling is young, hip, well traveled, and Chinese-Canadian. She holds a certain amount of nostalgia for Chinatown, where her mother used to shop for groceries on the weekends before it became easier to go to Richmond's T&T supermarket. She speaks the language of authenticity, drawing on Chinatown's history to create something new and hip that speaks to her generation. In an interview conducted by *This Space* in 2011, Ling explains her reasons for returning to Chinatown:

I had this dream for a long time that I would open a Chinese restaurant that I would want to hang out in, that had good drinks and wine, and friends. Chinatown seemed to be quite distinct and genuine and authentic, and it seemed to be missing a really good Chinese restaurant for some reason.

I came here quite a bit when I was young, but you know, then all the Chinese people started to move out to Richmond and then all the T & Ts and large supermarkets just made things a lot easier in terms of parking, so we stopped coming and didn't come here for a long time until I moved back from London and rediscovered the area. It seemed like no man's land. But now...it seems like there are lots of cool and interesting shops opening up, so I'm really excited and happy about it. It seems like we're heading in the right direction, the perfect combination of the new generation and the Chinese culture... I think it would be cool if the neighbourhood expanded in that kind of direction, bookstores, shoe-stores, designer shops, as well as bars and restaurants, a nice combination of everything.

In other words, as this quote illustrates, Ling espouses everything the anti-gentrification movement works against. The conflict is summed up by a satirical flyer circulated at the 2012 Downtown Eastside Women's Housing March informing patrons "what to expect if patronizing this business." The flyer consists of a mock menu intended as a challenge to up-scale establishments like Bao Bei, Bitter, and Wild Rice. On this menu, the "marinated pork with lychees" is "served in the *shadow of condo towers*, "while the Spicy beef fillet" comes with sides of "roast potatoes, *increased policing*, and wild chanterelle mushrooms" (Wood, 2012, original emphasis).

Ling is operating within a particular political, economic, and cultural opportunity structure created by the revitalization scheme, including the 2010 approval of the up-zoning policy, and a shift in emphasis towards diversity at the micro-scale. *Flare* magazine lauds Ling as "taking on, oh, just the reinvigoration of an entire neighbourhood, starting with the Chinatown Night Market" (20 April 2013). Since January 2013, Ling and a new team of organizers have formed the VCMA's Chinatown Night Market Committee. The CNM's newly launched blog promises an "all new night market," featuring arty filtered portraits of a new class of conspicuously hip, young, white, creative vendors. These changes are indicative of the broader wave of change throughout the neighbourhood, as grocers and knick-knack shops are replaced by businesses that cater to middle-class, young professionals: boutique clothing stores, local food bistros, and coffee shops. A series of new developments, like Bao Bei, mix cosmopolitan chic with nostalgic Chinatown. Café Brixton, at the corner of E. Georgia Street and Main Street, for example, references London's Brixton district, replicating this aesthetic while offering patrons Sake Sangria (albeit, with a shot of something called "soho lychee liquor"). Sean

Heather, owner of Heather Hospitality Group (responsible for a series of Irish-themed Gastown pubs including Irish Heather Gastropub, Salty Tongue, Shebeen Whiskey House, Salt Tasting Room, and Bitter) continues his march into Chinatown with the “Everything Café,” located on E. Pender Street at Carrall Street. A German beer and “currywurst” sausage shop is scheduled to open down the street. Meanwhile, the 10-storey condominium tower slated to open in 2013 at 189 Keefer Street invites potential buyers to “move or invest in Vancouver’s next up and coming neighbourhood – Historic Chinatown. Vibrant, walkable neighbourhood – rich in culture and history – an emergence of new retail shops and dining establishments.” The list goes on, raising important questions about Chinatown’s future. This thesis could only touch on the issue of gentrification in Chinatown. Are Chinese-Canadian young people, who grew up outside of Chinatown, moving into Chinatown as gentrifiers? Such a study would put *Vancouver’s Chinatown* in conversation with Wendy Shaw’s (2011) work on whiteness and gentrification.

9.4 Concluding Thoughts

The conditions in which marketplaces can support diverse publics are crucially important given the growing popularity of marketplaces in cities and suburbs in North America. This research demonstrates the role that marketplaces can play, not only in bringing diverse communities of people together on common ground, but also in the social and economic inclusion of immigrant groups, many of whom come from cultures where marketplaces are deeply engrained as features of social and economic life. At the same time, this research emphasizes the potential pitfalls of such spaces, which can easily end up excluding the very communities they were originally intended to serve.

Markets clearly have a role to play in creating new rhythms of public life. In the suburb of Richmond, the market has been used to reclaim a private space for public use. An otherwise empty parking lot in an old industrial area is seasonally transformed into a community institution. This space allows immigrants groups that come from cultures that have night markets to exercise a particular conception of public (and pedestrian) leisure culture at night, in a suburban landscape that is quiet after 6pm. It also provides low-risk opportunities for entrepreneurs of various backgrounds and generations, including recent immigrants, students, and retirees because participation is not dictated by stringent retail agreements. The case of the Richmond Summer Night Market demonstrates the importance of community-driven cultural events at the same as they encompass a global cultural form. Like the Chinatown market, the Summer Night Market is an imported, global, cultural-spatial form, filtered through multiculturalism policy at different scales in Canada.

In Vancouver's Chinatown, the night market is held in a highly contested area of the downtown. It is physically at the crossroads of some of Canada's wealthiest postal codes and its absolute poorest; caught in a battle between advocates for the low-income, homeless, and precariously housed in the area, long-time Chinese immigrant residents (many of whom are elderly), and encroaching condominium developers. The market has served as a safe nighttime gathering place for the area's Chinese community. Increasingly, however, it provides a picturesque backdrop for new high-end restaurants and bars in the area. These developments have unfortunately occurred at the expense of low-income Chinese residents of the neighbourhood. This exclusion will only become more acute as plans progress to gentrify the night market. The elephant in the room is that the night

market's reputation stands to be damaged by the unsettling presence of the low-income, homeless, or under-housed. This dilemma raises serious questions about the reconcilability of a socially just, inclusive night market in contested downtown public space. The case of the Chinatown Night Market has relevance for the planning of any marketplace with a cultural brand or cultural heritage dimension. There is a fine line between planning Chinatown as a heritage site, neighbourhood revitalization, and planning a space that supports multiple publics.

Ultimately, these markets lie at the intersection of several types of profound change. They reflect a shifting socio-economic and ethno-cultural landscape. They also reflect the changing nature of culture, sociability, and temporality across the city and suburbs. The story of the night markets is one of constant, dynamic negotiation of authenticity in an age (and place) of ongoing migration and super-diversity, through changing and multiple perspectives.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Table of Interviewees

Market	Interview type	Connection with market	Place of residence	Gender	Ethnic origin	Age	Immigration status	Language of interview
Chinatown	Vendors (14 Total)	5 Food 9 Dry Goods 10 Owner 2 Part/co-owner 2 Employee	9 Vancouver 2 Burnaby 1 Chinatown 1 Surrey 1 Coquitlam	10 Female 4 Male	14 Chinese	0 Twenties 4 Thirties 5 Forties 5 Fifties 0 Sixties	8 Immig./PR 6 Immig./Cit.	7 Mandarin 5 Cantonese 2 English
	Consumers (22 Total)	/	6 Vancouver (E.) 3 Vancouver (W.) 2 Chinatown 2 Strathcona 2 Surrey 2 Yaletown 1 White Rock 2 Scotland 1 Israel	12 Female 10 Male	9 Caucasian 6 Chinese 2 Taiwanese 3 Filipino 1 Jewish 1 Iranian	3 Teens 6 Twenties 5 Thirties 4 Forties 2 Fifties 2 Sixties	8 Immig. 6 Long 5 G2 3 Intl Tourist	18 English 2 Cantonese 2 Mandarin
Richmond	Vendors (16 Total)	4 Food 11 Dry Goods 1 Performer 6 Owner 3 Part/co-owner 6 Employee 1 Volunteer	8 Richmond 4 Vancouver 3 Burnaby 1 Port-Coquitlam	8 Male 8 Female	7 Chinese 3 Caucasian 2 Ecuadorian 2 Korean 1 Indian 1 Taiwanese	5 Twenties 5 Thirties 4 Forties 1 Fifties 1 Sixties	11 Imm. 3 Long 2 Int. Stud. 0 G2	12 English 2 Cantonese 2 Mandarin
	Consumers (26 Total)	/	11 Richmond 12 Vancouver 2 Port Coquitlam 1 Beijing, China	15 Female 11 Male	8 Caucasian 7 Chinese 2 Korean 4 Filipino 1 Vietnamese 1 Brazilian 1 Thai 1 Latino 1 Iranian 1 Ecuadorian	4 Teens 10 Twenties 6 Thirties 4 Forties 2 Fifties	7 Immig. 6 Long 7 Int. Stud. 6 G2	24 English 2 Cantonese
	Expert consumers (10 Total)	/	6 Richmond 4 Vancouver	7 Female 3 Male	7 Chinese 2 Caucasian 1 Filipino	1 Teen 6 Twenties 2 Thirties 1 Forties	5 Immig. 2 Long 3 G2	10 English
Key informants (10 Total)								10 English
3 Municipal civil servants			/	/	/	/	/	
3 Market administrators/organizers			/	/	/	/	/	
1 Security guard			/	/	/	/	/	
3 Community association representatives			/	/	/	/	/	

Immigration status: 'Immig./PR' = immigrant permanent resident; 'Immig./Cit' = immigrant with Canadian citizenship; 'Long' = following Radice (2010) 'long' indicates respondent's family is long-established in Canada; 'Int. Stud.' = International student; 'Intl Tourist' = International tourist; 'G2' = second-generation (child of at least one immigrant parent); '/' = information not systematically collected or not applicable.

Appendix B: Contact Letters and Informed Consent Forms

B.1: Sample Contact Letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Geography
1984 West Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1Z2
Tel: (604) 822-2663 Fax: (604) 822-6150
Url: <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/>

DATE

«First» «Last»

«JobTitle»

«Organization»

Address

Dear {«First»},

My name is Yolande Pottie-Sherman and I am from the Geography Department at the University of British Columbia. I am conducting a research study for my PhD thesis called, “Ethnic Food, Electronics, and Engagement? Everyday Multiculturalism and Citizenship in the Night Markets of Vancouver.” I invite you to take part in this research study to learn more about how people (including young people) interact with different cultures in the Chinatown Night Market and Summer Night Market in Richmond. I aim to understand how markets operate as places of social engagement. This research is guided by the following questions:

1. What role do the markets play in Vancouver’s Chinese, Asian, and broader communities, and, particularly, for young members of these groups?
2. How do people interact in the night markets? (for example, how do vendors and shoppers relate to one another?) Do people socialize while shopping or bargaining?
3. Are some cultural groups more comfortable in the night market? Are there differences between the groups that choose to attend the Chinatown Night Market and those that go to the Summer Night Market in Richmond?
4. Do people’s experiences of “diversity” between markets?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because of your role as a: 1) Market participant; 2) Market trader/vendor; 3) Market organizer/administrator; or 4) City official. Your participation is greatly appreciated and will further my understanding of the night markets in Vancouver. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to give a 60-minute interview, consisting of a series of formal questions. The interview will be recorded with your permission. Please note that you may end the interview at any time.

Your identity will be kept strictly confidential. All documents will be identified only by code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Data records kept on a computer hard disk will be password protected. Your name will not appear in any publications stemming from the research, nor will it be associated with any information you provide. No personal or company names will be mentioned in publications and reports unless you give permission.

This project has been subject to a thorough ethics review which concluded that it is a low risk study.

The results of the research will be made available to you. When the research is complete you will receive a summary of the findings if you would like one. If you wish, you will also receive a summary of the results of a survey questionnaire of night market participants (with information such as frequency of use, reasons for use of the night markets, neighborhood, socio-cultural background, etc). In this case, please provide your contact information on the Research Results Contact List.

If you have questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact either Daniel Hiebert (Principle Investigator) at xxx-xxx-xxxx or Yolande Pottie-Sherman (Co-Investigator) at xxx-xxx-xxxx.

If you have any concerns about your treatment as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca

Sincerely yours,

Yolande Pottie-Sherman, PhD Candidate, Department of Geography, University of
British Columbia
Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: yolandep@interchange.ubc.ca

B.2: Sample Consent Form



Department of Geography
1984 West Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1Z2
Tel: (604) 822-2663 Fax: (604) 822-6150
Url: <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/>

Research Consent Form

Doctoral Thesis: "Everyday Multiculturalism and Citizenship in the Night Markets of Vancouver"

Principal Investigator:

Daniel Hiebert, Professor, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, office phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx; email: daniel.hiebert@ubc.ca

Co-Investigator:

Yolande Pottie-Sherman, PhD Candidate, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx; email: yolandep@interchange.ubc.ca

Purpose:

This consent form concerns the research for a PhD thesis entitled, "Ethnic Food, Electronics, and Engagement? Everyday Multiculturalism and Citizenship in the Night Markets of Vancouver." The purpose of this research is to examine the role of the Chinatown Night Market and Summer Night Market in Richmond as places where people from different cultural backgrounds meet and socialize. I aim to understand how markets operate as places of social engagement. This research is guided by the following questions:

5. How do people interact in the night markets? (for example, how do vendors and shoppers relate to one another? And is this interaction important?) How do people socialize while shopping or bargaining?
6. Are some cultural groups more comfortable in the night market? Are there differences between the groups that choose to attend the Chinatown Night Market and those that go to the Summer Night Market in Richmond?
7. How do small businesses use the night markets?

Study Procedures:

In order to answer the above questions, four types of individuals involved in the Chinatown Night Market and Summer Night Market have been identified: 1) market participants (consumers); 2) market traders/vendors; 3) Market organizers/administrators; 4) city officials. You are being invited to take part in this research study because of your role in one of these groups. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to

give a 60-minute interview, consisting of a series of formal questions. The interview will be recorded with your permission. Please note that you may end the interview at any time.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept strictly confidential. All documents will be identified only by code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Data records kept on a computer hard disk will be password protected. Your name will not appear in any publications stemming from the research, nor will it be associated with any information you provide. No personal or company names will be mentioned in publications and reports unless you give permission.

Potential risks:

This project has been subject to a thorough ethics review which concluded that it is a low risk study.

Potential Benefits:

The results of the research will be made available to you. When the research is complete you will receive a summary of the findings if you would like one. If you wish, you will also receive a summary of the results of a survey questionnaire of night market participants (with information such as frequency of use, reasons for use of the night markets, neighborhood, socio-cultural background, etc). In this case, please provide your contact information on the Research Results Contact List.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact either Daniel Hiebert (Principle Investigator) at xxx-xxx-xxxx or Yolande Pottie-Sherman (Co-Investigator) at xxx-xxx-xxxx.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

If you have any concerns about your treatment as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca

Consent:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy to you.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Subject Signature

Date

Printed Name

Appendix C: Interview Schedules

C.1: Key Informant Interview Schedules

Municipal Civil Servants

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What is the history of the development of the night markets in Vancouver/Richmond? How have they been included in municipal planning? How have you been involved with the night market?
Night Markets & the Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Where do the night markets fit in terms of the economy of the city? How does ethnic entrepreneurship impact the economy?How are the night markets related to tourism? To neighborhood revitalization?
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Are the night markets becoming more or less multicultural? Is this a goal of the city? Why or why not?

Night Market Administrators/Organizers

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender; ethnic origin (with what ethnic or cultural origin(s) do you identify?); immigrant status; place of birth; residence; educational background; neighborhood in Vancouver
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work history: What is your experience with business ownership? How did you get into your (current) business?Business structure: Do you own this business? If so, how did you gain ownership? What is the structure of this business? How is it organized? How many employees do you have?Why did you decide to start a night market in Vancouver/Richmond? Can you tell me about the formation and history of the market and your involvement in it?How has the market changed over the years? (I.e. in terms

	<p>of size, location, demographic profile of vendors and consumers, etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you attract and select vendors/traders? What criteria do you look for? Has this changed over time? Why is the night market an attractive site for entrepreneurs? • Why has the market been successful in Vancouver/Richmond? Could the night market be re-created anywhere?
Inclusion & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiculturalism: Are the night markets becoming more or less multicultural? Is this a goal? Why or why not? • The state: How much interaction do you have with city officials? With other night market organizers? Has this relationship been positive or negative? • Community: How is the night market important to the Chinese community of Vancouver/Richmond? How is it important to the non-Chinese community? To the Asian community? To the immigrant community?
Night Markets & Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban economy: Where do the night markets fit in terms of the economy of the city? What role do they play in the economy? • Tourism: Do you attract visitors from outside of the region?
Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of on-site private security personnel?

C.2: Consumer Interview Schedule

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender; ethnic origin (with what ethnic or cultural origins do you identify?); immigrant status; place of birth; residence; educational background; neighborhood in Vancouver
Use of Night Market: General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency & reasons for use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How often do you come to [this] night market? ○ What attracts you? ○ What is the most important reason you use the night market?
Shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe a typical shopping experience in the night market. • Products: What type of products do you look for/buy? And why look for these in the night market (as opposed to a mall, etc)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which products do you find more or less appealing? ○ How much money do you typically spend? Is bargain hunting a significant reason for shopping at the night market?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you bargain over the price? • Interaction & the exchange process: How much interaction would you say you have with vendors when you are shopping/buying? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With other shoppers? ○ How often would you say you interact with people who are different from you (culturally, ethnically, racially, economically, etc)? ○ Do you interact with people with whom you would not normally come into contact with?
Eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred foods & vendors: Do you often eat at the night market and what sorts of food do you eat? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which vendors do you frequent (if any?) and why? ○ Do you often sample new types of foods, or foods from different cultures? ○ Which foods/vendors/products do you find more appealing/less appealing? ○ Do some foods have more cultural meaning for you? • Interaction and food: How much and what kind of interaction do you have when ordering from food vendors? Is language an issue when ordering?
Socializing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social benefits: Do you go to the market to socialize? What social benefits do you derive from participating in the night market? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you use the night market as a place to meet friends? ○ To hang out? ○ To see people and be seen? ○ For dating? ○ Do you run into people you know in the night market? • Group characteristics: With whom do you come to the night market? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (i.e. friends, family, partner, alone, etc)? ○ Do you use the night market as a place for family outings?
Walking & Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strolling: Do you use the market as a place for strolling? For exercise? • Transportation: How do you get to the night market? (i.e. car, public transportation?)
Cultural Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact: Do you think the night market is a good place to come into contact with people of other cultures? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How frequently do you interact with people you do not know in the night market? ○ Do you think it is better for people of different

	<p>cultures/races/ethnicities to mix or come into contact with each other on a regular basis?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfort: Do you feel comfortable in the night market? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you think that the night market is mainly for Chinese people? ○ Is language a barrier to participation? Do you feel that there are cultural codes to participation that you are unaware of? (i.e. bargaining). • External effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would you say that the night market benefits the city of Richmond/Vancouver? ○ Does your participation in the night market affect your life outside of the market itself? (i.e. does your participation change the way you view certain groups/cultures/food/immigration, or otherwise?). ○ What do you think it means to participate in the night market?
Comparison to Chinatown Market & other Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Richmond night market compare to the downtown Chinatown night market? Do you use both? Why or why not? • Other types of markets: How does the night market compare to other (daytime) markets you have been to? (i.e. farmer's market, etc).

C.3: Vendor Interview Schedule

CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS
Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender; age; ethnic origin (with what ethnic or cultural origins do you identify?); immigrant status; place of birth; residence; educational background
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work history: What is your experience with business ownership? How did you get into your (current) business? Do you own this business? If so, how did you gain ownership?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business structure: What products/services do you sell? • What is the structure of this business? How many employees are there?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurial strategies: Do you have a permanent retail location? Where else do you sell your product? • Why do you vend in the night market? What are the benefits/difficulties of having a stall in the night market? • What are your gross sales on an average night? What is the range of gross sales (i.e. low and high ends)?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are your main consumers? Are you trying to expand your consumer base? How? • What (if any) external benefits come from participation in the market?
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets and the community: What role does the market play in the city of Richmond? /Vancouver? • How does the Richmond summer night market compare to the downtown Chinatown night market?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction: How would you characterize your relationship with the other vendors? Do you socialize with them? Do you see them as your competition? How do you interact with them? • How would you characterize your relationship with consumers? Do you think that people come to buy or to socialize? • Do you notice any differences across cultural groups (i.e. in terms of consumption behavior)? Are the markets becoming more or less multicultural? • Do you do business differently with different groups? • Do you think it is better for people of different cultures/races/ethnicities to mix or come into contact with each other on a regular basis?
Inclusion & Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think there are some groups that are excluded from the night market? Do you think people need money to be able to participate in the night market? Are you seeing more non-Chinese entrepreneurs? Consumers?

Appendix D: Survey Results

Table D.1: Richmond Market
Survey Participants by
Gender

Gender	Number	% Total
Male	204	41.1
Female	292	58.9
Total	496	100.0

Table D.2: Richmond Market Survey Participants by Language Spoken at Home

Responses	% Total
Single responses	84.4
Single responses/English	59.4
Single responses/French	0.2
Single responses/Non-official languages	24.7
Chinese, n.o.s.	6.6
Cantonese	5.9
Mandarin	2.5
Korean	1.8
Tagalog (Pilipino/ Filipino)	1.8
Persian	1.1
Panjabi (Punjabi)	1.1
Hindi	0.7
Spanish	0.7
Fujian	0.5
Japanese	0.5
Tamil	0.5
Vietnamese	0.5
Polish	0.2
Russian	0.2
Thai	0.2
Multiple responses	15.6
English and French	0.5
English and non-official language	13.8
French and non-official language	0
English, French and non-official language	0.7
Multiple non-official languages	0.7
Total responses	441

Table D.3: Mode of Transportation,
Richmond Market Survey

Respondents		
Mode	Number	% Total
Drive	342	76.5
Bus	97	21.7
Taxi	5	1.1
Other	3	0.7
Total responses	447	100.0

Table D.4: Number of Visits/Year,
Richmond Market Survey Participants

# Visits	Number	% Total
<5 times	320	70.8
<10 times	90	19.9
Every weekend	42	9.3
Total responses	452	100.0

Table D.5: Parking-use, Richmond
Market Survey Participants

Parking	Number	% Total
Night market lot	200	48.9
Neighboring lots	68	16.6
Street	138	33.7
Other	3	0.7
Total responses	409	100.0

Table D.6: Spending & ATM-use of Richmond Market Survey
Participants

Amount Spent at Night Market			ATM-withdrawal at Night Market		
Amount	Number	% Total	Amount	Number	% Total
\$0-\$10	152	34.2	\$0-\$20	218	68.3
\$21-\$50	194	43.6	\$21-\$50	45	14.1
\$51-\$100	77	17.3	\$51-\$100	39	12.2
>\$100	22	4.9	\$100 or more	16	5.0
Total responses	445	100.0	Total responses	319	100.0