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UMI
EXPLORING THE MARGIN
THE BORDERS BETWEEN REGENT PARK AND CABBAGETOWN

by

Luisa Veronis

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
Graduate Department of Geography
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Abstract

Exploring the Margin:
the Borders between Regent Park and Cabbagetown

Master of Arts 1999
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This thesis explores the meaning and the usefulness of the spatial metaphor 'margin' in urban social geography. I analyze a downtown neighborhood of Toronto in light of the modernist, postmodernist and border interpretations of the margin. My study of the contrasting yet juxtaposed communities of Regent Park (a public housing project) and of Cabbagetown (a gentrified area) leads me to conclude that the margin is a multiple, flexible space where groups with unequal power meet, come into conflict and negotiate. Through this research, I examine the links between power relations, the production of space and the politics of representation. Drawing on government reports, newspaper articles and personal interviews, I investigate the urban planning policies that have shaped the neighborhood since the late 1940's, the shifts in the media image of each community, and the struggles of their respective populations.
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To the community of Regent Park
Introduction

Cabbagetown has soul and a small town feeling. (...) There is a sense of pride, a sense of ownership, a sense of community here in the heart of this large cosmopolitan city.
Cabbagetown is a place we can relate to because of its human scale and warmth; it is a place to satisfy our aesthetic sense.


... urbanists, architects, planners, and historians as well as visitors from around the globe (...) come to see one of North America’s largest collections of late nineteenth century homes, and the miracle of a neighborhood that works in a city that works.


Regent Park has been the subject of more assessments and opinions than any community in Canada. What is ignored in many of these assessments and opinions is the fact that the community is home to over 10,000 individuals. The key word here is ‘individual’.
(...) But how many studies of Regent Park have been able to give face to the range of individuals that populate the community? In the absence of such faces, the community may come to see itself as invisible, lost in the vast expanse of clichés that have encased Regent Park like a calcified fossil.

– David Zapparoli, photographer and previous Regent Park resident, Regent Park. The Public Experiment in Housing (1999: 9).

I think they should kick people out those people who cause trouble in Regent Park should be sent out of it (sic.). No one should paint on the walls nor steal. Students should not swear nor fight. They should be thinking of living together in peace and love and harmony. And then we would be able to live together in peace. (Jason Gardener; in Zapparoli, 1999: 30)

Some people say I’m not good enough to be a teacher, but it doesn’t matter to me because if I try to be a teacher when I grow up and I get turned down, I would still be happy because I tried (Monique Richards; ibid.)

– excerpts from the compositions of two Regent Park elementary students asked to write about the attitudes of people toward Regent Park and about what they wanted to do when they graduated from Park School.

In this thesis, I wish to explore the concept of the margin in urban social geography. Applying different interpretations to a case study of the margin between Cabbagetown and Regent Park in Toronto, I will investigate the meaning of the
concept and its usefulness for understanding larger societal processes. First, I will look at the modernist reading which is based on the assumption that the margin is produced and imposed by the dominant group. Then, I will analyze the postmodernist perspective with the hope of filling in the gaps left by the first approach. The postmodernist critique opens the way to difference by enabling those who are oppressed and silenced to voice their world view. Finally, taking into consideration the limits of both the modernist and the postmodernist interpretation, I will turn to a ‘third way’, to the ideas presented by border theory. According to this, the margin is a space of conflict, of negotiation, and of possible hybridity; it is the meeting point between the dominant and the subordinate, the edge where the dialectic between the two takes place.

On Gerrard St. East, between Parliament St. and the Don River, one can have the unique experience of visiting two contrasting yet juxtaposed residential communities at the heart of downtown Toronto. South of Gerrard St. lies Regent Park¹, Canada’s first public housing project and one of Toronto’s poorest neighborhoods. On the northern side stretches Cabbagetown, a gentrified area and “one of North America’s largest collections of late nineteenth century homes” (Coopersmith, 1998: 8). The first question that springs to mind is how to make sense of the juxtaposition of these two distinct communities. In order to understand not only what Regent Park and Cabbagetown represent but also how they came to be, one needs to look more closely at the nature of their contrasts.

The most obvious difference between the two communities is in terms of their

¹Regent Park itself is divided into Regent Park North and Regent Park South. For the purposes of this paper, the term Regent Park refers spatially to the northern section of the area, which is the initial part of the public housing project, and socially to the Regent Park community as a whole. The reason for this choice is that although there are differences between the two parts of Regent Park itself — architecturally, as well as in terms of the composition of the population and the distribution of its characteristics — these are not as sharp as the contrasts between Regent Park and Cabbagetown. The aim here is to examine how Regent Park differs from Cabbagetown, not to point to its internal variations. The physical space of Regent Park North was chosen not only because it is the initial part of the project, but also because it is directly juxtaposed to Cabbagetown.
Map 1 - The locations of Regent Park and Cabbagetown as these are currently understood. The Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area includes the block west of Parliament St. to its definition of Cabbagetown. (Source: Sewell, 1993)
architecture and landscape. Regent Park is a group of red-brick blocks, often considered monotonous and anonymous, most of which are three and six storey apartment buildings with a few row houses. This architecture bears the mark of Le Corbusier’s ideas and of the ‘tower in the park’ aesthetic prevailing in the mid-twentieth century. The principal characteristic of this landscape is the separation of uses, which explains why the area is entirely residential. Its other characteristics are the desire to maximize open green space by locating the blocks in the middle of the lots, and the transformation of the streets into wide culs-de-sac with large parking spaces in order to prevent through traffic. Besides acts of vandalism, it is not uncommon to find empty playgrounds. They are empty not in the sense of being deserted by children, but in that the playground equipment has been taken away. Also, surveillance cameras bluntly face the entrances of the buildings.

Across Gerrard St., the landscape is strikingly different. Cabbagetown is noted for its peaceful, shadowed streets bordered with beautifully renovated and upgraded Victorian houses. Wrought iron fences protect colorful gardens, each of which competes with the others in terms of horticultural artwork. Back lanes add to the charm of the small, narrow streets. At every other street corner, convenience stores or little restaurants are there to fulfill some of the residents’ immediate needs. The area radiates a feeling of privacy and coziness.

The above description of the Regent Park and Cabbagetown landscapes is not without partiality. Rather, it reflects the influence of the popular representation of these two communities. Indeed, the contrasts between the two do not stop at their physical form, but they are further stressed by their portrayal in the media. Regent Park has been made notorious for its poor and immigrant population which is dependent on public assistance. It is described as a crime ridden area facing problems such as drug dealing, prostitution, youth delinquency, violence and crime. Put together, these images turn Regent Park into the worst kind of ghetto. On the other hand, Cabbagetown’s image is filled with the nostalgic feeling of a small, old time
community. It celebrates its architectural and historical value, as well as the cohesiveness of its population. The media promote this area as a most desirable neighborhood to live in at the centre of today's Toronto.

These images picture Regent Park and Cabbagetown as two self-sufficient units—a community, a town, an island—within the larger city. However, this representation is expressed in negative terms for the former and with positive connotations for the latter. Regent Park is stigmatized and ingrown to the point that it is “an island in the city, and looks it” (National Post, April 7, 1999), whereas some consider Cabbagetown as “the miracle of a neighborhood that works in a city that works” (Coopersmith: 8).

At this point, one might wish to understand not only the meaning of the juxtaposition but also the foundations for the contrasting representation of Regent Park and Cabbagetown. It is necessary to look for more evidence and to use other forms of material than the media representation to explain the contrasts between the two communities. The data provided by the Census of Canada (1996) is an ideal source of information to compare the socioeconomic and sociocultural composition of Regent Park and Cabbagetown. An analysis of a selection of characteristics will help verify the juxtaposition of the contrasts of these two communities as presented in the popular images.

The total population of Regent Park North amounts to 6492 people on 0.26 square kilometers, a density of almost 25,000 persons per square kilometer.

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2 The census tracts roughly correspond to the identifiable neighborhoods of Regent Park North (CT31) and Cabbagetown (CT67 and CT68). The latter’s division into two census tracts, however, presents a problem. CT68 coincides with the area lying north of Regent Park between Gerrard and Winchester Streets. But in addition to the northern portion of Cabbagetown, CT67 includes St. James Cemetery and the Castle Frank neighborhood, which stretches as far north as Bloor St. Because this factor somewhat alters the information on Cabbagetown’s residents, Regent Park will be compared to both CT67 and CT68 separately. In order to give a better sense of the urban context in which these two communities exist, figures for the former City of Toronto and for Regent Park South (CT30) will be provided when relevant. The detailed data from the Census of Canada can be found in Appendix A.

3 CT30 has a population of 4183 people for 0.39 square kilometers, a density of over 10,000 persons per square kilometer. It is important to keep in mind that in addition to Regent Park South CT30 includes the area between Shuter St. and Queen St. East. Roughly, the total population of Regent Park comes to 10,675 residents on 0.65 square kilometers, or about 16,400 persons per square kilometer. It is equivalent to number of small towns in Ontario but concentrated in a small area.
Map 2 - a) Cabbagetown Census tracts.

Map 2 - b) Regent Park Census tracts.
Note that these do not correspond exactly to the boundaries shown in Map 1.
Although there seems to be more open space because of the design of the public housing project, Regent Park is more densely populated than Cabbagetown. The area is mostly comprised of apartment buildings, half of which are five or more storeys, and a quarter of which are less than five storeys. The average number of rooms and of bedrooms is significantly lower than for the former City of Toronto. Regent Park being a public housing neighborhood, all the housing is rented and there are no homeowners. The average rent represents about 60% of the average for the former City. Family households rate above 60%, the rest being mostly non-family households.

In comparison to the former City of Toronto, a larger portion of Regent Park residents are under the age of 15 years and women are overrepresented. The average number of persons per census family is 3.3, slightly above the 3.1 former City average, and families of 3, 4, and 5 persons make up a significant percentage. The average rate of never married children at home is 1.8, not as high as the 2.2 for Regent Park South, but well above the former City's 1.3. Furthermore, 42% of Regent Park's families are lone-parent families, of which over 90% are female headed.

More than half of Regent Park's population is immigrant, one third of which arrived in Canada after 1980. This characteristic underlines the fact that Regent Park is a reception area for recent immigrants. About 20% of the residents have a citizenship other than Canadian. The most important country of origin is Vietnam, distantly followed by Sri Lanka; more generally, immigrants come from south and south-east Asia, north, east and west Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. It ensues from this that one third or more of the population has a first and a home language other than English or French. In Regent Park, less than 10% of the residents have a bachelor's degree and 30% of the population have failed to complete high school. Overall, the area has high unemployment rates and low income levels, but these are worse for Regent Park. The unemployment average is abnormally high, over three times that of the former City of Toronto, and incomes are extremely low.
less than half of the former City rate. In this neighborhood, almost half of the total income composition comes from government transfer payments.

On the north side of Gerrard St., Cabbagetown's residents add up to 1672 on 0.67 square kilometers in CT67, and 2445 on 0.44 square kilometers in CT68, which comes to a total of 5117 for 1.11 square kilometers, a density of about 4600 persons per square kilometer⁴. For Cabbagetown at large, the most common type of dwelling is the row house closely followed by semi-detached houses. In CT68 however, apartment buildings of less than five storeys dominate. The average number of rooms and of bedrooms is similar to that of the former City of Toronto's for CT67, and slightly below for CT68. Almost half of the neighborhood's housing is owned, but it is necessary to highlight the fact that CT67 has an exceptionally high proportion of home owners. The average value of dwellings is somewhat higher than the former City rate ($238,511) for CT68 ($277,395), and considerably higher for CT67 ($351,464). The average rent in CT68 corresponds to that of the former City, but is remarkably higher in CT67. About half the households are one family households, the other half being non-family, and there is a significant number of owner one-family households without additional persons.

In contrast to the former City of Toronto, and even more so to Regent Park, Cabbagetown has a significantly smaller child and youth population, and its male residents are in a slight majority. With a 2.7 rate throughout Cabbagetown, the average number of persons per family is well below that of the former City. Although 4 person families are common in CT68, 2 person families represent above half of the families. The average number of never married children at home is very low in this part of the city, especially in CT67. Lone-parent families represent less than 10% of CT67 families and only about a quarter of those in CT68.

For CT67 and CT68 respectively, 90% and 85% of the population is of Canadian citizenship, and only one quarter and one third of the residents are

⁴ It should be taken into account that because of the presence of St. James Cemetery, the density rate is particularly low for CT67. In CT68, the Riverdale Park also takes up an important portion of the surface.
immigrants with most of them settling in Canada before 1980. Although an important portion of CT68 residents come from the People's Republic of China, most immigrants are from the United Kingdom and the United States. Hence, the linguistic component is considerably more homogeneous in Cabbagetown than in Regent Park. A high proportion of the residents have a university education — a bachelor's degree or higher. Cabbagetown seems to be an exception in the area with an unemployment rate well below that of the former City and an income average well above. This is even more true for CT67 than for CT68.

The above characteristics confirm some aspects of the popular images of Regent Park — the fact that its residents are poor, of ethnic origin, and largely young — and of Cabbagetown — whose population is socioculturally homogeneous and socioeconomically better-off. Although the census data supports the existence and reveals the nature of the contrasts between the two communities, it does not explain their origins, nor why Regent Park's representation is negative whereas that of Cabbagetown is positive. The images of the two communities and their census characteristics match, but these are static. They do not show the processes that have produced these contrasts and these images. The issue at the core of the contrasts between the two communities is their origin. Furthermore, how is the portrayal of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown linked to their physical and social reality? And, what do these contrasts — in architecture, population composition, and image — between the two represent?

Having looked at the nature of their contrasts, the principal question addresses the meaning of the juxtaposition of these two radically distinct communities. In order to interpret this phenomenon, we need to examine more closely the forces that have shaped Regent Park and Cabbagetown through time. A historical investigation into the area's urban and political planning is the starting point for understanding the processes that have led to the development of these contrasts.
The area designated as Cabbagetown is located east of today's Toronto downtown. Even to those who know little of the city's history, the very name Cabbagetown has a nostalgic connotation producing picturesque and colorful images, while also carrying a number of ambivalences. Historically, it evokes a poor neighborhood of Irish immigrants, escaping from the potato famine and growing cabbages in their small front yards. It simultaneously embodies the essence of Victorian Toronto and the worst conditions of the Depression years. To some, Cabbagetown is associated with poverty and low housing conditions, but to most the name today suggests a fashionable neighborhood with trendy townhouses and chic shops.

The diversity of Cabbagetown's physical form, character and traditions is the result of a number of transformations which have shaped the neighborhood over the last hundred and fifty years. In fact, the variety of images that spring to mind when Cabbagetown is mentioned is directly linked to an important controversy regarding its boundaries. Thus, the first step will be an attempt to define Cabbagetown's boundaries which at the same time will allow us to follow the early historical and geographical changes that the area has undergone. The location and character of what is now known as Cabbagetown is the outcome of twentieth century urban renewal schemes. In order to give a sense of what contemporary Cabbagetown is made of, it is necessary to investigate the more recent changes that have shaped the area. These include particularly the development of Regent Park after the Second World War and the upgrading of the neighborhood during the last thirty years or so.

Because "Cabbagetown was never an incorporated area or a parcel of land with legally defined boundaries" (Toronto Star, Dec. 7, 1995), no one is exactly sure where Cabbagetown begins and ends. The only consensus is that its eastern boundary is indisputably marked by the Don River. The Toronto Star (ibid.) and Penina Coopersmith (1998) agree that the heart of present day Cabbagetown, as
defined by the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area, is delimited by Gerrard St. in the south, Wellesley St. in the north, and Parliament St. in the west. This represents the most picturesque and most recently developed part of the neighborhood. This narrow definition is sometimes extended to include Regent Park to the south of Gerrard St. and St. James Cemetery to the north. It is this broader definition that will be adopted for the purposes of this study. Yet oldtimers dispute whether this area is Cabbagetown at all. Some even argue that the real, old and true Cabbagetown no longer exists. In order to understand the issue of Cabbagetown's location, it is helpful to briefly examine its historical and geographical evolution.

The origins of Cabbagetown can be traced back to the beginnings of the City of Toronto in the early nineteenth century. The first working class neighborhood sat at the foot of Parliament St. around King St., an area which was once called 'Corktown' (Globe and Mail, Oct. 6, 1984). As the population and industry of Toronto expanded, this neighborhood gradually shifted to the north, with modest, working class houses built in the direction of the Don River to the east. Back then, the name Cabbagetown was used derogatorily to refer to this part of town, whose mostly Irish, English, and Scottish residents were rather poor and grew the cabbages which gave their name to the neighborhood. By the 1850's and especially after the 1870's, the district began to fill in as far north as Gerrard St. and, in some blocks, all the way up to St. James Cemetery. At that time, the neighborhood was characterized by small, overcrowded houses, sometimes bare shacks, all lacking basic facilities. The area north of Gerrard St., which is today referred to as Cabbagetown, was an exception with its distinctive middle and upper middle class homes, especially Carlton and Winchester Streets.

Hugh Garner, the famous Canadian novelist and native of the area, described the neighborhood as it was during the 1930's as "the largest Anglo-Saxon slum in North America" (Coopersmith: 62). Garner's novel Cabbagetown, for which the author drew on personal experience, illustrates the extreme conditions of poverty and unemployment of the neighborhood at that time. Its streets were tiny, unhealthy culs-
de-sac lined with rooming houses, and many drunks roamed around (Sunday Star, Feb. 11, 1979; Coopersmith: 10, 63-4). In the preface to the 1988 edition of his book, Garner defines Cabbagetown’s boundaries as being Gerrard St. on the north, Queen St. E. on the south, Parliament St. on the west, and the Don River on the east. To oldtimers, this is the old and true Cabbagetown: a poor working class neighborhood geographically almost coterminous with what is now Regent Park.

Nevertheless, this part of Cabbagetown no longer exists. It was wiped out by the large scale demolitions of the 1950’s and 60’s which preceded the construction of the Regent Park public housing project. And that is not all. The area was further modified with the upgrading of the neighborhood north of Gerrard St. in the late 1960’s and 70’s. Thus, we may question the authenticity of today’s Cabbagetown since the changes brought by urban renewal schemes during the past fifty years have modified both its location and character: situated south of Gerrard St. before, it now lies on its northern side; from a slum, it became gentrified. The issue around Cabbagetown’s boundaries further raises questions on the relation between Regent Park and Cabbagetown. Is Regent Park, a poor community located where old Cabbagetown stood before, part of Cabbagetown? It is interesting to note that Regent Park’s boundaries, in contrast to those of Cabbagetown, are well defined. There is no controversy regarding the physical location of the public housing project. What are the forces that lie behind the creation of these boundaries? What do these boundaries stand for? It is time to investigate further the details of the area’s transformations in the past half century.

Regent Park constitutes Canada’s first public housing project. It is the product of ideas on slum clearance and public housing that had emerged in North America by the 1930’s and prevailed throughout the 1940’s and 50’s. In 1944, a group called ‘Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association of Toronto’ formed with the aim of developing affordable housing, and more specifically of redeveloping “a forty-two-
acre area in downtown east Toronto that had been defined (...) as one of the worst slum areas in the city" (Sewell, 1993: 71). The fundamental assumption was that "there should be total demolition and a new start" (ibid.). The decision to construct a low and/or moderate cost housing project in the area bounded by Parliament, River, Gerrard, and Dundas Streets was passed in the 1947 municipal election. Two years later, the nineteenth century structure of Cabbagetown was cleared to give place to what is known as Regent Park North. The project was built between 1947 and 1957. It contained 1,056 units and cost $16 million, most of which was financed by the City of Toronto, with some federal and provincial assistance (Coopersmith: 65). By 1960, an additional 732 units – Regent Park South – extended the project south of Dundas St.

In terms of landscape and architecture, the housing plan was influenced by modern planning ideas as described above: the separation of uses as advocated by Le Corbusier and the ‘tower in the park’ aesthetic of the period (National Post, April 7, 1999). Whereas the area used to be both commercial and residential, with some industrial activity, the new project was only residential. No retail facilities were included, although the neighborhood provides an administrative centre, a recreational complex, and a church. The rows of Victorian houses have been replaced by red-brick blocks, the site has been kept free from roads, and excessive emphasis has been put on open space (Sewell, 1993: 72).

Regent Park marked the beginnings of an active urban renewal program that planners and civic officials considered both necessary and beneficial (Sewell, 1993: 112). In the short term, the project was a success: all of the original residents were rehoused – for some it was the first experience of hot and cold running water. The units were new, clean, large, sun-filled and heated, and the rent was affordable. Regent Park became a model leading to similar projects throughout Canada (Coopersmith: 66). The history of the public housing project, however, is marked with problems and since the 1960’s the urban and social policies that have shaped the area have been called into question.
Fifty years after the first tenants moved in, the project, like most of its kind, is considered a model of how public housing should not be done (National Post, April 7, 1999). The first problem is the high concentration of people coming from the same (disadvantaged) economic background (ibid.). Next, the nature of the urban space itself is linked to overwhelming social problems (Now, Nov. 27-Dec. 3, 1997). There is “too much open space under no one’s control”, which breeds criminality and drug dealing. On the other hand, there is no public space such as public streets and sidewalks which allow normal urban life to happen. The shape of the buildings is at the core of these problems. The fact that they turn inward and that they sharply contrast with the architecture of the area isolates Regent Park. The design of the project, “neither urban nor suburban” according to Coopersmith (70-2), has segregated it from the rest of the neighborhood. Although delighted at first by their new homes, neither the original residents nor later tenants have been able to recreate what once was Cabbagetown’s heart. Both the composition and the spirit of the population gradually changed and have developed into a very different community.

For the past few years, the community of Regent Park seems to have become engaged in another transitional period. Plans have been in the air for almost a decade now to redevelop the northeast corner of the public housing complex. The major idea is to double its density by introducing mixed-income housing which would modify both the composition of the population and the character of the neighborhood. The positive factor about this project is that it is community oriented and based on the residents’ participation. Unfortunately, the process of the redevelopment project presents some difficulties that have been slowing down its progress.

The part of Cabbagetown north of Gerrard St. experienced a different evolution. Initially, the former City of Toronto wanted to implement a similar urban renewal scheme in this area by the mid-1960’s, with the difference that it was to take the form of private redevelopment. But by that time, a backlash against such planning
activities had arisen (Coopersmith: 67). First, it was realized that cities would not be saved through destruction. Second, residents of threatened neighborhoods began strengthening community ties and organized politically. In this case, a coalition of residents stood up to prevent the demolition of what was left of Cabbagetown. The coalition's purpose was two-fold; it intended to save both the character of the neighborhood and its affordability for working class people. After negotiations, politicians eventually withdrew the proposal for urban renewal, yet they slowly implemented policies which in the long run achieved the reuse and effective private redevelopment of the area that was circumvented by the residents' resistance to the former City's more radical urban renewal plan (Lorimer and Phillips, 1971: 102).

Blockbusters threatened Cabbagetown until 1972 when they ceased to have the former City's support (Coopersmith: 68). After this time, a new, more sensitive and innovative approach to improving the area was taken. Nevertheless, speculators and realtors played their part in promoting the attractiveness of Cabbagetown in the 1970's (Toronto Star, June 24, 1985). Increasing numbers of middle and upper class families discovered the advantages of living in this area, which was not only central but also affordable. Throughout the 1970's and 80's, crowds of new, young professionals, so-called 'white-painters' or yuppies, moved in, renovated and transformed the Victorian working class cottages with so much vigor and creativity that the houses came to look much better than they ever did before (Coopersmith: 70). Gradually, as the prices started to rise in the late 1970's, working class tenants were driven out (Lorimer and Phillips: 103). A house bought for $10,000 in the 1960's could sell for $125,000 and more in the 1980's (Gould, 1983: 12). The 1999 Real Estate Guide of Toronto lists the average asking price of a house in Cabbagetown at $336,356 and the average sale price at $327,754.

The neighborhood's improvement has not been without tensions. 'Real' Cabbagetowners obviously resent the activities of speculators. Some feel that these new arrivals have pushed out the poor. On the other hand, it seems that some dislike
the presence of the few remaining drunks because they give Cabbagetown a bad name (Sunday Star, Feb. 11, 1979). The irony is that by the late 1970's "the poor [were] often no longer welcome in Cabbagetown" which was originally a poor working class neighborhood (ibid.). It is not clear whether this is still true twenty years later. Finally, others are angry because architectural renovations and the use of techniques such as sand-blasting have destroyed the original character of the area (Gould: 12).

Despite these conflicts, Cabbagetown seems to have a rather strong sense of community and identity which sets the neighborhood apart. Cabbagetowners are said to "rally around causes that will benefit [them]". They are characterized by their "willingness to get involved in community projects"; and they are described as being "very protective of their little enclave" (Toronto Star, June 24, 1985). Evidence for this is the existence of two active and well-organized bodies, the Cabbagetown Preservation Association and the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area (BIA). In addition, the neighborhood is animated by a number of events and activities throughout the year. The most important celebration is probably the Cabbagetown festival which runs for five days every September. In other words, the heart of Cabbagetown is now looked at as a healthy environment, physically and socially, and even economically.

However, the outcome of Cabbagetown's improvement is met with mixed feelings. We may wonder, as do oldtimers and 'real' Cabbagetowners, how much this new and trendy neighborhood has to do with the original Cabbagetown. It has changed not only in terms of the socioeconomic composition of its population, but even its character has been somewhat altered because the original architecture has been improved. It seems that the attractiveness and desirability of living in Cabbagetown is the work of culture and fashion. Ideas of historic preservation have shaped Cabbagetown into a kind of postmodern commodity. The authenticity of Cabbagetown is being challenged by the process of gentrification, which leads us to question the real meaning of the neighborhood's upgrading: is it as well intentioned
as it wishes to appear, or is it rather motivated by less pure interests? Notwithstanding these somewhat negative reflections on the transformations of Cabbagetown, the neighborhood seems to have kept a strong sense of identity. In Coopersmith’s opinion, it is defined more by its shared experience than by its location (8-9). What matters most, especially to oldtimers, is that “a ‘state of mind Cabbagetown’” (Globe and Mail, Sept. 22, 1984) and “the spirit of ‘old Cabbagetown’ remain in good standing” (Globe and Mail, Oct. 6, 1984). Although the improvement and renovation of the neighborhood have altered Cabbagetown’s character and identity, they have saved it in a way – at least from destruction.

Today, what makes Cabbagetown an unusual neighborhood is the juxtaposition of two distinct communities: the new, trendy ‘heart’ of the area north of Gerrard St., and Regent Park’s poor, multicultural population on its southern side. Actually, there could be no sharper contrast than the two parts of Cabbagetown in terms of socioeconomic and cultural composition, as well as from the point of view of architecture and urban form. Besides, only the ‘heart’ of Cabbagetown is considered to form a community, with a strong sense of identity. It is believed that this feeling is lacking among the residents of Regent Park, which, when it happens to be designated as a community, it is not considered a desirable one.

Coopersmith thinks that these two distinct parts of Cabbagetown “represent two solitudes” and she specifies “not of ethnicity, but of class” (72). Along this line of thought, the Sunday Star describes Cabbagetown as “a social frontier of people and architecture” (Feb. 11, 1979). In fact, we can observe two different kinds of border zones in the neighborhood. On the one hand, Gerrard St. operates as a line of separation, almost segregation. Running through the middle of Cabbagetown, it divides the neighborhood into two distinct parts. It is along this line that the differences between the two, especially those of urban form, stand out most sharply. On the other hand, Parliament St. represents a frontier that attracts the opposites, where they are
allowed to meet. This might be happening specifically on Parliament St. because of its own position at the border of the neighborhood. This street is the western boundary of the area, where Cabbagetown opens up toward downtown Toronto. Furthermore, Parliament St. plays a significant role for the neighborhood in that it is its economic heart. In sum, Parliament St. presents a social and economic, even an ethnic and architectural mix of old and new, where chic and trendy businesses stand right next to junk and thrift stores (Toronto Star, June 24, 1985). Here, a little of everything can be found thanks to the variety of people that come together. It is on Parliament St. that we also feel the influence of St. James Town lying to the north of the area under research – a social housing project with a highly multicultural population – and the gay district to the west. These communities add another dimension to the economic, social, cultural, and ethnic vitality of the area.

One of the most special places of the neighborhood is the corner of Gerrard and Parliament Streets. The intersection does not follow the regular two-dimensional, rigid grid street layout. This is due to the fact that the sections of Gerrard St. to the east and west of Parliament St. do not line up with one another. The intersection is also broken by what is called ‘Banana Island’, a triangular green space with benches on which drunks sleep and a fountain in which they occasionally bathe (Toronto Star, June 24, 1985). This space is rather complex. First, the intersection which is always busy is something of an obstacle to traffic. The flow of cars, already hampered by the atypical setup of the intersection, is further slowed by the peculiar route of the TTC streetcar-line that turns from a north-south to an east-west axis at this corner. Second, it is here that the Parliament Public Library and a neighborhood community centre are located, i.e. two facilities whose role is both public and civic. Finally, the intersection is the gate from the zone of segregation to that of mixing. Thus, ‘Banana Island’ really is a border space that brings together, while at the same time separating, all the components of the neighborhood.

The uniqueness and thus attractiveness of Cabbagetown lies in the fact that its
Figure 3: A mixing of old and new architecture, Parliament St. at the corner of Winchester St.

Figure 4: The 'Banana Island' at the intersection of Parliament and Gerrard Streets.
urban landscape forms a juxtaposition and superimposition of many different layers of meaning. This is the result of the complex processes which have shaped the neighborhood. Cabbagetown's architecture and physical form reveal the sociocultural, economic, and political factors that have been at work for a hundred and fifty years. Despite the changes and transformations which characterize its development, Cabbagetown has been able to maintain a community with a strong sense of identity. Interestingly, when the original part of Cabbagetown, replaced by Regent Park, lost its name, it also lost its original identity and sense of community. The mixing of layers of meaning in the landscape enables us to interpret Cabbagetown from a variety of perspectives. This is particularly true with regard to the neighborhood's frontier zones, Parliament and Gerrard Streets.

Despite this detailed description and presentation of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown, many questions about the origins and the formation of these two communities remain unanswered. Why and how did Cabbagetown, which was one neighborhood composed of one homogeneous community, evolve into two, radically contrasting communities, which differ in their physical form, their representational image, and more particularly in the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of their respective population? Regent Park is a public housing project inhabited by a disadvantaged population, mostly recent immigrants, which suffers from a bad reputation, whereas Cabbagetown is a gentrified area whose residents are among Toronto's most aspiring well-to-do. How can one explain the development of such social, economic and cultural differences? Even after the historical overview provided above, one wishes to understand the deeper factors that have shaped the area. Finally, what does the juxtaposition of these two distinct communities tell us about contemporary urban processes? What does this juxtaposition manifest and how should it be interpreted? How can one understand the implications of the processes and of the forces at play?
Each of the following chapters will present a set of different approaches to conceptualizing the 'margin' and will provide an analysis of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown in light of each of these. Chapter 2 opens the discussion with the modernist perspective, the production of the margin 'from above'. Chapter 3 represents the postmodernist voice of the oppressed, the experience of the margin 'from below'. Finally, Chapter 4 is an attempt to go beyond both the modernist and the postmodernist points of view. Based on the ideas from border theory, this 'third way' interprets the margin as a space of conflict, of negotiation and of hybridity. Before all this, Chapter 1 will introduce the conceptual background and the theoretical issues that will be investigated in this thesis.
Chapter 1

The juxtaposition of the centre and the margin

In the last chapter of his book *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (1996), David Harvey argues that the disciplines concerned with urban issues are lacking an adequate common language that would enable us to grasp the new problems affecting contemporary cities. In his opinion, we need not only a new common language, but altogether new ways of thinking about today's world processes. Using the language of 'uneven geographical development', Harvey calls for a revolutionary change in thinking, and ultimately in politics, in order to understand today's world urbanization and to address its problems. It is in this context that this thesis inscribes itself, although its scope is more modest than Harvey's broader work. This research is built on the assumption that cities are important and that the contemporary conditions of urbanization represent a challenge to our society. Notwithstanding the fact that the possibility of achieving a new common language to discuss urban processes is debatable, the paper also takes into consideration Harvey's argument that we need new ways of thinking about cities to overcome the problems they present.

Among today's urban problems, there is one phenomenon in particular that has become a matter of interest. This is the question of increased inequality and growing polarization. A significant part of the literature discusses the impacts of globalization and economic restructuring, and of related processes such as space-time compression (Harvey, 1989; Massey, 1993; Virilio, 1995). On the one hand, these affect our perception and experience of the world, while on the other they
transform the economic, social and political relations of society at large, as well as the physical form of cities. Although changes in the perception and in the experience of the world are linked to the transformation of societal relations and of the urban structure, the latter will be the principal focus of this investigation.

A range of literature explores the ways in which globalization and economic restructuring, what some call late capitalism (Jameson, 1984) and others postfordism or flexible capitalism (Harvey, 1989), affect present day cities, now often referred to as postindustrial and postmodern cities. For example, in her work on the 'global city', Saskia Sassen studies the impact of global changes and economic restructuring on urban structures at both a global and a local level. In her interpretation, globalization and the restructuring of the economy have led to a new urban geography and a new urban order (1994; 1991). At the global level, a new hierarchy or system of cities has emerged – the global cities which are part of that system versus the rest/periphery which are left out of it. At the local and urban level, cities are reorganized into new centres and margins. These new centres and margins are not merely physical, but primarily economic (changing relations of production), political (decision making), social (exclusion), cultural (consumption) and geographical (uneven development).

This transformation takes place at the global level by establishing an international division of centres and margins between countries and between world cities – the global cities that are the leading financial centres, the points of control and command. But what is at stake here is that they also appear on a smaller scale, locally, at the urban level, within cities themselves. New economic, political, and even social and cultural relations are visible in the development of the urban structure and in the uses of urban space. Economically, they are indicated by the deindustrialization of certain areas, the location of offices and back-offices, or the fluxes in real estate investments. From a political point of view, they manifest themselves in the choice of places of decision-making. Finally, they are expressed socioeconomically through changes in employment opportunities and distribution, the offer of and the demand for labour,
and socioculturally through changes in migration, gender roles, and consumption patterns.

The local transformations resulting from the processes of globalization and economic restructuring take the form of an increased economic, political, and sociocultural inequality between different urban areas, and between different socioeconomic and cultural groups. While Harvey interprets this growing polarization as a form of uneven geographical development, Sassen analyzes it by using the centre-margin metaphor. In terms of the urban structure, centres are those areas that are highly valuable and developed, and margins are those neighborhoods that are abandoned and decaying. In terms of population groups, the centre represents the well-to-do, the elite, the powerful, the educated, professionals and those working at the top of the service industry, in other words those who are at the top of society. Those who are excluded from it form the margin, including the powerless, the poor, the underemployed and the unemployed, immigrants, illegal workers, single parents — to name only a few of the disadvantaged.

As presented in the introduction, the case study at the basis of this research exemplifies some of those recent urban changes in Toronto. Both Cabbagetown and Regent Park reflect the impact of globalization and of economic restructuring, but in different ways. Cabbagetown has become an affluent residential neighborhood, inhabited by white, Anglo-Saxon, globe-trotting professionals. Regent Park, as a recipient area of recent immigrants, is a rich multicultural community, but economically poor and probably less mobile.

There have long been different forms of centres and margins. The processes of globalization and economic restructuring, however, mark a shift in the geography and in the character of these. The starting point of this investigation is Sassen’s statement that in today’s cities the new centres and margins are juxtaposed; inequalities in urban development and between population groups exist bluntly next to one another. This statement is the major criterion for choosing the Cabbagetown and Regent Park
area as a case study. Over time, this neighborhood has presented different forms of margins and borders. During the 1970’s, the influence of larger context changes led to the upgrading of Cabbagetown and to the settlement of an increasing number of recent immigrants in Regent Park. But today, the differences between the two have reached such a degree of polarization that the juxtaposition of Cabbagetown and Regent Park seems to correspond to Sassen’s juxtaposition of the centre and the margin.

Introducing the margin

In this thesis, I will explore the concept of the margin and its use in urban social geography. The central question deals with the meaning of the concept itself which cannot be dissociated from the question of its usefulness and its power for urban social geography. My primary purpose is to better understand what the margin means by looking at different interpretations and uses of the concept. Then, I will apply these various interpretations to one case study, the Cabbagetown neighborhood\(^5\), as a manifestation of this phenomenon in Toronto. By drawing links between theory and reality, I hope first to better grasp what the margin is, and second to determine how powerful the concept is in making sense of today’s urban phenomena and processes. From the point of view of urban geography, it comes down to looking at what factors shape cities, and from that of social geography, at what forces are at play. More specifically, this exploration into the meaning and the use of the margin will allow me to review different approaches to understanding power relations and their manifestation in space. In turn, this question will lead me to consider such issues as the politics of representation and of identity, and the notion of space.

Now, one could ask why examine the concept of the margin at all? The answer

\(^5\)The expression ‘Cabbagetown neighborhood’ refers to the geographical area under study which is composed of the two communities of Cabbagetown and Regent Park. Although in this research I will analyze more closely the community of Regent Park than that of Cabbagetown, I decided to keep the term Cabbagetown to designate the area for historical reasons: Regent Park today stands where Cabbagetown was located more than half a century ago.
lies in the fact that the notion is widely and increasingly used. It is extensively referred to not only in human geography but also in other disciplines devoted to social theory. The margin is no longer used in a strict geographical and physical sense, but - like many other spatial concepts including "position, location, situation, 'mapping' (...) open-closed, inside-outside, global-local" (Pile, 1997: 1) - as a metaphor to express larger societal processes. Generally, the concept of the margin is used in the form of a binary opposition, through the centre-margin metaphor. Here, the concept and the metaphor will be used interchangeably, since the meaning of the margin cannot be understood independently from its relation to the centre. As will be explained below, the relationship between the centre and the margin is among the main themes addressed in this research. Similarly, the focus of the case study analysis will be on Regent Park, but the latter cannot be fully interpreted without being compared to Cabbagetown, and without considering the relationship between the two communities.

Nevertheless, the usefulness of the 'margin' needs to be carefully evaluated. The appeal of the notion lies in its rich, evocative and flexible meaning which makes it possible to adopt the term to explain phenomena from a variety of perspectives: economic, political, sociocultural, and even architectural. Yet the term presents several shortcomings which remind us of Harvey's concern about finding a new common language to understand and deal with urban issues. The very fact of applying the concept of the margin to such a wide range of contexts causes a loss in its meaning. The consequence of making it too broad is that it becomes meaningless.

There are two possible explanations for the number of differing interpretations of the margin. First, the concept is shaped according to the context in which it is used, in which case it becomes historically and geographically specific. The problem with this form of interpretation of the margin is that its meaning is relative, and thus limited. The different conceptualizations of the margin may also find their origins in the older divisions of the larger geographical discourse. Traditionally, there has been a
historical division between the sociocultural/political and the socioeconomic analyses, which comes down to an opposition between the humanist/cultural and the Marxist schools of thought. At the basis of this opposition, we find the question of the nature of the relationship between the sociocultural and the socioeconomic forces driving societal change. This opposition is fundamental for understanding the functioning of power relations. The problem of the different approaches and of opposed analyses is an important one, not only within but also between disciplines. It is necessary to investigate the meaning and the uses of the concept of the margin and of the centre-margin metaphor in order to determine what theoretical, and in some ways ideological, position is taken.

Due to the complexity of the concept of the margin and the diversity of its uses, it is necessary to apply the different interpretations. Looking at what is there, will be helpful in making sense of the notion of the margin. Using the case study will add a concrete dimension to the concept. Thus, the second step of this research is to go from a conceptual to an empirical investigation of the margin. The aim is to find empirical evidence – the manifestation of what is the margin – from which to unpack the different conceptualizations. This will further facilitate a discussion and comparison of the different interpretations. In addition, it will reveal in what ways theories and their application feed upon one another. This is somewhat of an experiment in the interactive process of constructing knowledge: moving from a theoretical to an empirical dimension, and back⁶.

Power relations and the production of space

At the preliminary stage of my research, I was surprised to find that space is mostly studied and analyzed from a political perspective, with most discussions looking at space in terms of power relations (de Certeau, 1984; Harvey, 1996; Keith

⁶I say that this is somewhat of an experiment because due to space limitations I cannot discuss ideas on the links between theoretical and empirical research, namely how theory frames experience, and in turn how experience alters the understanding of theory.
and Pile, 1993; Massey, 1993; Pile, 1997; Soja and Hooper, 1993). This led me to question the forces involved in the process of space making: is the construction of space only the result of power relations in which the oppressor dominates the oppressed and imposes his/her ideology? What is the role of the dominated in the process of space making and space using? And how are the two positions, the conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed, negotiated? It is because of the importance of power relations in understanding the process of space making and space using that this research will scrutinize the issue of power relations, their impact on the production of space, their manifestation in space, the use of space, the relation between power and space making and space using, as well as the interaction between the dominant and the oppressed, or put simply between the centre and the margin — hence the theme of the centre-margin relation.

There are several dimensions to the study of power relations. The first is the dynamics of oppression themselves, and the second is their expressive potential — the constitution of roles such as master and slave, the mastery and practice of power, and the reproduction of power relations. This paper is based on the idea that power relations take place in space: space not only expresses and reflects the dynamics of oppression (geographies of power), but its very production, its making and its use, is linked to the functioning of power relations. These two assumptions draw from theories on power relations (Foucault, 1990; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) and on the 'production of space' (Lefebvre, 1974).

Because power lies in every aspect of our lives, it is necessary to take into consideration ideas on the dynamics of oppression. This paper is not based on Foucault's early insights on power and the focus is not on how totalizing institutions function. Rather, my understanding of power relations derives from the Gramscian notion of hegemony. In this interpretation, the hegemonic articulation of power is based on the presence of antagonistic forces and on the instability of the frontiers which separate them (Laclau and Mouffe: 134-145). The assumption is that society
forms an open system of differences and of changing social identities. Hegemony is based on the plurality and to a certain degree on the autonomy of political spaces which allow the emergence of new social movements. There are two important elements that need to be highlighted to understand this perspective. First, hegemony is "a political type of relation, a form (...) of politics" which has no determinable location, but which acts from a variety of hegemonic nodal points (139; emphasis in original). Then, the "hegemonic formation also embraces what opposes it" (ibid.) which means that there is no power without an antagonistic force. In sum, power relations are viewed as articulatory and hegemonic practices assured by the openness and the indeterminacy of the social system, which allow for the presence of antagonistic and negative forces (144).

This presentation of the functioning of power relations is essential because of the political dimension of space itself. Thus, the understanding of the dynamics of oppression affects the understanding of the production of space. I wish to clarify, however, some aspects of the interconnection between power relations and the process of space making. There is a strong belief in social and cultural geography that space is not "a passive, abstract arena on which things happen" (Keith and Pile: 2), but rather that it is imbued with meaning. A variety of approaches exists 'to read' the meaning(s) of space, each of which provides its own theory on the issue. The idea that spatial organization is produced by and reproduces power relations is one of them.

Edward Soja thinks that space is filled with politics and ideology, and that "relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life" (1989: 6). Michael Keith and Steve Pile "use the term 'spatiality' to capture the ways in which the social and spatial are inextricably realized one in the other" (6). They even go a step further and state "that all spatialities are political because they are the (covert) medium and (disguised) expression of asymmetrical relations of power" (38). These quotes suggest first that power relations are reflected
in space, and second that the appropriation and use of space are a form of empowerment. In other words, power makes space and space makes power. In geography, this interpretation of spatiality has significant implications for the understanding of power relations and the process of space making, as well as of the links between the two.

In addition, we should take into consideration the fact that power relations encompass both forms of domination and of opposition. Both power and resistance ‘take place’ through specific geographies, real, imagined or symbolic, which is the reason why they can be and are transposed into spatial metaphors (Keith and Pile: 1; Pile: 1). As mentioned earlier, there is a whole range of spatial metaphors which are used to articulate the multiplicity and flexibility of power relations. This investigation looks at only one of these metaphors: the margin. I wish to explore how the margin, or marginal spaces, contributes to the understanding of power relations and of the process of space making, and thus of larger societal processes.

There are different geographies of power, and different geographies of resistance. Because centres and margins can be real, as well as imagined and symbolic, we have to question the relation between the centre and margin, as well as the representation of one another: the geographies of power and their representation, and similarly the geographies of opposition and their representation might not correspond to or be recognized by the centre and the margin respectively. This is the reason why particular attention will be given to the politics of representation and of identity.

What is meant by the margin depends on what is considered ‘normal’, usually defined as being the centre. Because where one stands affects one’s interpretation and understanding of the concept of the margin, it is essential for this discussion to think about who establishes what criteria for whom. This issue is directly related to the problem of the construction of the margin, as a real and as an imagined space, and further raises questions on the production and institutionalization of societal norms, of
sociocultural values and images (Shields, 1991). As the production of space is political, so is the construction of images and of identity. In turn, the politics of representation makes the issue of the relationship between the margin and the centre significant for this investigation: does the centre produce the margin? It is because power relations are expressed in space and the production of the centre is linked to that of the margin that these two themes – the relation between the centre and the margin, and the politics of representation – are relevant to this discussion.

**Conceptualizing the margin**

I explained first that the conceptualization of the margin depends on the theoretical approach taken in the study of geography. Then, I discussed how the meaning of the concept is determined by the perspective on the functioning of power relations and of how these relate to the process of space making. There are two major conceptualizations of the margin: the modernist hegemonic theory and the more recent postmodernist counter-hegemonic interpretation. Soja and Hooper explain the origins of this division and discuss its implications for understanding spatiality (1993). In short, the modernist approach to hegemony developed along the lines formed more than a century ago by "anti-capitalist class-consciousness and revolutionary struggle against exploitation". It is based on a "praxis of refusal and resistance that parallels the bipolar logic of class struggle (...) defined around a deep structural dichotomy that 'orders' differential power into two primary social categories, one dominant the other subordinate" (185). Soja and Hooper criticize the degree of closure and exclusiveness presented by this perspective and favor the new postmodernist vision on power relations that has emerged over the past two decades from postmodern blackness and postcolonial critiques (186-7). The latter represents "a new cultural politics of difference and identity that moves toward empowering a multiplicity of resistances", its key processes being the "disordering of difference (...)"
and the reconstitution of difference (...) among all who are peripheralized, marginalized and subordinated by the social construction of difference" (187; emphasis in original).

Most studies are based on the modernist vision of society. However, because of its restrictions for understanding power relations, and thus the process of space making and space using, I decided to also take into consideration the postmodernist approach. Despite its different perspective on power relations and the production of space – the multiple points of view of the oppressed, and for my purpose, of the 'marginalized' – the case study will show that this interpretation has its shortcomings as well. Probably due to a certain danger of romanticizing and idealizing the power that those who are dominated can really achieve, the postmodernist interpretation leaves some important questions unanswered. This is the reason why I finally look at border theory which offers a 'third way' (Soja, 1996) for understanding the margin. The interest of this perspective is that it stresses the dialectical relationship between power and resistance, the fact that power relations feed upon the action and reaction of the dominant and the oppressed. Border theory underlines the fact that power relations are a process and not only the end product, the outcome of hegemony. This idea is reflected in the understanding of space making and space using in this theory: space is both a medium and an outcome, it is a process constantly negotiated and manipulated (Jacobs, 1996).

The notion of process is important in that it ties together the main themes that I will investigate. Looking at power relations as a process establishes links not only with the production of space, but also the politics of representation. The process of making space is parallel to that of constructing images and identity in that they all are the medium and the outcome of dialectical practices such as in the understanding of power relations in border theory (Keith and Pile; Ruddick, 1996). In a similar way, the conceptualization of space itself is essential for making sense of its production.

Doreen Massey has developed a complex definition for understanding space
which she calls a 'progressive sense of place' (1993). In her article, she stresses the links between unequal power relations and the production of space, but it is her very understanding of space itself that is interesting. Her main argument is that space is not static, but rather it is a process, it is an active and a generative form. Also, it is her idea that space has no fixed boundaries, but is open and links elements located within and outside a place. Finally, space is full of internal differences and conflicts (67). This definition of space is relevant in that it underlines not only the notion of process, but also the relational character between forces that take place in space. The conceptualization of the margin based on the above understandings of the functioning of power relations, the construction of images and identity, and the notion of space, seems most helpful in making sense of larger societal processes and their manifestation in space.

In the following chapters, I will explore the meaning of the notion of the margin by looking first at the modernist perspective, then at the postmodernist interpretation, and finally at border theory. Comparing the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to conceptualizing power relations and the production of space, I hope to evaluate the usefulness of the concept of the margin for understanding contemporary sociospatial phenomena. But before proceeding to the investigation itself, I wish to introduce the methodology on which this research is based.

Methodology

At a time when all aspects of society are affected by the processes of globalization and of economic restructuring, the issue of scale has become of tremendous importance for understanding the contemporary world. One question is how the global and the local interact. But there is another matter that is more relevant to this research, that of the scale of the phenomena investigated. In other words, what is the scale of the concept of the margin and what is the kind of margin examined in this research? Here, the scale is the (amalgamated) city of Toronto, and thus the
manifestation of the centre and of the margin at the local urban level. Nevertheless, the analysis includes two, different kinds of margins. On the one hand, I will discuss the neighborhood of Cabbagetown as a geographical and historical area, and on the other, the communities of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown which represent two distinct physical, imagined and symbolic spaces. These are the two main scales of the margin in this paper, but I will also touch, to a certain extent, upon the more controversial attribution of the concept to such categories as class, race and ethnicity, or gender.

As presented earlier, I will proceed to a somewhat experimental approach by applying several theories in relation to one another and in relation to one case study. Unpacking different conceptualizations of the margin to one context will enable me to compare the shortcomings of the various perspectives and to move beyond these to a more powerful interpretation. With this method, I hope to provide a useful understanding of the margin in order to make sense of the Cabbagetown neighborhood, and of the two communities of Regent Park and Cabbagetown. The advantage of this approach is that it allows for a comparison and a discussion of the different conceptualizations of the margin. One could argue, however, that the use of only one case study presents some limits. The principal of these is that the understanding of the theories presented is historically and geographically specific, and thus relative. Nevertheless, this approach seems relevant for the purposes of this investigation in that the aim is the exploration of the meaning and of the usefulness of the concept of the margin. Using one case study is one possible approach to make sense of different conceptualizations and to demonstrate their respective strengths and weaknesses.

This kind of analysis will require both a diachronic and a synchronic approach. The former emphasizes the changes through time of the meaning and the uses of a term taking into consideration the larger societal context to which it corresponds. On the other hand, a synchronic study focuses on the simultaneous existence of different
phenomena. Both approaches will be adopted here: the diachronic perspective will be useful in analyzing the historical aspect of the empirical section of the research; the synchronic point of view will facilitate a comparison of different interpretations, and thus of different notions of the margin. Besides helping to evaluate different conceptualizations, this approach is essential for analyzing the empirical component of this investigation. Bringing concepts and context together will stimulate a discussion on the case study in relation to the theories used to analyze it, and vice versa.

The theoretical part of the investigation is based on a review of the literature on the margin. The discussion will draw on a number of different interpretations and uses of the concept, each of which is analyzed in context. The first mainstream perspective is the modernist understanding of the margin, to which the postmodernist offers an alternative. Border theory presents a third way that resolves the difficulties of the two previous conceptualizations. The empirical part consists of one case study – the Cabbagetown neighborhood in Toronto. The main criterion for this choice is the juxtaposition of the two contrasting communities of Regent Park and Cabbagetown which appears as a concrete example of Sassen’s exploration of the juxtaposition of centres and margins in present day cities. In what ways and to what extent these two communities fit Sassen’s argument will be discussed later.

There are two components to the empirical research which roughly correspond to the diachronic and synchronic dimensions mentioned above. I look first at historical data in search of the forces that have shaped the neighborhood of Cabbagetown. The study of official documents such as plans and requests for projects, government reports on urban and housing policies, as well as media articles – all of which were intended for an audience composed of politicians, planners, and to a certain extent the society at large – provides a good sense of the institutional discourse and practices. The purpose is to find evidence of how the neighborhood has been produced ‘from above’, i.e. in what ways it is the outcome of the power of the centre.
Furthermore, the use of this material is a first step into an analysis of the politics of representation and reveals the dynamics of oppression: what is heard and what is silenced highlights the dialectical relation between the centre and the margin. This first part corresponds more particularly to the modernist perspective which looks at the construction of categories 'from above', the ways in which physical and imagined spaces are imposed by the dominant.

Secondly, I undertook fieldwork in both the communities of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown with the purpose of discovering what constitutes the local, urban and social reality, what is there in terms of social services, community organization and action groups. The fieldwork corresponds to the synchronic dimension of the research and represents the postmodernist approach. Determining the local reality and the representation of the communities themselves will allow the comparison of different perspectives while revealing the experience of the margin 'from below'. Since the focus of the paper is on the concept of the margin, the emphasis of the fieldwork has been put on Regent Park. Cabbagetown, as a manifestation of the centre, stands as a tool to better understand the margin.

I gathered most of the information through individual interviews with representative informants from each of the two communities. For Cabbagetown, I interviewed the executives of the two major, local associations: Joice Guspie, Manager of the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Association, and Peggy Kurtin, President of the Cabbagetown Preservation Association. Joice Guspie has spent all her life in Cabbagetown and Peggy Kurtin has been living there for over sixteen years. In addition, I looked at some of the promotional material provided by them, which reflects the concerns of the community. This includes the upgrading of the commercial area, business owners' and realtors' desire to attract customers, and also the preservation, renovation and restoration of nineteenth century houses.

For Regent Park, my first informant was Richard Milgrom, an architect who has

[A schedule of the interviews and of the events attended can be found in Appendix B.]
been volunteering in Regent Park for almost ten years now and who happens to live in Cabbagetown, at the Spruce Court co-operative housing located one street north of Gerrard. He is part of the North Regent Park Residents' Steering Committee and he has been working with the residents on the redevelopment project of the northeast corner of Regent Park. He led me on my first tour of Regent Park. Adonis Higgins is a social worker at the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition and the coordinator of the Media Arts Program offered by this action group. He is not a Regent Park resident, but he has been involved in the community for over ten years now. Because of his work with the media, his comments on the representation of Regent Park were particularly insightful. David Zapparoli is a previous Regent Park resident, a photographer and youth coordinator at Dixon Hall, one of the major social agencies serving the Regent Park community. His position as a previous resident and as an artist makes him a special informant: he is part of the Regent Park community, and yet he is different from its residents. Patricia Gilbert is a teacher and counselor at the Eastdale C.I. high school two thirds of whose body of students is from Regent Park. She provided me with a poignant account of the hardships faced by children living in Regent Park. Finally, I had the chance to interview John Sewell, previous mayor of Toronto (1980-1982), and previous head manager of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (1986-1988). His position as a politician, however, is somewhat ambiguous. Although he has long been a militant about local interests and is working with local action groups, he is considered as being 'from above' by several of the other informants.

I would like to explain my choice of informants. My aim was not to conduct a survey among the populations of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown. Rather, I was interested in having a glimpse of the life in each of the communities. This is the reason why I decided to interview people whom I thought have a good knowledge of each of the communities. This was easier for Cabbagetown than for Regent Park, not only because the fieldwork was smaller, but also because people were more
accessibility. Interviewing people from Regent Park was a challenge in more than one way. First, as a white, graduate student at the University of Toronto, I felt rather uncomfortable at entering this disadvantaged community. This was the main reason why I did not wish to interview any local residents. There is a problem of voyeurism, as well as the fact that I had nothing to give in return but my work. I thus turned to people who are situated 'in between' — i.e. both inside and outside — who are involved in Regent Park, who have a sense of what is happening there, and yet who do not or who do no longer live there, and have somewhat of an outsider's perspective towards it. These are people such as volunteers (Milgrom), social workers (Higgins), previous resident and artist (Zapparoli), teachers (Gilbert), and to a certain extent local politicians (Sewell).

Furthermore, the interest of interviewing people situated in between lies in their representation of Regent Park and of its residents. This regards the layer of the voices heard and the issue of the construction of images and of identities. My informants had a very strong feeling of the local identity and were able to express it critically. In order to grasp the identity 'from below', I also used the local Regent Park newspaper called Catch da Flava. Of particular relevance was the issue of October 1998 which dealt with the topic of 'neighbourhoodism'. The audience of Catch da Flava is primarily the community of Regent Park itself, and sometimes other disadvantaged communities and/or groups.

Despite my apprehension about interviewing the local population, I had the opportunity to meet two current residents which was a valuable learning experience. Doug Rice has lived in Regent Park North his whole life and is actively involved in the community organization. He is part of the Tenants' Action Group, he is a Regent Park North building representative, and he is an active member of the North Regent Park Residents' Steering Committee. He led me on a tour to show 'his Regent Park'. The second resident I had the chance to interview is Maria Long, a single mother of three children who has been living in Regent Park North and South for ten years. She used
Figure 5: Richard Milgrom’s workshop – ‘Remodeling Regent Park’.
to be active in several action groups, including the Sole Support Mothers' Group and after school support programs, until her third child was born. This is the only time I visited a building and an apartment in Regent Park.

I would like to stress the fact that the image of each community I developed through these interviews is not representative of the identity of the Regent Park residents or of Cabbagetowners. Rather the fieldwork provided me with an insight into the local reality. My interest was in getting a sense of how the identity, the image and the representation of each community is constructed, and whether they correspond to that presented in the official discourse and the media. Keeping in mind the issue of the politics of representation and of how it relates to power relations and the production of space, I tried to understand the relation between the centre and the margin and to find evidence for the dialectical process between the two. Thus, some data are used as evidence, for example the work by David Zapparoli, and others are used as representation, such as *Catch da Flava*. I also took into consideration the fact that representation through history changes and investigated the interesting shifts that have occurred.

I also attended several events that were linked to my research. The first was David Zapparoli’s photographic exhibition "Regent Park. The Public Experiment in Housing" which, in addition to his artwork, included historical material on Regent Park from the City Archives. Then, I participated in ‘Sunday-in-the-Park’, an event celebrating Regent Park and principally geared towards children, by helping Richard Milgrom on his workshop called ‘Remodeling Regent Park’. Through this workshop which is part of his research on the residents' participation in the redevelopment project of the northeast corner of Regent Park, Milgrom was interested in the children’s ideal vision of Regent Park. Using handy play material to remodel buildings of Regent Park North made out of cardboard, most children designed swimming pools, trees and playgrounds on the roofs of the buildings. Finally, I went on one of the guided tours of the present day Cabbagetown organized by the Cabbagetown
Preservation Association.
Chapter 2

The margin 'from above'

In this chapter, I wish to introduce the first interpretation of the concept of the margin, which is that of the modernist view on hegemonic power relations. After a presentation of the theoretical background at the basis of this conceptualization, I will describe the historical development of the Cabbagetown neighborhood since the late 1940's. I will discuss in detail the factors which have led to the construction of Regent Park, and more specifically I will show how the community became marginal. Then, I will examine in what ways and to what extent the juxtaposition of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown corresponds to Sassen’s understanding of the margin and the centre.

The modernist conceptualization of the margin

The characteristic of the modernist approach to theorizing power relations and the production of space is that it considers power to be the expression of a singular dimension of oppression, particularly in terms of class, gender or race (Keith and Pile: 1). This perspective on power relations is based on a bipolar logic of social struggle, which turns into a dialectical interpretation of social relations, and into a binary ordering of both society and space (Soja and Hooper: 185). The key idea is that hegemonic power “actively produces and reproduces difference (...) to create and maintain modes of social and spatial division” (184-5; emphasis in original). It appears that order and control are two essential means to achieve and maintain power for dominant groups. In terms of social relations, the dominant group resorts to labeling social categories in order to define and impose social subjectivities – the
construction of identities – according to a binary ordering of differences: dominant/subordinate, self/other, subject/object, colonizer/colonized (186), and ultimately centre/margin. Similarly, those in power control and regulate the use of space by setting borders and boundaries, which distinguish spaces of purification from spaces of exclusion (Pile: 16). The processes of social labeling and of organizing well defined spaces assure power, order and control in that they are "attempts to defeat, prevent and oppress those who threaten [the dominant's] authority" (27). This represents an imposition of real, imagined and symbolic spaces: physical spaces; identities, communities and groups; images and representations. It is because the production and the uses of these categories fall under the power of the oppressor that they are imposed 'from above'.

The emphasis of the modernist interpretation of power relations is on how hegemonic power is executed and on how it is secured. The belief is that power functions in binary oppositions, with the possibility of manifesting itself through a range of different forms of power relations. Although subordinate groups are part of the dialectical relationship of hegemony, their position is usually thought of as responding or reacting to the dominant practices. They offer different degrees of opposition, in a way that makes them conform to the hegemonic power, order and control, and thus reproduce it, even if sometimes they take advantage of it. It is only in exceptional circumstances such as revolutions that the oppressed overcome the hegemonic power and ideology through an open and complete resistance to their oppressor's practices.

Furthermore, in the modernist understanding of power relations, space is conceptualized as being static, in the sense that its functions and uses are well defined. These are representative of what space is, of what it contains, and of what takes place in it. In other words, the distinct meaning of space represents the dominant ideology and the organization of social relations according to it. Indeed, Harvey stresses "how vital spatial ordering is to the actual practices and institutions of
a power-laden social process" (1996: 230). From this perspective, the process of space making is in the realm and control of power, which keeps producing and reproducing the differences that are advantageous to its continued empowerment (Soja and Hooper: 184-5). Unless the opposition of oppressed groups proves to be successful, there is little room for social and spatial change in this approach.

The question I will try to answer here is how the modernist conceptualization of the margin (and of the centre) is useful for understanding urban processes. In order to provide an answer I will focus on Regent Park, lessening my attention on Cabbagetown, and analyze in what ways the geographical area lying south of Gerrard St. corresponds to the modernist interpretation of the margin. The reason for this shift in emphasis lies in the assumption that the margin is produced and imposed by the centre. Thus, what I want to understand is how the margin, i.e. Regent Park, is produced. I will investigate how Regent Park has become marginal not only as a physical space but also as an imagined and as a symbolic space through the hegemonic discourse and practices. I will show that as the outcome, the expression and the representation of power relations, it is a political product.

The term centre designates two different aspects of the dominant group. The first is the government as the hegemonic power that has shaped the area. The centre stands as the institutional authority, the official discourse and practices on urban planning and housing policies that have led to the construction of the Regent Park public housing project. But the centre also refers to present day Cabbagetown. In the second sense, the centre is a physical, imagined and symbolic space. Cabbagetown is the centre in that it is the elite’s residential neighborhood, it represents the dominant community, and it symbolizes the hegemonic ideology. The two aspects of the centre are linked: the first is the exercise of hegemonic power, while the second is its physical, imagined and symbolic dimension. I will discuss how Regent Park relates to both these centres.
The Institutional discourse and practices on Regent Park

In the modernist understanding of power relations, the margin is the outcome of hegemonic power relations; it is a real, imagined and symbolic space imposed 'from above'. Based on a simple binary relationship between the dominant and the subordinate, this perspective underlines the processes through which the centre executes its power, by producing and labeling space according to its ideology in such a way as to secure its interests, thus reproducing unequal hegemonic relations. Space is seen not only as a reflection of power relations themselves, but also as representative of the hegemonic ideology. It is shaped and used to work to the advantage of the centre.

With regard to the case study, it is important to stress the fact that the original Cabbagetown, which used to be one physical neighborhood and one socioeconomic and cultural community until the Second World War, is divided today into Regent Park and the gentrified Cabbagetown. The geographical area which corresponds to Old Cabbagetown comprises now two distinct, separate, yet juxtaposed communities. In order to understand the origins of the split of the neighborhood, I will investigate the factors and forces that have formed the area since the Second World War. Focusing primarily on Regent Park, I will investigate the history of urban planning and housing policies that have transformed the neighborhood. I will examine first how Regent Park was built as a physical space, then as an imagined space, with the purpose of showing how it became marginal. I will analyze how the government's representation of Regent Park led to the shift in the media image from a success story to that of a bad neighborhood. The combined impact of the institutional representation and the media image represents the symbolic space at the basis of the societal attitude toward poverty, homelessness, immigration, and even family values.²

Using the modernist understanding of hegemonic power relations and thus their production of space I will also look at how Regent Park as a marginal space

² Interestingly, the opposite happened to Cabbagetown: from being a margin it shifted to representing the centre. I will return to this issue in Chapter 4.
relates to the institutional discourse and practices. Because this approach to power relations is based on a simple dialectical relationship, the binary structure of the centre and the margin, the margin is a label imposed by the elite. What is defined as being the margin depends entirely on the hegemonic ideology, this being in terms of the physical production of space, or the construction of identity and images. This is the reason why the issue of the politics of representation is relevant for this discussion. The modernist emphasis on binary oppositions further brings us to question the role of the centre and of the margin in relation to one another. Finally, space is not only the product of the centre, the outcome of its relation to the margin, it also is the medium that reproduces unequal power relations.

Historically, the split of Old Cabbagetown into the two present day communities finds its origins in the Bruce Report of 1934 prepared by the Lieutenant-Governor's Committee on Housing Conditions in Toronto. The task of this committee was to discover the slum conditions in Toronto, their remedies and how authorities should deal with them. Among the areas inspected, a large section in the south-eastern part of the City called Moss Park – the area between the Don River and Sherbourne St., south of Carlton St. – was identified as containing the worst housing conditions in Toronto (MTHA, June 1952: 2). The intensive study of the area revealed that about 96% of the houses fell below the minimum of the amenities standard (Rose, 1958: 40). Furthermore, the Bruce Report emphasized for the first time the need to rehabilitate the future area of Regent Park. Moss Park was the most challenging slum clearance and rehabilitation area of Toronto, and today contains among the highest concentrations of social, public and assisted housing in the metropolitan area of Toronto. However, contrary to the United States and the United Kingdom, Canada did not engage in programs of slum clearance and public housing development as an economic measure during the Depression years. The war delayed the progress of rehabilitation, and it was not until 1946, when the postwar conditions made it possible and when housing shortage had become a serious problem in Toronto, that the
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Regent Park public housing project was seriously considered. This made it the first rehabilitation and public housing scheme in Canada, "and therefore a national experiment" (Hamilton, 1952).

**Regent Park as a physical space**

The practice of urban rehabilitation through slum clearance before the Second World War in the United States and in the United Kingdom reflects the prevailing ideas on urban development at the time. This kind of project was more than an experiment in modern urban planning. It was a social reform "based on the idea that the old city had to be replaced, not simply modified" (Sewell, 1993: 72-4). In Canada, the history of public housing is recent, and it actually starts with the Regent Park project. Before the Bruce Report, the government had no interest in housing as a social and economic measure, and no authority or government agency was responsible for housing. It was only after 1934 that legislation, action and procedures were slowly put into place, and this is probably thanks to the determination of small groups of people in citizens' organization. Albert Rose explains in detail how public housing did not "just happen", but was the result of community action (Chapter 5).

The citizens' organization was motivated by the strong, postwar belief in the role of the community and the responsibility of the welfare state which shaped the ideology on civic rights and duties. The latter not only stressed the fact that social and economic welfare fell under the responsibility of the government, it also established links between problems of employment, education, health and housing. This means that it was recognized that physical conditions such as housing are related to human welfare. Second, society realized that helping the disadvantaged by solving social and economic problems implied an improvement in the health and welfare of the community as a whole. Finally, because the community would benefit from the improvements, and since their costs would decrease in the long run, it was believed that welfare should be publicly financed.
Source: Housing Authority of Toronto, 1861.

Figure 7: Regent Park Knot as presented in an architect's drawing, about 1948.
Because it was thought that a municipality should be responsible for its own improvement, including housing, slum clearance and rehabilitation, the municipal government was charged with carrying the Regent Park public housing project (Rose: 59). The citizens' determination asked for a housing program, and on January 1, 1947, the Regent Park public housing project was approved by a vote of five to three at municipal elections (HAT, 1951: 5). The civic-minded groups played a major role into making this possible, but so did the then Mayor, Robert H. Saunders, and the public at large, the electors who voted in favor of the project (Rose: 63-68).

At the time of its construction, Regent Park embodied the most advanced ideas in planning. In addition to progressive a design and plan for construction, great care was taken to insure the successful resettlement of the residents. Most of the new buildings were built on vacant lots before the demolition of the original houses (Shein, 1987: 64). Started in 1947, the 1289 units of the project were completed by the late 1950's. The municipal government covered most of its $16 million cost, with special assistance from the Province of Ontario and the federal government. In 1957, Regent Park South was planned for the area extending south of Dundas St. and bounded by River, Shuter and Regent Streets. The design and the financing of this project, however, were somewhat different from the previous one.

Regent Park is the product of experts on housing issues, including politicians, architects and planning consultants, as well as social and welfare specialists, and even clergymen. All of the latter were heavily involved in the entire process of building Regent Park, from the preliminary study, to the choice of a proposal, to the design of the plan, to the construction itself and the adjustments it required (Shein: 64).

Although Toronto had "no slums in the generally accepted meaning of the word" (HAT, 1951: 1), the Bruce Report showed that the main problems of a number of residential areas were the substandard conditions of housing, sanitation and crowding. In addition, the intensive study of Moss Park revealed some further concerns. The three most important were the lack of green, open space; the presence
The Toronto Housing Authority Board yesterday inspected sections of the area which they will administer under the city's rehousing plan. One of the worst slum streets in the area is Wilmot Ave, which Mayor Saunders and other members of the board scrutinize at left. Crowding conditions are deplorable. A group of youngsters on Wilmot Ave, are shown at right. Playgrounds are inadequate.
of industrial and commercial activity which significantly reduced the quality of life – a number of small factories and businesses were located in the area, such as breweries and distilleries; and the street pattern that made the neighborhood unsafe for the numerous children living there.

Particular attention was paid to the design of the Regent Park project because of the innovative ideas of that time on how environment contributed to welfare. It was strongly believed that adequate housing conditions would improve both the physical and the mental health of disadvantaged groups, thus decreasing socioeconomic problems. It appears that the plan of Regent Park is the direct outcome of what was seen as a problem and of what was considered its remedy at that time. This explains the overemphasis on green, open space, the elimination of commercial, not to mention industrial, activity altogether, and the redesign of the street pattern to prevent through traffic (HAT, 1951: 1-2). The design of the units themselves, which were clean, large, sun-filled and heated, and which provided necessary facilities such as a stove, a refrigerator, and a full bathroom in each unit, and laundry in each building, was also based on modern ideas about the physical and psychological improvements brought by adequate housing conditions. It is important to stress that for some residents, this was the first experience of hot and cold running water (Coopersmith: 66).

Regent Park as an imagined space

In the short term, the project was a success from several points of view. First, the tenants themselves expressed great satisfaction at the new housing conditions which were an immense step above what they were replacing (Zapparoli, 1999: 16). Rose (Chapter 9) and official documents of the 1950’s (MTHA, 1958) discuss how the physical improvements have been followed by psychological and economic benefits (although they provide no evidence). Police reports stress the decrease in fire hazard,

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10 These comments on social pathologies are only mentioned to illustrate the hegemonic ideology and discourse but will not be discussed in detail.
LAST DAY IN OLD HOME—GLAD DAY IN NEW

...the new modern kitchen being inspected by their sister Joan and Mrs. Bluet and Mrs. family moves into shining new quarters at the Regent Park housing unit...

Billy and Margaret Bluet, two of five children of Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Bluet of 218 Sumach St., wash up the dishes for the last time at the old sink in their home at 218 Sumach St., which offers startling contrast to...
crime and delinquency. These represent savings on public costs to which one can add the tenfold increase in tax collection in the community by the time of its completion (Zapparoli: 16). Furthermore, all were pleased to announce the betterment of children's performance at school. Regent Park's success confirmed the belief by social workers, doctors, and teachers among others that the project made a tremendous difference in the life of the rehoused families, and by officials that it benefited the community at large.

The project was largely covered by the press throughout its various phases, from before the clearance — showing poor children playing in the dirty streets and rundown houses —, to the politicians presence on the site during its construction — at the cornerstone ceremony —, and especially when the first residents moved into the new units of the Regent Park housing complex (NFB, 1953). A great deal has been said on the media coverage regarding Regent Park, and especially on the representation of the residents (Shein, 1987; Sinclair, 1989; Zapparoli, 1999). Brian Shein proceeds to a detailed analysis of the different stages of the media image of Regent Park. He underlines particularly the portrayal during the late 1940's of the residents' passivity and helplessness. According to him, poor children were largely photographed to emphasize the pathos and the irresponsibility of poor people (64-5). This idea runs along the line of the paternalistic attitude of the welfare state and of the various experts whose role was to help the poor. Zapparoli thinks that these images are "a patronizing look at low-income families" and that they reflect "an optimism of which, in many ways, Regent Park was a product" (16). He even writes that the "media covered the community when it wanted a positive story" (20; emphasis in original).

However, the honeymoon for Regent Park lasted only for about fifteen years. By the mid-1960's, a significant shift took place in the official discourse, not only on Regent Park but on public housing in general, and the media began to represent Regent Park in negative terms (Zapparoli: 22).

Since the mid-1980's, "Regent Park has continued to endure constant 'cheap
shots', labeling, and misinformation from the mass media" (Zapparoli: 30). Shein writes that it is "presented either dehumanized and filled with pathos", at an early stage, "or a menacing 'tenement jungle' in which ordinary teenage necking is a sociopathic act", at a later time (65). The most commonly used metaphors to depict Regent Park are the prison and an urban jungle which not only isolate the poor people from the rest of the society, but also "avoid dealing with real problems – jobs, food, shelter, clothing, health care, child care, old age" (ibid.). Most articles of the local media on Regent Park concern such issues as prostitution and drug dealing, or cover events of crime and violence taking place around such matters (NFB, 1994).

The reasons behind the shift in the representation of Regent Park are multiple and complex (Sewell, 1994: Chapter 8; Zapparoli, personal interview). There is first a change in the public's beliefs about civic rights and duties, and welfare, as well as in the general attitude toward such issues as poverty. These are reflected in the changing ideas on urban planning and housing policies. This set of changes did not take place independently however, but is linked to larger societal processes. One of these comes from the economic sphere. Developers feared the possible competition of public housing on the market, at a time marked with the dream of home ownership and a boom in consumption, and thus pressured governments to slow down and eventually stop housing programs.

The tenants of public housing projects themselves started expressing their dissatisfaction with the administration that ruled their lives and began organizing their own associations. These new movements were looked at critically by the outside society because it was believed that disadvantaged groups should simply be happy with what they were given by the larger community and have no say in it whatsoever. Finally, faced with all these tensions and influenced by new ideas on urban planning, housing and social policies, the government modified its approach for dealing with such issues altogether. There is strong evidence for the shift in the institutional discourse and practices regarding public housing, housing programs and policies in
number of official documents (Helleyer Report, 1969; Dennis and Fish, 1972; CMHC, 1990).

Regent Park as a marginal space

What I would like to demonstrate is that Regent Park embodies and symbolizes the centre's ideas about the margin. As a physical space, the public housing project was entirely produced and imposed by the centre. First, its construction was made possible thanks to the action, organization and determination of civic-minded groups which are generally led by a well-intentioned, philanthropic elite. Then, the project was under the responsibility, not to say power, of the government, which was in charge of the legal procedures, the construction, the cost and the administration of Regent Park. Finally, it was designed and planned by experts such as architects, planners, and social specialists. All of the above categories are part of the institutions that govern society, and thus represent the dominant group. Conforming to the modernist understanding of hegemony, Regent Park as a physical space was produced by the centre.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to clarify the context in which the construction of Regent Park took place. In the postwar era, the prevailing belief was that modernism and progress were the remedy to all human problems. Jennifer Sinclair explains that “Regent Park North was influenced by modernist ideology, the imperative of planning, but it was essentially an exercise in pragmatism (...) it was not the imposition of modernist ideology, but a product of activism on the part of a local and vocal citizens’ group” (1989: 17; she qualifies the design of the project as banal, almost benign when compared to some other experiments made in Germany). Despite the fact that Regent Park is not the imposition of modernist ideology itself, it is the product of the hegemonic ideas through the means of modernism. The ultimate objective driving the citizens’ action for the provision of adequate, suitable and affordable housing was the belief that public housing would solve other socioeconomic problems, and thus
contribute to the improvement of the community at large.

Furthermore, the construction of Regent Park itself was imposed in the sense that the local population had no say in a project that affected it directly. The experts worked without consulting the residents, and without their participation. The irony goes so far that only taxpayers could vote in municipal elections, and they approved of the Regent Park project, but not those poor people who were to live in the new housing. Despite the fact that great care was put into the design of the project and into the resettlement of the population, the project was carried out with a paternalistic attitude. The building of Regent Park was based on the assumption that progress was successful through a 'top-down' approach: authorities had both the power and the knowledge to bring about human welfare. Politicians, social experts, citizens' groups and even the bureaucratic administration behaved with the same paternalism toward the poor, passive and helpless residents who, it was thought, needed to be guided for their own welfare.

According to Shein, there are several ironies in the ways in which the Regent Park project was imposed. First, the people who lived in the area before the slum clearance were not all poor and/or receiving welfare assistance; some even owned the houses they were living in, which implies that not all residents were eligible to move into the new public housing units. Further, the population became helpless because of the rehabilitation project which destroyed the structure of the community: there no longer were local centres of gathering such as stores and the pub, and particularly there no longer were local job opportunities which means that people had to find work outside the area (64). But what is probably most ironical about the imposition of Regent Park is that the residents were not only left out of the design, planning and construction process of the project, they were also denied access to the control of their neighborhood. Regent Park was and is run by a paternalistic, bureaucratic administration. The management and the maintenance of the public housing project are in the hands of government appointed officials and staff.
Here, we begin to see the simple dialectical relationship between the dominant and the oppressed which is at the basis of the hegemonic interpretation of power relations: space is produced and imposed by the group in power upon those who are governed by it, in the literal sense in the case of the Regent Park residents. Thus, Regent Park represents the power of the centre over a disadvantaged population, and in addition it reflects the centre’s ideas about how to deal with poverty, housing, and socioeconomic problems in general.

But how and why did Regent Park become a marginal space? It was not marginal right from the start of the construction of the public housing project. On the contrary, in the early years, Regent Park was among the top priorities and of primary interest to the centre. Not only that, it was also considered a successful story and widely mediatized as such, even without concrete evidence to support this image. What is then the explanation behind the downfall of Regent Park which made it a margin? It is in the shifts of Regent Park’s representation that appears the source for an answer. The images of Regent Park reflect the centre’s ideas about public housing and its attitude toward social issues. As the hegemonic ideology changed so did the representation of Regent Park: its image was positive as long as it corresponded to the mainstream welfare programs. But as soon as public housing lost its privileged position as a solution to social problems and suffered from numerous criticisms, so did the image of Regent Park which then became marginal. Thus, it is because the centre’s ideology is expressed through images that the history of Regent Park’s representation is useful for clarifying why, how, and when it became marginal.

Here, we need to establish a link between the production of space and the construction of images. Looking at the politics of representation will be helpful for discussing the ways in which physical marginality is tied to other forms of marginality, imagined and symbolic. The question is: what was the impact of the shift in Regent Park’s image? It seems that it is the representation of Regent Park that gradually

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11 This issue will be further investigated in Chapter 3 and 4. It will lead to a discussion on the role of discourse and practices in the production of space.
made it marginal. It is after the marginalization of Regent Park’s image that it became marginal as a physical space as well. Thus Regent Park was first produced physically, but it was gradually imposed as a margin as the interests of the centre changed. In other words, space, be it physical or imagined, is both produced and labeled according to the dominant group’s interests.

The study of the representation of Regent Park both in the institutional discourse and in the media allows us to move a step further. Regent Park is the physical product of the centre, but it also is the centre’s imagined space. Regent Park is an imagined space in several ways. It is imagined in a literal sense to the extent that for society at large, Regent Park exists through its images and its representation, since most people have not physically visited the public housing project. But it also is an imagined space in that Regent Park reflects the dominant ideas about what are the socioeconomic problems and how they are to be dealt with. Thus, the shift in the representation of Regent Park reveals how its image is constructed by the centre, and that the origins of its marginality are to be found at the centre. It is because the image of Regent Park became marginal that it became physically marginal. As explained, the factors that have led to the image shift are multiple and complex: changing ideas about housing, welfare and poverty; societal values (home ownership); economic forces (consumption and developers); and institutional discourse and practices. Nevertheless, it seems that the official ideology changed because of the general pressure. Then, the institutional representation influenced the media, which in turn shaped the larger society’s image of Regent Park, building an imagined marginal space.

Shein’s article makes explicit the problem of the complex link between reality and the construction of images, thus showing the impact of imagined space on physical space. This is the link between the politics of representation and the production of space. Shein explains that the portrayal of Regent Park is inadequate, that the images presented in the media do not reflect the reality of Regent Park. He
writes that "Regent Park becomes the convenient screen on which journalists project their naked-city fantasies, incidentally highlighting their own wishful self-image as streetwise reporters" (65). Also, "Regent Park has long been presented as a threatening force in our city" (68). These, however, are misconceptions and distortions of reality, because if we look closely the "facts are otherwise" (65). Nevertheless, it is these images that are at the basis of Regent Park's marginality, both physical and imagined. They have formed the larger society's vision (the centre) about Regent Park (the margin), but they have also shaped the residents' very identity and vision of themselves: they have been assigned not only the physical space of the public housing project, but also the imagined space of their community. Regent Park, as a physical and as an imagined space, has been produced and imposed by the centre.

Thus this analysis of the production of Regent Park shows how space reflects hegemonic power relations, and embodies the dominant's interests in relation to the oppressed. In the conclusion of this chapter, I will discuss how Regent Park symbolizes the centre's ideology with regard to the margin, but before that I wish to return to Sassen's statement about the juxtaposition of the centre and the margin. In light of the hegemonic interpretation of the margin, I wish to examine in what ways Regent Park and Cabbagetown correspond to this understanding of the margin and the centre.

Regent Park and Cabbagetown: margin and centre?

Among the principal criteria for choosing the Cabbagetown neighborhood as a case study is the fact that it is composed of two, distinct communities each of which represents an extreme in its kind. Regent Park is a public housing project said to be the poorest neighborhood of Toronto. Its name is associated with images of crime and violence; its residents are characterized as being poor and of ethnic origin, with a high rate of unemployment, and with almost 40% of the families headed by single mothers. Cabbagetown, on the other hand, is a relatively gentrified neighborhood in
which it is fashionable to live. Its reputation is that of a stable community composed of a white, Anglo-Saxon, middle and upper class population proud of its image. How is the radically contrasting representation of these two juxtaposed communities to be interpreted?

If we look more closely, Regent Park appears as a family area, with families of a significantly large size. It also is a popular immigrant, and especially recent immigrant, neighborhood whose residents' country of origin is generally located in the less developed part of the world. Socioeconomically, Regent Park is an extremely disadvantaged part of the city, concentrating many unemployed and/or underemployed residents, low income residents, as well as many female headed families. In contrast, Cabbagetown has a large share of non-family households, singles and couples without children. The few families living in this area tend to be small. The population is socioculturally homogeneous and comprises some of the most well-to-do residents of Toronto. These characteristics seem to conform to and confirm the images of the two neighborhoods mentioned above. How then can we explain the juxtaposition of Regent Park and Cabbagetown? What does it reveal in terms of the forces at play in urban social processes?

The juxtaposition of these two extremes recalls Sassen's statement that in contemporary cities the centre and the margin exist next to one another. Thus we can ask ourselves in what ways and to what extent Regent Park and Cabbagetown fit Sassen's statement on the juxtaposition of the centre and the margin. Furthermore, we may also wonder whether they match her conceptualization of the centre and the margin. I will attempt to answer these questions by analyzing the data presented in the introductory chapter in light of Sassen's interpretation.

Sassen's argument is to be considered at the local, urban level, i.e from the point of view of the internal structure and organization of the city. It is important to keep in mind that Cabbagetown is primarily a residential neighborhood, with some commercial activity taking place on Parliament St., which is foremost aimed at the
local population. The Cabbagetown neighborhood is geographically central in that it is located in the vicinity of downtown Toronto, close to the commercial, financial, and sociocultural activity of the city. Furthermore, it benefits from an efficient public transportation. However, Sassen makes it clear that the emergence of new centres and margins in contemporary cities is not in terms of physical location, but rather is part of a political, economic, social, and cultural process of uneven geographical development. In order to determine whether the Cabbagetown neighborhood is in accord with Sassen’s use of the centre-margin metaphor, I will look at the internal characteristics of the geographical area under study. This is the reason why I will be discussing Regent Park and Cabbagetown as two distinct communities.

In Sassen’s idea, the margin is a physically decaying and/or abandoned area, for example a deindustrialized site, or one that suffers from disinvestment (1991: Chapter 9; 1994b: 54-6). Generally, the margin presents low real estate values with the consequence that it often is of no interest to developers and politicians. It is abandoned physically, and also in terms of urban policy. Economically, the margin is underdeveloped in that it does not accommodate the currently leading economic activities which in Sassen’s opinion are the financial industry and service sector. Finally, the margin stands for disadvantaged groups as well, those who are politically and socioeconomically powerless: low skilled and low income workers, immigrants, homeless people, and to a certain extent people such as single mothers.

Regent Park is a marginal space according to several of Sassen’s criteria. First of all, it is a public housing project, which ties together most of the problems that make it a margin. Although Regent Park is not abandoned nor in a bad physical state of decay, it is marginal from the point of view of its design. It is architecturally cut off from the remaining neighborhood and the design of the buildings itself presents many problems: there is too much open space belonging to nobody which leads to crime and vandalism; the project turns inward; and there are major security problems within the buildings. In terms of its physical condition, the structure of the buildings is
relatively sound, but nevertheless the internal conditions are bad (CMHC, 1990). Regent Park suffers from inadequate maintenance presenting such problems as inefficient facilities (laundry, garbage), decaying paint, repairs (vandalism), pests, to mention only a few. For a fifty year old project it is in a fairly good state; the problem is more in the important details of everyday comfort and quality of life. A factor related to the relatively decaying conditions and the undesirability of living there is the low real estate value of the area. The lack of ownership, what Sassen would interpret as disinvestment, is simply explained by the fact that the project is government owned. As a public housing project, Regent Park is meant for low income groups. This is the reason why all units are rented and rents, being income-geared, are low. It is not quite true that the area where Regent Park lies has a low real estate value. In fact, if it were not government owned, the area would have an incredibly high value considering its location at the vicinity of downtown Toronto.

Regent Park is not exactly a desirable neighborhood to live in, not only because of its design, but also, for some, due to the socioeconomic and to the sociocultural characteristics of its residents. It concentrates a disadvantaged population of unemployed, underemployed, low skilled workers, (recent) immigrants, single mothers, and a significant youth population. It is not clear in what ways the combination of the project’s design and the composition of the population are the cause of the local problem of crime and violence. It is debatable whether the link between the two is more a potential than a real threat to the population. Nevertheless, the problem of security adds to the discomforts of life and makes the housing conditions particularly unhealthy for families with children and for single mothers. Evidence for the undesirability of living in Regent Park is the high rate of tenants’ turnover. However, this factor needs to be interpreted carefully. It should be kept in mind that Regent Park is a public housing project which is meant to be a transitional

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12 We may wonder to what extent the politicians’ and the developers’ disinterest in the area is a form of speculation meant to drive the public housing residents out of the area in order to redevelop this valuable part of the city for market purposes. The same question arises with regard to the redevelopment project for the northeast corner of Regent Park.
form of housing. It is thus expected to have a certain rate of turnover. On the other hand, however, there is part of the population that is very stable with some families living in Regent Park for several generations. In other words, we note two trends among the residents: either people move out as soon as they can afford to do so, or they stay there, sometimes for several generations, probably because they are unable to move upward.

Regent Park is also economically underdeveloped from several points of view. First, the population itself is economically disadvantaged (unemployed, low income, low skilled). But again, this concentration is explained by the fact that it is a housing project intended for low income groups. Then, the design of the project makes it economically underdeveloped in that it is entirely residential; there is no commercial activity on the site itself. Furthermore, the services provided to the local population are very limited. Originally, there were no local community services or recreational facilities and those existing now are almost entirely community led and the result of local action. If one finds a relatively good range of services today, it is because these have been stimulated artificially. What I mean by artificially is that these services are not the natural result of the market, the service industry that serves the community at large. Rather these are provided by non-profit action groups which try to help organize Regent Park residents. Also, these services do not compare with the high standard and competitive services developed by leading sectors. On the contrary, these take the form of self-help action and barely respond to the local needs, especially in terms of recreational facilities for children or support activities for disadvantaged and distressed residents, as well as for recent immigrants.

The underdevelopment of local services is further linked to the issue of the administration and the management of the public housing project. The story of the Regent Park administration itself is filled with ironies and contradictions. The most important one probably is the transfer of the management from the provincial government to a municipal body, the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority. There
have also been endless problems in relation to the appointment of officials and administration staff. All of these signify Regent Park’s absence from the government’s and the politicians’ agenda. The well-being of the residents, and even social issues in general, are no longer among their priorities. The area is underdeveloped because of the absence of private services on the one hand, and because of management and maintenance problems on the other. Thus Regent Park as a public housing area presents no interest to politicians and developers. Another source of evidence for this lack of interest is the long and painful process of the redevelopment project for the northeast corner of Regent Park. Its failure symbolizes the lack of concern by the centre, not only the government but also the other powerful actors involved such as the developer. The story of this project further highlights that no matter how active and successful the community is in organizing itself, it remains rather powerless in the process of decision making.

Thus Regent Park appears as a margin from a political, socioeconomic, ethnic — if not racial — and gender perspective. Could we go as far as to say that it is Toronto’s ghetto? In the previous section I explained in what ways Regent Park corresponds to the modernist conceptualization of the margin: it has been produced and imposed through the discourse and the practices of the centre. The question now is to what extent does it match Sassen’s understanding of the margin in contemporary cities? Despite the fact that it fits several of her criteria — a certain level of physical decay, political disinterest, economic underdevelopment — Regent Park differs from her definition in some subtle ways. Above all, it is important to keep in mind that Regent Park is a public housing project. This is a key factor that explains several of the characteristics of Regent Park that make it seem to correspond to Sassen’s margin. These have been mentioned above, and they include the low real estate value of the area, the concentration of a disadvantaged population, and so forth. We may wonder whether Regent Park’s marginality is due to its being a public housing

\[\text{13 I will elaborate on this issue in the following chapters.}\]

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project, and to what extent does this very fact does not really make it a margin.

Such characteristics as the low real estate value, the absence of home ownership, the concentration of low income groups and disadvantaged population are to be expected in a public housing project, and thus are not the factors that make it a margin. On the other hand, the physical decay of the buildings, the absence of social services, and the political abandonment of the area are elements that conform to Sassen's conceptualization of the margin. Nevertheless, there is one aspect of Regent Park that appears problematic, both in light of the modernist interpretation of power relations and the production of space, and of Sassen's definition of the margin. This is the high degree of community organization and the local action that provides the residents with the services they need. With regard to the modernist perspective, there is no explanation for grasping the full meaning of the empowerment of subordinate groups besides that of a form of resistance against the dominant group. Sassen's conceptualization of the margin also lacks the necessary tools to interpret the complexity of this phenomenon.

Then, Sassen defines the new centres as being those areas which are highly developed and specialized, which are economically and politically central, i.e. where the leading economic and industrial activities (finance and service sector), and the processes of decision making take place (points of control and command; 1991: Chapter 7 and 9). The centre takes the shape of luxury offices and residences, it manifests itself in gentrified areas with high real estate values, and in those areas where the most advanced services are provided. These usually are at the centre of the politicians' and developers' interests, and are controlled by the powerful.

As a high standard residential community, Cabbagetown corresponds to Sassen's definition of the centre in several ways. It obviously is a gentrified area with particularly high real estate values. Architecturally, the neighborhood is composed of upgraded and renovated Victorian houses, most of which are owned, with a particularly high rate of homeowner families. The average sale price is around
$300,000, but some houses are sold for as much as $500,000, and even $700,000 (Kurtin, personal interview). Cabbagetown is among the most desirable and fashionable neighborhoods in downtown Toronto according to the Toronto Life "1999 Real Estate Guide" and to the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area promotional material. This is the reason why this neighborhood lies at the heart of real estate agents' interests, and probably at that of politicians and developers as well.

In terms of the composition of its population, the Cabbagetown community is composed of the socioeconomically well-to-do, or yuppies: well educated and high income group professionals (university professors, media, arts, liberal arts; Kurtin, personal interview). Most couples are young professionals with both members active, or middle aged couples whose children have left; there also is an important gay population whose presence is very beneficial to the character of the community; and there are a few families with children (Guspie, personal interview). Cabbagetown is economically developed in that its population is part of the upper income group. It is also developed in that the area is of mixed use: one can find restaurants and corner stores in the residential part of the neighborhood. Nevertheless, most of the commercial activity takes place on Parliament St. which according to the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area and the Cabbagetown Preservation Association is part of the Cabbagetown community. The services provided in the area are on the upper end of the scale with nice restaurants and cafés, some fashion and design shops, and lots of flower shops. Kurtin underlined the excessive number of cafés and flower shops that have mushroomed on the strip. These reflect the contemporary consumption culture and industry that drive economy.

The community is homogeneous and seems well organized. Its concern is less in providing local services than in defending local interests such as real estate values, and the privileged quality of life. This stands as an important contrast to the 'survival strategies' developed in Regent Park. Cabbagetown residents can afford and sometimes prefer to use higher scale services outside the area. For example, most
children are sent to private schools outside the neighborhood, and few of them attend the local public schools (Kurtin, personal interview). One reason for this choice is probably because local schools are not as exclusive, and also because some parents wish to avoid their children being around Regent Park youth.

The Cabbagetown community is conscious of its own image, and of the level and the quality of its development. This is the main function of the two local organizations: the Cabbagetown Preservation Association and the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area. The community appears to be at the centre of politicians’ and developers’ interests: the CPA is successful in preserving the area, and the project of designating the area as preservation heritage is working well and quickly (Kurtin, personal interview). The Old Cabbagetown BIA works at attracting more upgraded businesses and provides some financial support to those business owners who wish to improve their business’ look (Guspie, personal interview). In other words, the community is rather powerful in taking decisions regarding its neighborhood, thanks to the two associations.

Yet, it should be underlined that economically, Cabbagetown does not exactly correspond to Sassen’s conceptualization of the centre. The commercial area on Parliament St. is not as upscale, as gentrified as in Sassen’s definition. The community of Cabbagetown is aware of this factor, and it is trying to bring in more upscale businesses. This is the very purpose of the Old Cabbagetown BIA. Also, I found out that Cabbagetowners are not satisfied with the commercial strip on Parliament St. Apparently, the businesses do not fulfill Cabbagetowners’ needs: the kinds of stores that are there are inadequate and they are not good enough (Kurtin, personal interview). It is interesting to note that Regent Park residents, on the other hand, are quite content because the shops provide them with most of what they need at affordable prices, and they do not need to go out of the neighborhood (Maria Long and Doug Rice, personal interview).

Although Cabbagetown presents most of the characteristics of Sassen’s
understanding of the centre, it does not entirely satisfy her definition. In other words, it cannot be said to be or to represent the centre from a general point of view. Thus both Regent Park and Cabbagetown, respectively, do not correspond to Sassen's conceptualization of the margin and the centre in absolutely every way. It appears that there are several margins and several centres, that the interpretation of what is the margin and what is the centre is relational. This is the reason why we need to reconsider the modernist conceptualization of the margin, and in turn Sassen's statement on the juxtaposition of the centre and the margin.

Conclusion

According to the modernist perspective, space is the outcome of hegemonic power relations. In the analysis, I explained how Regent Park was imposed by the centre both as a physical and as an imagined margin. First, I showed how it was produced by the institutional discourse and practices, and then I discussed how it was made marginal. Analyzing the shifts that took place in the official representation and the media image of Regent Park, I established an important link between the production of space and the politics of representation. By producing space and by labeling it, the centre ensures the spatial order and control which enables it to maintain its power. In the modernist interpretation of power relations, the centre produces and reproduces difference through space. It is because the centre has power and the margin is powerless that the margin is produced and defined by the centre. The centre takes form at different scales: the government, the institutions, politicians, but also experts in planning and social specialists. With regard to the case study, the centre has a paternalistic attitude and as a welfare state seems well intentioned. On the other hand, the margin is both the physical and the imagined space of Regent Park whose residents are portrayed as poor, helpless and passive, or as bad, dangerous and violent.

As the outcome of power relations, space is political, but it is also politicized. In
addition to reflecting unequal power relations, space symbolizes the hegemonic ideology. In the case of Regent Park, the public housing project is the product of the centre and reflects its power, yet at the same time it symbolizes the centre's ideas and attitude toward such issues as poverty and unemployment, homelessness and housing, immigration and race/ethnicity, and even gender and family structure. The representation of the margin reflects the larger societal ideas and values toward these issues and how these are being dealt with. For example, the administration, management and maintenance of Regent Park mirror the government's policies on poverty and housing; the ethnic composition of its population results from immigration policies; the presence of a significant number of single mothers reveals policies on parenthood. Regent Park stands as a political, socioeconomic and cultural symbol.

How useful is the modernist approach in making sense of what is the margin, and thus of understanding power relations and larger societal processes and phenomena? This conceptualization is useful in explaining the ways in which dominant groups execute and secure their power. It sheds light on the forces and factors that have led to the production of Regent Park, answering the question of how it was produced and of how it became marginal. Nevertheless, it does not explain everything. For example, what is at the margin does not always correspond to what is thought to be the margin. More specifically, the modernist perspective is not helpful in interpreting what is happening from the point of view of the oppressed.

The shortcomings of the modernist conceptualization stem from the fact that power relations are only considered from the point of view of the centre. Thus the centre and the margin are opposed in a simple dialectical structure. This problem comes down to the question of politics of representation, the construction of identity and difference. From the modernist point of view, the margin is defined by the centre. But what is the margin's representation of itself? Does it passively accept and correspond to the centre's labeling? And ultimately, what is the margin's relation to
the centre? We saw that in the case of Regent Park, its image in the media is a misconception of its reality. Since there is an inadequacy between the centre's image and the margin's reality, we need to investigate the margin's experience.

Furthermore, there is no space for different forms of power in the modernist interpretation. The margin depends on the centre and is almost powerless, it is silenced and voiceless. There is little space for resistance, and thus for change, unless it is imposed by the centre for its interests. For example, this approach does not explain phenomena such as the presence of a complex community organization in Regent Park. In other words, there is no possibility for societal change, unless implemented by the dominant group, but rather the reproduction of unequal power relations and of difference.

The understanding of the relation between the centre and the margin ties together the issues of the production of space and of the politics of representation, to which we can add a static notion of space. Because it is based on a fixed binary structure of oppositions, the modernist conceptualization of the margin interprets societal phenomena as static. The consequence is a limited understanding of the functioning of power relations and of societal processes. How does the process of change work? What are the possibilities and the choices of change? And what about the belief in people's power to choose, not simply to be assigned change?
Chapter 3

The margin ‘from below’

What is the experience of the margin from the point of view of those who are oppressed and silenced? Emphasizing the discourse and the practices of the dominant, the modernist conceptualization of the margin does not answer these questions. Worse, it does not explain social and spatial change, unless it is produced and imposed ‘from above’. The modernist perspective provides only the hegemonic vision of societal processes: the production of space is under the power of the centre, thus producing and reproducing difference. Its major weakness is the use of binary structures, which make the relation between the centre and the margin a static one. In this chapter, I move to the postmodernist approach with the hope of filling in the gaps left by the modernist conceptualization of the margin. After a detailed discussion of the postmodernist understanding of power relations and of the production of space, I will analyze in what ways Regent Park represents a space of resistance, creation and change ‘from below’.

The postmodernist vision of the margin

Postmodernists have taken a different approach to interpret the point of view of the subordinate and of the marginalized. Looking at the ideas developed by ‘postcolonial’ and ‘subaltern studies’ proves to be a significant critique of the Western, dominating construction of knowledge. This theoretical move away from the modernist approach has become a great issue of concern in cultural theory and generates endless debates. The goal of this investigation, however, is not to review or discuss
the various arguments, but rather to use their understanding of power relations as a source of inspiration for studying the production of space, and thus for conceptualizing the margin.

First, it is necessary to examine the postmodernist understanding of the functioning of power relations. This perspective emphasizes the fact that hegemony is not the expression of a singular form of domination, but rather it is a multiple, flexible, and complex process. Foucault's later notion of power and of power relations provides an insightful starting point. In the introductory chapter to *The History of Sexuality*, he clearly states that "power must be understood in first instance as the multiplicity of force relations" (1990: 92). Using a spatial metaphor, he explains that "power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations" (94). In contrast to the modernist approach, Foucault thinks that "there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations" (ibid). The absence of binary ordering makes this understanding very different from the previous interpretation, not only in terms of establishing social divisions and differences, but also for the organization of space, which is still considered a constitutive component of power relations.

In Foucault's understanding of power, resistance plays an important role in the dynamic of oppression in that "[the existence of power relationships] depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance" (95). In other words, there is not only a multiplicity of forms of domination, there is a multiplicity of forms of resistance as well, and thus of forms of power relations. This is a second important point which clarifies why so many spatial metaphors have been developed to articulate the multiplicity and flexibility of power relations. Similarly to his illustration of domination, Foucault uses a spatial metaphor to state that "there is no single locus of great Refusal (...). Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case" (95-6). Furthermore, one is dealing "with mobile and transitory points of resistance" (96). Another important component in this analysis of power is the notion that power does not have a static
form. Rather, power is subject to continual transformations and variations (99), which suggests that power has the capacity to change and probably also to adapt to different needs and new situations, especially those engendered by the plurality and mobility of resistances. Therefore, Foucault thinks that we must not look for "the unique form of a great Power", but rather that we should try to make sense of practices "in the field of multiple and mobile power relations" (98).

Foucault developed a complete explanation and analysis of how power relations work, of how they organize social relations, and of how they shape society. However, it is only those aspects of his definition of power relations which are useful for the purposes of this discussion that are presented here. Foucault’s ideas on power provide a new source of understanding of the process of space making. What are the implications for the production of space if power relations take multiple and mobile forms? According to this perspective, space cannot fall into the modernist, static binary ordering, but undergoes and reflects the transformations and changes in the dynamics of oppression. In her discussion on how to develop a “progressive concept of place”, Massey argues that place “is absolutely not static” (66) and that

If places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions are not static. (...) Perhaps this should be said also about places; that places are processes, too. (...) places do not have single, unique ‘identities’... (66-7)

In other words, space is also multiple and flexible, at least in its meaning, maybe even in its functions and uses, as opposed to being part of a well defined order. Regarding the issue of control, it seems that such an understanding of power will interpret power practices as more subtle and flexible, not as openly oppressive, imposed and dehumanizing. As a result, subordinate groups are left with more space to move and to act. They are given more options, more room for subjectivity, and a certain flexibility to express their opposition to power. Yet there are a few aspects of Foucault’s interpretation of power and of power relations which are challenged by Steve Pile
There are two elements in particular within Foucault's definition of power and power relations with which Pile disagrees. First, there is the idea that power is everywhere (Foucault: 93). Pile thinks "that power seems to be everywhere, but wherever we look, power is open to gaps, tears, inconsistencies, ambivalences, possibilities of inversion, mimicry, parody and so on" (27; emphasis in original). In other words, power is not as absolute and as total as previously assumed, which implies that "power relations are incomplete, fluid, liable to rupture, inconsistent, awkward and ambiguous" (14). Resistance, however, is found in everything and is thus able to filter through the gaps and inconsistencies of power with the consequence that resistance is "only ever in part controlled by the practices of domination" (16).

By challenging this first element of Foucault's interpretation of power, Pile makes a second aspect of power relations appear problematic. Foucault strongly believes that power relations are unconditionally relational (95). Although power relations might be multiple and flexible, there is a constant dialogue and exchange between domination and opposition. In Foucault's perspective, "one is always 'inside' power, there is no 'escaping' it, there is no absolute outside" (ibid). Pile thinks, however, that we need to reconsider "the presumption that domination and resistance are locked in some perpetual death dance of control" (2). The very fact that power is incomplete and inconsistent, that it has gaps, allows for resistance to be only partly controlled, but also to stand outside the sphere of domination. The use of various spatial metaphors here suggests and reveals how much resistance is a spatial phenomenon that needs to be understood in terms of where it 'takes place'. Pile's essay beautifully illustrates the ways in which resistance not only takes place in space, but also how it "comes from a place outside of the practices of domination" (15) and is not "forever confined to the authorized spaces of domination" (3).

The most significant implication of this understanding of power relations is in
terms of space. Pile introduces the idea that "resistance might have its own distinct spatialities" (2). In other words, "spaces of resistance are distinct from spaces of domination" (5) and "resistance occurs in spaces beyond those defined by power relations" (26). These ideas have further implications which are of interest here. First, there is the notion that resistance and its spatiality are linked to community formation and organization (4). Secondly, resistance may take place in reaction to dominant power and unjust practices, but it also may involve the expression of feelings and meanings, of something different and better. In this sense, resistance exists in and for itself, it creates new meanings, new possibilities and new ways of living (14; 30). Finally, resistance and its spatialities have the capacity of bringing change (14; 27). After this rather long prelude, it is time to explore the postmodernist meaning of the margin. The idea that resistance is linked to community formation, to creation and to change will be investigated more in depth.

The margin is only one among a whole range of spatial metaphors which have been developed to understand the multiple and flexible forms of power relations. This study does not pretend to provide a complete analysis of power relations, but rather it will illustrate how the margin can be interpreted in terms of resistance, creation and change. The margin represents both real and imagined space where resistance actually takes place. Because the organization of space reflects social relations and is imbued with politics and ideology, the real and imagined dimensions of space are intrinsically connected. This conceptualization of the margin takes its inspiration from bell hooks' book *Yearning: Race gender, and cultural politics* (1990) and is principally based on a close reading of the chapter "Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness" (145-53).

hooks discusses the margin as both a political and a geographical space, i.e. in her eyes it is both real and imagined. The interesting and novel aspect of hooks' interpretation is that she looks at the margin from a postmodernist perspective and

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thinks of the margin as a space of counter-hegemony. Indeed, it is hooks’ insistence on the fact that she considers the margin as a chosen space, not as one imposed by the hegemonic power, that necessitated the above investigation of the notion of hegemonic power, and the concepts of domination and resistance. Hooks explains that “margins have been both sites of repression and sites of resistance” (151) and she makes “a definite distinction between the marginality which is imposed by oppressive structures and that marginality one chooses as site of resistance” (153). But in this case, hooks decides to choose marginality instead of “accepting its imposition by the more powerful, binary Other, a submission to the dominant, order-producing and unremittingly” hegemony (Soja and Hooper: 190). It is the act of choosing the margin which leads hooks to claim that “[m]arginality is the space of resistance” (hooks: 152). This statement has strong implications in terms of identity and subjectivity construction on the one hand, and of power relations and spatiality on the other.

First, choosing the margin means rejecting the imposition of an identity and subjectivity, and thus the ability to construct other forms of identity which are non-hegemonic. Secondly, saying that “the margin refuses its authoritative emplacement as ‘Other’” (Soja, 1996: 97-8) means not only the rejection of an imposed identity, but also the refusal of an imposed position in power relations and in space. Thus, choosing the margin becomes both a political and a spatial act. It is an act of resistance which takes place through the appropriation and the use of space, this space being either real or imagined (98). Indeed, it is because resistance can take place outside the realm of power, order and control, that the margin and marginal spaces can be interpreted as social categories, identities, and spaces which are not imposed.

(...) resistance uses extant geographies and makes new geographies
(...) geographies that make resistance. (...) So, while there are different forms of control that work through distinct geographies, geographies of resistance do not necessarily (or even ever) mirror geographies of domination, as an upside-down or back-to-front or face-down map of the
Yet, as explained earlier in the postmodernist interpretation of resistance, the act of choosing the margin is not necessarily done directly in relation to oppression, it is not necessarily fighting hegemonic power openly. Evidence for this is put forward by Soja and Hooper who affirm that hooks "pushes the process of identity formation beyond exclusionary struggles against white racism on to a new terrain, a 'space of radical openness'" (190). These two authors also quote Pratibha Parmar to emphasize that "creating identities (...) is not done 'in relation' to, 'in opposition to', or 'as corrective to'... but in and for ourselves" (ibid; emphasis in original). Thus the political and geographic act of choosing the margin is an act of resistance because, although not directly opposed to domination, it still represents a form of challenge to power: it creates something new, it opens new possibilities. In other words, the margin is a space of resistance because it does not fall under the well defined power, order and control of hegemony, and because it creates something new and different, something in and for itself, something which is better.

The notion of creation is the second characteristic of this conceptualization of the margin which I wish to touch upon. Marginality is much more than just choosing an identity or a space. As an act of resistance in and for itself, i.e. outside of power, it not only implies rejecting imposed meanings, it also implies the actual creation of new meanings. Choosing the margin is creating difference, constructing one's own identity and subjectivity, transforming space, as well as opening new possibilities, new ways of living, and new ways of seeing the world. The margin is what hooks calls a 'space of radical openness'.

We are transformed, individually, collectively, as we make radical creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity, which gives us a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world. (153)

The margin is chosen because it "offers the possibility of radical perspectives from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds" (149). Although not
directly opposed to domination, the margin is a space that challenges hegemonic power, its ideology and its order because it (re)presents alternative meanings; it even offers new forms of social relations, new values, new ideologies. For this very reason, the margin can be interpreted as a space favorable to the formation of new communities, and thus as a potential source for the development of new forms of society. This idea explains why resistance is associated with community organization and collective movements.

In her discussion, hooks talks of the margin in relation to solidarity and to the creation of a community of resistance as well. She suggests that choosing the margin is not done individually but collectively, and the creation of identity and subjectivity, of space, as well as of new possibilities and new worlds is done in solidarity. "[T]he chosen context of marginality [provides openings] to build larger communities of survival and resistance" (Soja, 1996: 100). Ironically, the chosen margin is the very opposite of the marginal identity and space imposed by hegemony. The margin appears as "a spatiality of inclusion rather than exclusion, a spatiality where radical subjectivities can multiply, connect, and combine in polycentric communities of identity and resistance" (99). Due to her origin and background, hooks, an African-American woman, gives a very specific meaning to the formation of community. She directly associates the margin with the black experience and the black struggle for liberation in the United States. To her, the margin is a special space she calls 'homeplace'. This community has its own social construction and plays the role of nurturing which allows the transcendence of despair and the strengthening of one's sense of self (100). Homeplace is much more than the imposed ghetto or shantytown she had to live in. It "has been a crucial site for organizing, for forming political solidarity. Homeplace has been a site of resistance" (hooks: 47). The fact that resistance takes place through the appropriation and use of space, and that it creates communities, reveals how much power relations and the production of space are interconnected.
hooks calls homeplace the margin that creates new worlds, alternative ways of living, one's own identities and subjectivities. However, the margin can also be called a dreamland, since the new possibilities, values and ideologies it creates are meant to be better that those in the extant power, order and control of hegemony. We could go further and argue that the margin creates forms of utopia — ideal communities in some real or imagined far-away land — or even "what Foucault calls 'heterotopia' — a space of liberty outside of social control" (Harvey, 1996: 230). We might also wonder to what extent the margin represents utopias which will never be achieved, but this is another issue.

In short, the margin is a space that creates alternative worlds, new meanings and communities which represent a challenge to the hegemonic power, order, and control, and to its ideology. Although being an act in and for itself, the challenge of choosing the margin and of creating something better is not entirely without purpose. Indeed, creating new meanings through resistance has the capacity of changing things. It allows people to give "their own (resistant) meanings to things, (...) [to find] their own tactics of avoiding, taunting, attacking, undermining, enduring, hindering, mocking everyday exercise of power" (Pile: 14). One's own constructed identities and subjectivities are lived, alternative ways of living are practiced, new meanings are experienced. However, the change brought by resistance and the creation of new worlds "is not necessarily coherent nor has an essential constitution nor a fixed goal, with a clear direction" (27). This statement has two implications. First, it verifies the concept that the margin is chosen in and for itself and that it is not a form of resistance directly opposed to hegemony. Secondly, it suggests that the creation of a 'homeplace', of a dreamland, or of a utopia represents a form of order itself, with its own meanings and forces, which might not necessarily be any better or freer than others.

In summary, the margin and marginal spaces are newly created spaces, spaces which are different, spaces which have been transformed. This confirms the
idea that resistance creates its own distinct geographies, but also that it actually takes place in spaces that are different. This is highlighted in Soja's and Hooper's article that transposes us "... from [the] revealing recognition that space makes difference into a creative exploration of the multiplicity of spaces that difference makes" (193). We should think not only that space makes a difference, because its appropriation and use give power, but also that difference makes spaces, i.e. that the resistant act of creating something new and different has spatial implications as well. This is particularly true with regards to the margin: it is different because it exists outside of power. It is thus favorable to the creation of difference which brings more change. hooks does not explicitly explain what changes the margin creates, or what possibilities it opens. Nevertheless, the constant references she makes to the history of the black struggle in the United States suggest that changes have taken place, and that changes are still taking place within the politics of identity. The following two quotes are particularly strong in illustrating hooks' perception of the creation of black identity and subjectivity, and the changes it makes:

This sense of wholeness, impressed upon our consciousness by the structure of our daily lives, provided us an oppositional world view -- a mode of seeing unknown to most of our oppressors, that sustained us, aided us in our struggle. (hooks in Soja, 1996: 100)

Fundamental to the process of decentering the oppressive other and claiming our right to subjectivity is the insistence that we must determine how we will be and not rely on colonizing responses to determine our legitimacy. We are not looking to that Other for recognition. (...) I am moved by that confrontation with difference which takes place on new ground, in that counter-hegemonic marginal space where radical black subjectivity is seen, not overseen by any authoritative Other claiming to know us better than we know ourselves. (hooks: 22; emphasis in original)

Finally, it is important to stress the fact that since the margin is both a real and an imagined space, the changes created by resistance take place at two levels at least. On the one hand, they can be real, physical, material, external. In this case, they can be seen as location changes, as the transformation of a place's aspect, as the
adoption of new forms of behavior and practices, or they can be changes in the social structure and organization of a community. On the other hand, changes can be understood as being imagined, ideological, symbolic, internal. These are generally changes in meaning which are likely to be less visible to the oppressor, but which are even more significant to a community's perception of itself, of its identity and subjectivity, of its values and of its ways of seeing and understanding the world.

Regent Park: the experience of the margin ‘from below’

I will analyze Regent Park from the postmodernist perspective, determining how it verifies this conceptualization of the margin. Then, I will evaluate how useful is this interpretation for understanding the manifestation of urban processes in relation to the case study. It is important to underline the scale of the margin which I will be discussing. As in hooks’ interpretation, the margin refers to a social and spatial community. The focus will be on Regent Park's community organization and on its own representation – a structure parallel to the division of Regent Park into a physical and an imagined space in the previous chapter.

The modernist conceptualization of the margin as powerless is reflected in the portrayal of Regent Park as poor, helpless, passive, or as a bad and dangerous community. This interpretation, however, is not useful when attempting to make sense of what is there, of the reality and the experience of Regent Park from the point of view of its residents, those oppressed by the centre. First, examining Regent Park’s community organization, I will argue that public housing residents are not as powerless as assumed by hegemony. Second, I will show that the official representation of Regent Park is problematic in that it is an inaccurate representation of Regent Park’s reality, and more particularly because it does not correspond to the community’s own identity and image. I will establish links with hooks’ interpretation of the margin in order to highlight in what ways Regent Park is a chosen space of resistance, a space that offers possibilities of creation and change. However, I will
also underline some of the shortcomings of the postmodernist approach. The main criticism is the danger of romanticizing and idealizing the possibilities of empowerment and of appropriation presented by the margin. Examining the redevelopment project of the northeast corner of Regent Park, I will question the level of change that the margin can really generate.

Before proceeding to the investigation itself, I would like to make some methodological comments on the empirical research. The first step was to find what is there in Regent Park. The purpose of my fieldwork was to acquire a sense of what happens in Regent Park, of what it is like to live there, and especially of how the residents themselves experience and perceive their community. Although I had the chance to meet two current tenants, Doug Rice and Maria Long, my intention was not to carry out a survey among the residents. In order to have a glimpse of Regent Park's world, I interviewed people who know the community intimately but without being part of it. My informants are located 'in between' in the sense that they are involved in the community through their work or other kind of activity, while still maintaining their status as outsiders. They have a certain distance that allows them to have a critical vision of Regent Park; despite the fact that they do not live there, they are able to give an articulate and insightful description of the margin.

Richard Milgrom is an architect who has been a member of the North Regent Park Residents' Steering Committee for almost ten years and has been involved in the redevelopment project of the northeast corner of Regent Park. Through his work with the residents he has developed a good knowledge of the problems related to the design, the management and the maintenance of the public housing project, as well as of the community organization and the relations between the tenants and the administration. Adonis Higgins, as a social worker and youth coordinator at the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition, is a rich source of information on any issue related to the history, the problems and the achievements of the community. David
Zapparoli has a peculiar position. He is a previous Regent Park resident who as a photographer today seems to have nothing in common with the community he has left. Yet he is still involved in Regent Park and is concerned by what happens to the community as his recent photographic exhibition reveals. Patricia Gilbert is a teacher and counselor of Regent Park students and shares many of her students' difficult experiences. Finally, notwithstanding the fact that as a politician John Sewell appears to be 'from above' – especially since he was at the head of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority from 1986 to 1988 –, he is militant about local issues and gave me a picture of how politics work in Regent Park.

My choice to interview people who have a certain authority is based on the idea that they would voice more clearly the position of the margin. This approach can be criticized in terms of how representative of the margin these voices are. Nevertheless, my decision finds its legitimacy in my informants' commitment to the population and community of Regent Park. In the following analysis, I will attempt to interpret Regent Park 'from below', from the point of view of those who are silenced and oppressed, which is the goal of the postmodernist approach.

Regent Park as a space of resistance, creation and change 1: The community organization

Several informants pointed to the fact that the weakness of Regent Park, the diversity of its population whose ethnic and sociocultural variety has been increasing with the number of recent immigrants since the late 1970's, is the very source of its strength. It seems paradoxical that in a society celebrating its multicultural background, diversity turns into a problem. The reason lies in that the larger society – the centre – has not provided Regent Park with the necessary facilities to deal with its diversity, especially in terms of communication and of community life. This very reason has obliged the residents to find their own resources to deal with the problem and reinforced their need to become organized. The strong, rich and complex
community organization of Regent Park emerges as an essential aspect of the residents' experience. Local action is primarily the result of the tenants' concern for their community, but it is made possible thanks to the presence of various social agencies from the outside. What is considered to be a weakness and a source of powerlessness, as well as an element of oppression from a modernist point of view, is interpreted as a source of empowerment from a postmodernist perspective.

One is struck by the extent and the quality of Regent Park's community organization, which is entirely based on non-profit action groups. The external help provides the human and financial resources necessary to support the web of local groups. Nevertheless, it is the residents' own interest in local issues and their involvement that is the backbone of the community organization. Adonis Higgins explained that the social agencies only provide the structure necessary for the organization of the community, but that without the residents' input nothing would happen. Many residents volunteer in any of the various groups and some even lead certain activities. Both Doug Rice and Maria Long have a long history of community participation and are or have been involved in several aspects of local action. Doug Rice is part of the North Regent Park Residents' Steering Committee and the Tenants' Action Group, he volunteers for the Christian Resource Centre and is the representative of his building. In all, he volunteers about 40 hours per week. Maria Long used to be part of the Sole Support Mothers' Group, and participated in a special after school program at Park School, as well as to most activities revolving around single mothers' concerns. Both of them are familiar with the organization of the community and benefit from it in many ways, including health, food, schools, recreation, and other forms of support, in addition to being recognized and known by the community.

In terms of what is there, the organization of the Regent Park community provides most of the services needed by its residents. Particular focus is put on the needs of children, of recent immigrants and increasingly of seniors, as well as on
forms of support for the disadvantaged. One can find any service from day-care to after school and special summer programs, health centre, food banks, family planning and counseling, recreational activities for all age and interest groups, and support for those looking for employment, who want to learn new skills, or who need to adapt to a new environment, administrative services and groups helping the residents to deal with the administration of Regent Park – the management and maintenance of the public housing project being one of the most difficult of the tenants' everyday struggles. The purpose here is not to enumerate the endless list of local groups; nonetheless, it is useful to describe the functioning of the community organization to better understand its impact.

There are four major centres for local action. These are the Regent Park United Church Ministry located in Regent Park North which is home to thirteen groups; the Regent Park Community and Recreation Centre, and the Regent Park Health Centre in Regent Park South which provide among the most important services; and Dixon Hall situated on Sumach St. south of Regent Park which is probably the biggest local social agency\(^4\). The latter's target population is primarily Regent Park residents, but it also serves the larger area of Moss Park, as well as the transient homeless people of downtown Toronto.

The modernist conceptualization of the margin does not provide the tools necessary to fully explain phenomena such as the organization of oppressed groups. In the case of Regent Park, official documents and the large media coverage do not explicitly mention the existence of local action, probably because it is opposed to the government, as it will be explained with regard to the residents' struggle against the administration. On the other hand, the postmodernist approach recognizes forms of power that do not function in binary oppositions such as the subjectivity and the acts of the oppressed. The organization of the Regent Park community is not simply an abstract symbol that enhances the residents' self-esteem. The local action has

\(^4\) It is part of the United Way group, a major Canadian non-governmental organization.
Figure 10: a) Community gardens in front of the Regent Park Community Ministry United Church of Canada, which is home to 13 groups of local action. 40 Oak St., Regent Park North.

Figure 10: b) The old Regent Park Community Health Centre, located in Regent Park South. The Centre moved into a new building on Dundas St. East at the corner of Parliament St. in June 1980.
brought a significant improvement in the population’s access to resources.

The strength and the efficiency of Regent Park’s organization make it clear that Regent Park is a community above all. All informants stressed the fact that Regent Park is like a small town of 10,000 people, with the advantages and disadvantages of everybody knowing everybody’s business. In the postmodernist approach, more specifically in hooks’ conceptualization of the margin, the notion of community and its organization are of primordial importance for understanding how the margin can be a chosen space, and a space of resistance, creation and change. A short history of Regent Park’s community organization will be useful for evaluating the extent to which Regent Park corresponds to the postmodernist conceptualization of the margin. It will also open the discussion on Regent Park’s level of empowerment and potential in bringing about change.

During Regent Park’s first decade, its heyday according to the dominant view, the organization of the local community was undeveloped (Zapparoli: 20). There are two explanations for this: on the one hand, the community that existed before the rehabilitation project had been destroyed, and on the other tenants were satisfied with the brand new units that replaced their old homes. Regent Park tenants were relatively passive at the beginning, but their attitude altered by the mid-60’s when the hegemonic discourse and practices on the issue of public housing changed, as explained in the previous chapter. In Zapparoli’s opinion, the transfer of the administration and management of North Regent Park from the Toronto Housing Authority, a municipal body, to the provincial government was the principal factor for local action (23). Falling in the hands of the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC) – formed in 1964 and responsible for most of the public housing projects in Ontario, including Regent Park South (Sewell, 1994: Chapter 8) – the tenants came to fear the ineffectiveness of an “absentee landlord”: an off-site bureaucratic management and disconnected administrators less responsive and insensitive to the tenants’ needs (Zapparoli: 23). Unlike most other public housing projects, Regent Park has an on-site
administration office. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily imply good management and maintenance, or good relations between the administration and tenants.

The transfer of the Regent Park administration and management to a higher level of government probably results from the unfortunate circumstances that have led to the government's gradual lack of interest in public housing since the late 1960's. This took place in conjunction with the shifts in the representation of public housing, both in the institutional discourse and in the media, and to a decrease in the quality of the administration's attitude, of the project's management and maintenance. A group of Regent Park tenants decided to become involved in local issues to defend the community's interests and to improve its services. This is how the first local action group, the Regent Park Community Improvement Association (RPCIA), emerged (Zapparoli: 23).

The creation of the RPCIA marks the beginning of a long and rich history of community organization, of battles and of victories by the Regent Park residents over the administration and the government. Because of the inadequacy of the surrounding facilities to accommodate the demand and needs of Regent Park's large child population, the principal goal on the RPCIA's agenda was to increase the local recreational facilities. It successfully obtained the government's support to improve these. The result was the building of ice rinks in both Regent Park North and South, and the allocation of several indoor recreational spaces for children. Zapparoli explains the RPCIA's influence in bringing change in the 1970's by the residents' persistence, but also by the government's financial support and willingness to help the community (24). Among the most important of the tenants' victories stand the opening of the Regent Park Community Health Centre in 1973, the self-management of certain facilities, and the establishment of a literacy program whose role has become essential with the growing number of recent immigrants. The two most hard won battles were the building of an outdoor swimming pool in Regent Park North in
the mid-70's and the Regent Park Community and Recreation Centre for which the residents fought for sixteen years and contributed $100,000 themselves to the cost of its building (Zapparoli: 26).

The above examples provide evidence against the image of Regent Park as an oppressed, passive and helpless community. On the contrary, Regent Park residents use the weaknesses of their community to empower themselves and to stand up for their interests. Being disadvantaged economically, socioculturally and politically, the tenants probably do not choose live in this public housing project. Nevertheless, they can choose to take action to improve their quality of life. The fact that the population of Regent Park does not simply accept the housing conditions in which it has have to live, but rather fights to improve its quality of life is a first sign of resistance. The organization of the community into various action groups represents a form of creation and of new possibilities that comes 'from below' not 'from above'. These are not produced and imposed by the centre but by those who are oppressed. The marginalized use the hegemonic production and imposition of the margin to produce their own space. The appropriation of the margin by those who are oppressed is the first step towards their empowerment.

Besides the fact that the organization of the community is a space produced ‘from below’ what is significant is that it is a source of change. The victories of Regent Park residents indicate the number of changes that they were able to implement to improve the housing conditions. The move from an absent community organization to the development of a rich and complex web of local groups and services has made a tremendous difference in the tenants' life. So much so that Maria Long claims that without this, it would be impossible to live in Regent Park. Her statement underlines the significance of the community organization for the residents' life.

Through the interviews, I learned that it is the children of Regent Park who are the most affected by the low housing conditions and who face most hardships. (Rice

16 It should be stressed that children are probably the most powerless of a disadvantaged population.
and Gilbert, personal interview). In the 1950's, the problem was not that facilities for children were inadequate, but that they were non-existent. Things are different today; there is a range of facilities that makes it possible to accommodate every aspect of the youth's life – a significant portion of Regent Park's population – and thus of their families as well. These include breakfast and lunch programs in the schools serving the area, after school programs, special summer programs, recreational and support programs, and special events throughout the year. The most important of these are Sunday-in-the-Park, coordinated by the North Regent Park Residents' Steering Committee\textsuperscript{16}, and Block-o-rama which is entirely organized by the Regent Park youth (Zapparoli: 29).

However, the most significant evidence of resistance can be seen in the tenants' everyday struggle against the management and maintenance problems. Foremost, it is the administration of Regent Park, as of probably most public housing, that represents the major force of oppression for the residents. The issue of the administration of Regent Park began before its building, at the time of the planning and the design of the project. Back then, the problem was about the body of administration itself, which eventually fell under the responsibility of the municipal government with the creation of the Toronto Housing Authority. Another question addressed the duties and the powers of that body, and simultaneously the design of the rules and regulations that would govern the public housing project, a critical enterprise since Regent Park was Canada's first public housing project. Among these, the establishment of criteria for the eligibility and the admission of tenants, and for the income-geared rent (about 20%) were and still are the source of endless debates.

The first change in administration occurred in 1968 with the transfer of the management of Regent Park to the OHC. An additional change took place in the 1970's (Sewell, 1994: Chapter 8) with the appearance of a new layer of management, the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (MTHA). The creation of this body is the

\textsuperscript{16} At first, it was especially intended to entertain those children who have to spend the summer in Toronto and gradually became a community event. It will celebrate its tenth anniversary in summer 2000.
outcome of the criticisms addressed to the OHC both from within and from outside, as well as of the residents’ demands for a better administration and management services. But since the implementation of this new layer of administration, Zapparoli states that there have been fewer residents’ victories (26). The cause seems to be that the MTHA plays the role of an intermediary between the OHC and the tenants of public housing projects. It has only a managerial function and no power over its responsibilities. The real power is at the unreachable level of the OHC.

The residents resent two aspects of the government’s power over them: the attitude of the administration towards them and the bad maintenance of the housing project itself. The first issue goes back to the problem of establishing criteria for eligibility and admission, and a set of rules and regulations that affects every aspect of the tenants’ lives. The administration’s attitude and the rules and regulations reflect the larger society’s beliefs on the rights of disadvantaged groups – or, put the other way round, the centre’s duties and powers over this part of the population17. This is related to the idea that the production and imposition of public housing symbolizes the hegemonic ideology and attitude toward poverty. Because Regent Park tenants benefit from the government’s assistance, their freedom and their privacy are limited: their behavior is constantly regulated and scrutinized, and they are treated as second class citizens. They are the margin.

The symbolic issue of the administration’s attitude towards the tenants manifests itself concretely through the inadequate maintenance of the public housing project. Usually, the residents’ complaints are not taken seriously; repairs are not carried out as rapidly as should be expected; and once problems are finally taken into consideration, they are not addressed properly. Maria Long told me endless horror stories of maintenance problems and abuses. While nine months pregnant she

17 By today’s standards, the early criteria of eligibility and admission would be considered discriminatory. In the first years of Regent Park, only white, Anglo-Saxon families which corresponded to the traditional family structure – married couples with two or three children in average – were allowed to rent a unit in a public housing project. These criteria reflect the ideology on which the welfare state was based at that time. The most striking restriction probably is that back then, no foreigners were eligible.
almost killed herself in the staircase of her apartment because the handrail came off the wall while she leaned on it. Then, not only did the administration take time before sending someone to do the repairs, but the workman did not have the adequate material to fix the handrail. She said that she had to supervise his work in order to be sure that the handrail would not fall off the wall again. Another time, a workman threatened her when she complained about his work, and since then she refuses to admit him to her apartment. The worst happened the day she gave birth at home. Despite her insistent requests to the administration over the previous days, her sink was blocked and there was no hot water. From my experience, I can mention the garbage smell in the hallways, the smell of feces in the elevator – used by prostitutes and drug dealers for their business (Long, personal interview) – and the hordes of ants and cockroaches in Maria Long’s apartment.

The problems of maintenance take the form of everyday repairs such as the tenants’ complaints, plumbing, cleaning, painting and so on, but they are also related to the design of Regent Park. These include the pick-up of garbage, vandalism within and outside the buildings, and safety in the laundry areas, the hallways and the entrances (Milgrom, personal interview). This leads to another major concern of the residents, security. There seems to be a complex connection between the problems of the design of Regent Park, the concentration of a disadvantaged population, inadequate maintenance, and the image of the community. Each of these has an impact on and has led to the presence of crime and violence.

The residents have been fighting against the administration for a long time to defend their rights and interests in relation to the rules and regulations that govern their lives and to improve the maintenance conditions. Doug Rice explained that in the past two years, management and maintenance have grown better, probably as a result in the changes in the administration staff. The attitude of the administration is more favorable to tenants, complaints are taken into account and repairs carried out rapidly. In addition, the administration now listens more to the residents’ comments.
and there is more cooperation between the two. Among other factors, this has been possible thanks to the recent group of building representatives, of which Doug Rice himself is part. The building representatives meet once a month with five officials from the MTHA, the local police division and the fire hall to inform one another of and discuss current concerns. However, this takes place only in Regent Park North. Doug Rice said that despite the efforts of the building representatives from the northern part to involve residents from the south, the latter are less interested in such issues. Having lived on both sides, Maria Long confirmed that the maintenance in Regent Park South is worse than in the north. For example, the administration decided to tear down the balconies and to replace the windows of the high rise buildings only when these became too dangerous to conform to safety regulations (Milgrom, personal interview).

The residents’ fight against the administration – representing the government and the larger society’s attitude, thus the centre – is a real act of resistance against the source of their oppression. Regent Park North has experienced significant improvements in terms of life quality since the mid-80’s, which according to Doug Rice was possible only because of the residents’ action and their on-going involvement. The area has been cleared up, not only of the garbage that apparently littered the whole place, but also of most of the violence and crime. Today, only one sector is still used by drug dealers and can be dangerous depending on the time of the day. In the next section, I wish to look at Regent Park’s representation of itself.

Regent Park as a space of resistance, creation and change 2: The community’s image and representation

The issue of representation emerges as among the most controversial both from both a theoretical and an empirical point of view. Theoretically, it touches the set of questions related to the politics of representation and of identity. In the case of Regent Park, it takes two forms. The first tackles the relation between representation
and reality; the other is that of the relation between the centre's representation of the margin and the margin's perception of itself, or between the construction of images and that of identity. This issue is important, but rather than attempting to answer the questions it raises, I will show the proportion of its significance.

The problem of the production of images, as of the construction of knowledge, comes down to the matter of objectivity. Based on my research, I am unable to determine the real level of crime and violence that exists in Regent Park, and my goal is not to find the origins of the presence of crime and violence — whether they are caused by factors such as the design of Regent Park, its population composition, or its negative portrayal in the media, all of which are intricately related. The interest of the issue lies in the links between the politics of representation and the production of space. Because security is one of the principal worries in the residents' lives, I wish to discuss how crime and violence are related to the hegemonic representation of Regent Park, how the images produced by the centre affect the residents, and how the community, having developed its own identity, fights against both its negative portrayal and crime.

The perception of the level of crime and violence depends on the subjectivity of individuals. For example, Doug Rice as a man and resident of Regent Park North lessened the severity of the problem, whereas Maria Long as a single mother and a resident of Regent Park South is very aware of the danger. The level of severity of the problem also varies depending on the time of the day and on the place. Night time is probably more dangerous than day time, and Regent Park South suffers more from the presence of gangs than the North. Nevertheless, all informants agree on the fact that gangs come from outside of the Regent Park community and that in most cases acts of crime and violence are not committed by Regent Park residents, even if they are sometimes involved. This is the reason why we may wonder to what extent the negative representation of Regent Park in the institutional discourse and in the media...
could have stimulated the development of crime and violence \textsuperscript{18}.

Notwithstanding the reputation of Regent Park, the area today does not present the kind of violence one expects to find in the worst ghettos. On the contrary, while walking in Regent Park one encounters everyday scenes such as children coming back from school and playing, people sitting and chatting under the trees’ shade or on the porches of townhouses, others taking care of their community gardens, and still others washing or repairing their cars. On a tour of Regent Park, Doug Rice said that most of Regent Park North has been cleared of the presence of gangs. He pointed at all the sites that used to be occupied by drug dealers and have been reappropriated by the residents, and to the only place that still is dangerous.

Both Doug Rice and Richard Milgrom told me about the new security system that has slowly been implemented. The MTHA has placed surveillance cameras that overlook most of the building entrances and most gathering areas in Regent Park. This form of security resembles Foucault’s description of a surveillance society: the presence of cameras is a form of hegemonic control and order over space and symbolizes the centre’s power over the margin. Here, we may really question the usefulness and the meaning of these cameras. When I asked them about their presence, Milgrom could not tell ‘who is behind the cameras’, and Maria Long laughed and said that they are fake! Their control is uncertain, but it is more specifically their purpose that is rather obscure: are these cameras to protect the residents or are they to control their activities?

There have also been attempts at increasing the security within the buildings whose surveillance is one of the most difficult problems to solve. In addition to being open to anyone, they have three, sometimes four, entrances which makes it difficult to control who enters while providing many possibilities of escape. Currently, a more secure system is installed at the building entrances to prevent their access by outsiders. A last security implementation is that of a new patrol system within the area

\textsuperscript{18}Ironically, Doug Rice said that Regent Park is not like the public housing projects located outside the centre of Toronto. To him, it is neighborhoods like Jane and Finch that are dangerous.
Figure 11: Surveillance cameras: who is watching for whose protection?
of Regent Park. Doug Rice, however, is not very happy with the presence of security guards because they abuse their power and authority against tenants rather than looking after their safety. He added that it is the residents themselves who take action and work the hardest to drive gangs out of Regent Park.

Despite the inadequacies in the portrayal of Regent Park versus its reality today, there was a time when the area faced serious problems of racism and of violence. The negative images contain some truth and are not only the product of the official discourse and of the hegemonic ideology. Adonis Higgins, Doug Rice, and David Zapparoli explained that the period from the early 1970’s to the mid-80’s had been a difficult one. It corresponds to the time of increased immigration during which the composition of Regent Park’s population dramatically altered from a majority of Anglo-Saxon families to an ethnically diverse population. It was difficult for the residents to adjust to this new situation without adequate facilities to welcome recent immigrants and to communicate with them, until they had organized themselves and become used to living in such a multicultural environment. The community succeeded in overcoming the tensions created by its diversity on its own, to the point that today, as explained earlier, it is one of its strengths.

Higgins, as a social worker close to the Regent Park youth, thinks that there is less racism within Regent Park than anywhere else in Canada. This seems particularly true among the children who grow up in such a multicultural environment. Zapparoli emphasizes the celebration of diversity in the area’s schools, some of which list as many as 30 different mother languages among the student body\(^{18}\) (28). Events such as Dr. Martin Luther King Days and Multicultural Days acknowledge the importance of ethnic cultures in Regent Park.

Higgins and Zapparoli have their own explanations for the motives lying behind the negative portrayal of Regent Park. Higgins’ radical opinion has to be linked to his position as the coordinator of the local newspaper *Catch Da Flava* and of

\(^{18}\) This is not unusual in Toronto. For example, St. James Town with about 100 foreign languages has an even more diverse representation than Regent Park (John Sewell, personal comment).
the Media Arts Program offered by the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition. According to him, the stereotypes attributed to Regent Park represent society's attitude to low income people in general. They stem from "age old myths about the poor", poor people being the scapegoats responsible for society's problems, including poverty, crime, and the presence of immigrants. In his idea, the portrayal of Regent Park symbolizes the resentment toward the difficulties of the welfare state as well as Canada's attitude toward its recent immigrants. Higgins sees the source of the negative images on Regent Park as being a "class issue which has never been addressed", to which he adds the institutionalization of a form of racism. Ironically, there is less racism within Regent Park than is portrayed by the hegemonic discourse, and more tolerance among its residents than in the larger society, the centre itself.

Zapparoli thinks that Regent Park simply is "the convenient source [for editors and reporters] to feed their often preconceived theories" on "any issue that relates to 'big city problems'" (30; emphasis in original). He explains that because most of the major newspapers and television stations are located downtown, the proximity of Regent Park unfortunately makes it their favorite victim for "cheap shots', labeling, and misinformation" (ibid.). Being a previous Regent Park resident who has 'successfully made it outside of the margin' by becoming a photographer, his interpretation is insightful in the sense that it is the vision of someone 'from below' who is familiar with the hegemonic discourse and practices 'from above'.

Regent Park has become Toronto's margin by symbolizing the hegemonic attitude to certain societal problems while simultaneously bearing the responsibility for these. As an imagined space it is a symbolic margin, but it is also real if one considers the physical space of Regent Park – its design, the composition of its population, and its physical degradation. The residents suffer from the stigma and the segregation that result from the hegemonic image imposed upon them. They are afraid of leaving their community and they fear the world that lies outside of Regent Park. Adults internalize this negative representation, but it is children who are mostly
affected by it. Evidence for this is the difficulties they have in completing a normal and successful education, the major consequence of which is a reduction in their self-esteem and above all in their chances of achievement (Gilbert, personal interview). Thus, Regent Park turns inward not only physically but also socially. The residents take refuge within the community they know so well and which provides them with what they need in terms of material, social, personal and even cultural support.

Yet, Regent Park residents do not simply accept the images that are imposed upon them. They have their own identity and their own representation of their community. David Zapparoli and his work stand as a concrete example to support this argument. Looking at his photographs and at his book, one is struck by the residents' pride in themselves, their parents, children, families and friends, and by their love for Regent Park, their home and community.

Zapparoli stresses that no matter how important Regent Park is as a community, it is primarily composed of individuals. In his work, he wishes to uncover the invisibility in which the media have veiled the Regent Park community and from which he probably suffered himself. As a previous resident, he is sensitive to how the residents are affected by the hegemonic discourse, the construction of images 'from above'. As a photographer today, he uses his status within the centre for the benefit of the margin in representing the "voices previously unheard, faces unseen, and stories untold" (9). Despite the negative images and stereotypes characterizing the community, there are many stories of success and of achievement among Regent Park residents, and Zapparoli is only one of them. In his work, he wishes to illustrate the fact that Regent Park is an ordinary community with ordinary people who carry ordinary lives (33).

Thus, Regent Park residents have developed their own identity and their own representation of their community, but they also fight against the negative images, labeling and stereotypes imposed upon them by the institutions and the media. This combat is another form of active resistance against the hegemonic discourse and
Figure 12: David Zapparoli's photographs of Regent Park residents: ordinary people carrying ordinary lives. (Source: Zapparoli, 1999)
practices. The negative representation is fought directly through a newspaper promoted by the community. In the early 1990's, the local publication was called *The Regent Park T.O.* (Zapparoli: 30) which, being unsustainable, has been replaced by *Catch Da Flava* produced by the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition. These publications play several roles. Because their principal audience is the Regent Park community, they address issues important to its residents. These include such concerns as local management and security, employment, or changes in government policies that affect disadvantaged populations. In other words, they are a means of communication bringing information from the outside world to Regent Park. Being produced by the community, they reflect the local identity and representation, and work as a means of communication within the community itself.

These publications also fight the negative images and stereotypes that come from the outside, thus reversing the flow of information from the inside to the outside. In the case of *Catch Da Flava*, the editors have developed an interesting strategy to reach an audience outside of Regent Park while simultaneously making the newspaper sustainable: they seek sponsors outside of the community for each of their publications. For example, the June/July 1999 was a special issue on the provincial elections which was made possible thanks to the collaboration of *The Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers' Federation*. The benefit of this collaboration was the distribution of 100,000 copies of *Catch Da Flavor* in high schools across the GTA. Another more solid evidence of the fight against the negative hegemonic images is the October 1998 issue on 'neighbourhoodism' which was put together in collaboration with the Coalition Against Neighbourhoodism. This issue represents a major act of resistance on the part of several marginalized areas in Toronto, including Regent Park, Jane and Finch, O'Connor, Parkdale, St. James Town, and Lawrence Heights. The goal of this issue was first, to bring these communities together; second, to make them realize that they suffer from the same problem, 'neighbourhoodism' – a form of discrimination resulting from negative media image and stereotypes; third, to
Catch da Flava is brought to you by the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition

Figure 13
make them understand what neighbourhoodism means and how it works; fourth, to
denounce and attack the media and the institutions that are at the source of the
problem; and finally, to deconstruct those negative images and stereotypes.

There is a second form of opposition to the hegemonic representation imposed
on Regent Park. The Regent Park Focus Community Coalition provides a Media Arts
Program geared to the Regent Park youth. This program includes the 'e.y.e video
youth productions' and the Regent Park Plus radio in addition to producing *Catch Da
Flava*. Its role is to provide the local youth with its own means of expression, to teach
them how to use the media, especially journalism and film, which in addition to being
a positive source of self-esteem and of achievement, produces a local image to fight
the negative representation constructed by the centre. The program has put together
a series of videos under the label 'Peer Education Resources' dealing with issues
related to the use of drugs, sexuality, security, violence and crime, and various socio-
cultural and community problems. This series deconstructs the stereotypes of the
Regent Park community while simultaneously functioning as an education tool. The
program uses the experiences and the ideas of the local youth to produce videos that
are aimed at both youth and the general public. This program works with the larger
mandate of the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition which is one of prevention of
substance abuse.

**Regent Park: an interpretation of the margin 'from below'**

*In what ways can Regent Park be said to be a chosen margin?*

This statement should not be understood in a literal sense. The residents of
Regent Park obviously do not choose to live in this public housing project, but are
there because they do not have access to and cannot afford market housing.
However, they have the choice to form a community. In the 1970's, tensions
developed as a result of the increased number of recent immigrants in Regent Park.
Although the community did not have the necessary facilities to deal with the new

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multicultural composition of the population, the residents chose to organize themselves and to learn how to live with one another. After several difficult years, Regent Park became tolerant to the point at which now it truly forms one community. The residents of Regent Park have thus chosen to form a community. By becoming a community, Regent Park, the physical and imagined space produced and imposed 'from above', can be a chosen margin.

Furthermore, the residents of Regent Park have the choice of becoming interested in local issues and more particularly of taking action. This is probably the real meaning of choosing the margin as a space of resistance, creation and change and it is on this interpretation of the margin that the modernist and the postmodernist approaches differ most. Here, marginalized groups have a subjectivity. They have the power not only to choose for themselves, but also to resist the centre, its discourse and its practices. The postmodernist point of view gives voice to the multiple groups who are oppressed and does not consider them passive and helpless.

So, the community of Regent Park does not simply accept the images constructed and the representation imposed by the centre. The residents choose their own representation of themselves. This choice is an appropriation of the margin: in the postmodernist interpretation, the oppressed choose to become the margin but it has a different meaning for them than that produced and imposed 'from above'. The margin is chosen for its own identity and it escapes the labeling of the centre.

I would like to stress the fact that the notion of community is essential for grasping the postmodernist understanding of the margin. It is at the basis of the shift from a perspective 'from above' to one 'from below' in that it gives to those who are subordinate their own space from which to respond to the hegemonic group. This idea is made explicit in bell hooks' use of the term 'homeplace'. Homeplace is a powerful image to express the experience of the margin in that it gives to those who are oppressed a homeplace, their own space, from where to act against the dominant. It is the community, this homeplace, that explains why the margin is a source of
empowerment to those who are thought powerless in the modernist view.

In what ways is Regent Park a space of resistance?

The margin is a space of resistance in that it is opposed to the hegemonic discourse and practices. In the case of Regent Park, there are two major examples of active resistance. The first is the residents' struggle against the administration of the public housing project. The community fights the administration's attitude toward the tenants and the inadequate management and maintenance of Regent Park. This first aspect of active resistance is directed against the practices of the centre. Then, the residents also fight actively against the centre's discourse, the institutional representation and the negative media image used as stereotypes to characterize the whole community. Regent Park has its own representation of itself, produces its own image, and uses its own identity both as a form of internal empowerment and as a weapon against the outside.

The production of the margin's own identity is an act of resistance in that it rejects the images constructed by centre and it opposes their hegemonic imposition. In the postmodernist understanding, there is more than the simple inclusion of an opposition in the hegemonic functioning of power relations. In addition to having a voice, those who are silenced by the modernist interpretation have a certain amount of power from the postmodernist point of view. The latter emphasizes the importance of multiple forms of power relations. The margin is more than a space of resistance against the dominant. It is a chosen space and an act of opposition based on the will to create and to bring change.

What is the level of creation offered by Regent Park?

The margin offers new possibilities and alternatives to those who are oppressed and allows them to create something different than what is produced by the centre. In Regent Park, the act of creation appears first in the formation of a
community which stands as the equivalent to the imagined space produced and imposed by hegemony. This first act is symbolic, but there is a real form of creation as well, one that corresponds to the physical space of hegemony. It is the organization of the community into local action groups that gives to Regent Park residents access to resources they could not have otherwise.

The richness of this act of creation is revealed by the complexity of the system of services which is able to cover most of the local needs. The new possibilities and alternatives found in the margin of Regent Park are embodied in the intricate network of its organization. The different affiliations and mergings of the various social agencies and action groups work in a holistic way so that they touch upon all the aspects of the residents’ needs. For example, the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition offers activities for physical and spiritual well-being, such as massage and meditation, to complement its agenda on the prevention of substance abuse. Similarly, the Regent Park Community Health Centre coordinates the program of community gardens, which as a source of food are an essential component of health (Higgins, personal interview).

Another important creation by the residents is the local newspaper which is a means of information linking the community to the outside world and a means of communication within Regent Park itself. The significance of Catch Da Flava is that it allows the community to produce and to share its own image and representation.

These acts of creation, the possibilities offered by the community organization and the community’s own identity are created not only in opposition to the centre, a rejection of the hegemonic discourse and practices. Rather, they are created in the community and for the community itself. Events such as Sunday-in-the-Park and Block-o-rama represent a celebration of the community, of its diversity and of its characteristics. These are not directly opposed to the administration, the government or society at large, although they can be interpreted as symbols of resistance.
To what extent have the residents of Regent Park been able to bring about change?

All of the above arguments are tied to the margin's will to change the order produced and imposed by the centre. In other words, the margin is a space where the oppressed can take action, resist, and create the means to bring change. In Regent Park, the first step toward change is the residents' interest in local issues and in the improvement of the housing conditions and the quality of life. The organization of the community, the participation and the involvement of the residents in local action have brought visible changes. The number of battles won against the administration represent physical changes, as in the building of various facilities, and structural changes, as in the tenants' self-management of certain activities and the recent development of a collaboration between the residents and the administration. The latter appears as a significant transformation in the relationship between the centre and the margin, to the extent that we may wonder whether it could be conducive to more structural changes and eventually lead to a more equal functioning of power relations – probably the ultimate (utopian) achievement of a new world produced 'from below'.

Other changes have been wrought for the community itself, such as the local services. These are significant not only because they have improved the housing condition and the life quality of Regent Park. They represent a tremendous change for the residents in that they alter their relation to society at large: they play a key role in integrating this disadvantaged population to the larger society, the world outside of Regent Park. The various support groups and special programs are meant to 'normalize' the margin, or to 'neutralize' its marginality and to give to the residents access to the centre by providing them with the resources the hegemonic power is denying. For example, the literacy programs for recent immigrants, the special education programs for children and adults, the support groups for unemployed, single mothers and seniors, all open and facilitate the path of integration in the larger society. It is important to stress, however, that the community organization and the
social agencies are there to provide the resources necessary for those who are oppressed to be empowered, but that in order to achieve success those who are at the margin have to choose to bring change.

Finally, the changes are brought thanks to the fight against the negative institutional representation and media image. Zapparoli writes that The Regent Park T.O. "was effective in combating the effects of negative media image" (30). Nonetheless, he is not clear on what the sentence "the effects of negative media image" means. Does it refer to the impact of the hegemonic images on the Regent Park residents themselves, or to the effects of the institutional representation on society at large, or to both? I suspect that he is probably suggesting the effects on the community of Regent Park, because as I will discuss in the following chapter, the representation of Regent Park in the society at large is rather slow to change. Back in 1987, Shein's article in Toronto Life (1987) was the first to denounce the issue of the negative representation, but it has been unable to prevent the ongoing negative portrayal of the community.

To sum up, we see two major trends in the changes brought by the margin. On the one hand, change is an open form of resistance against the hegemonic discourse and practices. On the other, it is created in and for the community itself, in which case it stands as the appropriation of the margin by those who are oppressed and becomes a source of empowerment. It provides possibilities of integrating the centre, and thus the opportunity for those on the margin to use their knowledge of the centre to denounce its hegemonic discourse and practices, as David Zapparoli does.

*In what ways is Regent Park a space of 'radical openness'?*

What has been imposed in Regent Park, namely the design of the public housing project and the concentration of a disadvantaged population, has been appropriated by the community and used as a source of empowerment. The greatest weakness of Regent Park is probably its diversity, which was a real problem during
the time when the community lacked the facilities to deal with its population composition. This explains the severity of the problems that existed in Regent Park in the 1970's and which almost made the area turn into a real ghetto. But the particularity of Regent Park, which makes it a true margin from the postmodernist point of view, is that it was able to overcome its difficulties. It transformed its diversity into its greatest strength. It is its weakness that obliged the community to organize itself. In other words, the community appropriated what was produced and imposed 'from above' to create something new and strong 'from below'.

Regent Park today is a tolerant community and in Higgins' opinion it is probably more tolerant than any other community in Canada. His statement of the fact that there is less racism in Regent Park than in the larger Canadian society can be interpreted as a manifestation of local pride. Nevertheless, it opens the way to hooks' notion of a space of 'radical openness' where one can speak about difference and share diversity. As many of the above examples suggest, Regent Park represents a true celebration of difference and of diversity. In terms of being a space of radical openness, the population of Regent Park seems to know more about multiculturalism than the rest of Canada since it experiences it everyday in every aspect of its life.

Conclusion

The postmodernist interpretation allows a reconceptualization of the margin from the point of view of the oppressed group. This approach not only gives voice to the multiplicity of groups who are silenced by the modernist perspective, but it also reveals that subordinate groups are not entirely powerless. The appropriation of the margin is a form of empowerment for the oppressed that does not exist in the modernist understanding of power relations. This issue further helps our understanding of the relationship between the centre and the margin. In the postmodernist interpretation, the oppressed are more than simply part of the hegemonic power relations. In addition to resisting to the production and imposition of
space, they create their own space. Since the relation between the centre and the margin does not function according to a simple binary opposition, we need to re-evaluate the relationship between dominant and subordinate. It is not as straightforward as suggested by the modernist understanding of hegemonic power relations.

In this chapter, I tried to further develop the links between the production of space and the politics of representation, and to show how important they are for understanding power relations. Because the construction of images and of identity is parallel to the production and imposition of space, both processes reflect the relation between the centre and the margin. The identity and the perception of those who are oppressed do not necessarily correspond to the hegemonic representation. Thus, the space produced and imposed by the centre and the one chosen and created by the margin are not necessarily the same. In other words, the dominant is not the only power that produces space. By appropriating the margin, the oppressed are able to achieve a certain level of power as well. The margin is a space where the silenced can resist the discourse and the practices of the centre, but it can also be a space in and for itself. Finally, it is because the margin presents possibilities of creation that it is a space where the disadvantaged can introduce change 'from below'.

The possibilities of change generated by the margin affect the notion of space itself. In the postmodernist interpretation of the margin, space does not represent the fixed order of the centre, which results from the simple binary structure of power relations. Rather it is multiple and flexible; its meaning differs depending on one's position and one's subjectivity.

The major interest of the postmodernist conceptualization of the margin is that it helps making sense of societal processes that are not 'from above'. From that point of view, it fills in the gaps left by the modernist interpretation. Nevertheless, the usefulness of this approach also has its limitations. The problems of the postmodernist perspective become apparent in the empirical research.
The analysis of Regent Park makes us question several elements of the postmodernist explanation. Above all, the case study presents the margin as double-edged, both empowering and weakening the oppressed. The first question we need to address regards the extent of empowerment that the margin really offers. Then, we need to look more closely at the level of change that is made possible by the margin. In this case, it seems that by organizing itself, the community of Regent Park serves the interests of the government. This leads us to wonder whether the dominant group truly controls space and whether the centre accepts changes ‘from below’ only when these benefit its interests.

These questions revolve around the issue of the relationship between the centre and the margin, and in turn around the production of space and the politics of representation. Thus, both the modernist and the postmodernist interpretations present some shortcomings in their understanding of power relations. This is the reason why I wish to turn to a third way. In the following chapter, I will discuss in more depth the problems of the postmodernist conceptualization of the margin before introducing the ideas presented by border theory. Then, I will provide a last interpretation of the margin: the margin as a space of conflict, negotiation and hybridity between the dominant and the oppressed.
Chapter 4

Revisiting the margin

The modernist conceptualization of the margin demonstrates in what ways space is produced and imposed by the discourse and the practices of the dominant. The characteristic of this approach is its emphasis on the use of binary oppositions for the study of power relations. Its understanding of the functioning of hegemonic power is that of an oppositional dyad composed of a powerful oppressor and a relatively powerless, passive subordinate group. The first problem with this interpretation is that power relations are fixed and often function in such a way as to legitimate the established order. Then, the modernist perspective reflects only the hegemonic point of view on power relations and on the production of space. Finally, the major modernist shortcoming is that it gives less value to different forms of power, to phenomena such as the organization of subordinate groups; indeed, it assumes that they work in favor of the dominant interests.

The postmodernist perspective on the margin offers answers to the questions neglected by the modernist approach. It gives voice to a multiplicity of groups that are oppressed and silenced, and it goes as far as to celebrate difference through radical openness. The margin becomes a space of resistance, creation and change. Through the appropriation of the margin both as a physical and as an imagined space, the oppressed are able to empower themselves and to introduce change. Nevertheless, this conceptualization is in danger of idealizing and romanticizing the extent of power that the subordinate is really able to achieve. This criticism is based on an evaluation of the degree of change that marginalized groups can effectively implement. The case
of Regent Park provides several examples as evidence for this problem. Although the analysis of the community looks at resistance in and for itself, and not as strictly against the dominant group – the importance given to the notion of the community, and to the presence of creation and of change, versus class or race relations – a few questions remain unanswered.

After a critique of the postmodernist interpretation based on the problems it leaves unsolved with regard to the case study, I will investigate in more detail the links between the production of physical space and of imagined space. This discussion will then lead me to a presentation of border theory, the last conceptualization of the margin I wish to explore. In this chapter, I will return to the larger scale of the Cabbagetown neighborhood, analyzing both the communities of Regent Park and of Cabbagetown in light of the new ideas that will be introduced. I hope to answer the questions on the meaning of the juxtaposition of the centre and the margin and the origins of the contrasts between Regent Park and Cabbagetown with which I began this research.

Critique of the postmodernist conceptualization of the margin

Notwithstanding the organization of the Regent Park community, the residents' interest in local issues and their active involvement, and even the improvements in their relation with the administration, the management and the maintenance of the public housing project remain an ongoing source of dissatisfaction. For example, besides the handling of complaints and repairs, the quality of the housing conditions in Regent Park – which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1998 – suffers from degradation. The structure of the buildings itself is sound, but the units and the interiors need major renovations (Milgrom, personal interview; CMHC, 1990). Furthermore, security remains a primary concern among the residents. Although the situation is not as bad as portrayed in the media and is not threatening to the tenants themselves, one cannot explain the persistence of crime and violence considering the
action taken against it.

The postmodernist approach overlooks some details that prevent oppressed groups being fully successful in bringing about change. In the case of Regent Park, the celebration of its diversity ignores the internal tensions of the community. Doug Rice explained that the residents of Regent Park South are less interested in issues of maintenance. The Regent Park North building representatives tried to help organize the tenants of the south into a similar group, but they were unable to rouse them to action. Richard Milgrom pointed to the fact that it is always the same residents who participate in the various action groups and in the community organization. Furthermore, Doug Rice’s comment about the attitude of the security officers explains why crime and violence are not eliminated. These are only some of the unexplained details at the informal level. The most important problem is found at the institutional level. It is the question of the administration of Regent Park with regard to both its relation with the tenants and its structure.

The MTHA has no power over its responsibilities, it only fulfills an administrative role. It is the OHC that controls the management of public housing projects in the province. The OHC knows that it has to improve the housing conditions of most projects, not only Regent Park, and it knows exactly how since numerous government reports and evaluations have been written in the last thirty years (Helleyer, 1969; Dennis and Fish, 1972; CMHC, 1990). Yet, it simply will not implement the recommendations suggested by experts regarding the physical conditions of housing, as well as the importance of tenant participation. Thus, no matter how well the residents of Regent Park deal with the direct body of administration, the MTHA, the structure of the management will not change.

There is a second element that represents a more significant challenge to the postmodernist interpretation of the margin: the representation of Regent Park. Why is it that the negative, hegemonic portrayal persists despite the obvious efforts of the community to fight the media image and to promote its own identity? There are
probably some deeper motivations that feed this representation than the explanations given by David Zapparoli and Adonis Higgins – that Regent Park is a convenient case for bad city problems and that its residents are used as a targeted scapegoat. We might go a step further and wonder whether it is not this very image imposed on Regent Park that feeds the continuing problem of violence and crime, especially if we take into consideration the fact that the gangs responsible for crime and violence come from the outside.

Finally, the most serious bone of contention in the postmodernist perspective is the redevelopment project for the northeast corner of Regent Park, the oldest part of the initial public housing project. The goal is to “normalize this part of the city” (Now, Nov. 27-Dec. 3 1997); in other words to reincorporate it into the urban fabric. The plans propose to double the density of this section, which is the least dense of the whole community, by adding another 167 units to it. The main particularity of the project is the nature and the design of the new housing. The plan calls for a variety of low- and market-rental units, co-ops, and possibly condominiums, which would accommodate residents from mixed-income groups, taking the shape of street-oriented townhouses similar to those of the adjacent neighborhood. The second innovation is the redesign of the streets to recreate small blocks, and probably back lanes. Finally, some retail space is expected along Gerrard St. (Coopersmith: 73; National Post, April 7 1999). The redevelopment plan hopes to make up for some of the negative characteristics of the original project in terms of the use of space. It wishes to give tenants their own private space, while simultaneously re-establishing public space. The redevelopment project has been developed by the Regent Park Northeast Redevelopment Working Committee which “includes the participation of some actual residents in the planning of the new housing”, an involvement that represents a drastic change from the rehabilitation process fifty years ago (Zapparoli: 31).

It is the changing key ideas about housing development of the late 1980's-90's
that are at the basis of this project. In the summer of 1995, a team of experts led by John Sewell — with an architect and a developer — looked with the residents for redevelopment opportunities in the northeast corner of Regent Park. By 1996, they had put together the first report reflecting the residents' original ideas. Sewell explained that, ideally, the residents should be in total control of the action, and that their consent to any aspect of the project is essential. The experts like himself, the architect or the developer, only play the role of consultants to help the residents, but he underlined that they have no influence in decision-making. The project is the result of the team’s work with the collaboration of the residents, and the government’s role is to bring about the necessary conditions to make the development of the project possible (Sewell, personal interview).

According to the reports and the requests for proposals written by the government (MTHA, August 1990; OHC, July 1997; MMAHO, December 1998) — which in Sewell’s opinion are not representative of the local input — the redevelopment project is to take the form of a public-private partnership. The main goal is to increase the opportunities for affordable housing, but without the government’s financial support. The second aim is to improve the livable environment for the residents and for the community of the larger neighborhood through a sensitive urban design. The government is to facilitate the redevelopment process, but the entire responsibility for the administration, the maintenance, the construction and the cost of the project falls on the developer. The requirement is that the project be community oriented in spirit and approved through public consultation, which is the role of the Regent Park Northeast Redevelopment Working Committee.

But in practice, things have been different. Richard Milgrom thinks that the residents and the community do not have all that much power, and that the whole process is in constant flux and in a deep state of confusion. Sewell confirmed that the evolution of the project has been slow. The government dismissed the firm that had been allocated the responsibility for carrying the project at first and began the
assessment of three new proposals in February 1999. Sewell sounded angry at how the government has been handling the situation and is pessimistic about the possible coming of age of the project. He said that the government is delaying the process by taking decisions slowly, rather than easing it. At the end of June 1999, Milgrom found out that the government has postponed the entire project by rejecting the three proposals it had been evaluating for half a year; he also feels disillusioned about the project ever becoming reality (Milgrom and Sewell, personal interview).

Thus, the postmodernist approach should be used with care by keeping in mind its limitations on two points: the extent of the margin’s empowerment, which is itself determined by the degree of change that the oppressed are able to achieve. There are some nuances to be taken into consideration with respect to these two questions.

In terms of the degree of change, there is no doubt that the organization of the Regent Park community has made a tremendous difference in the residents’ lives and plays an essential role, even more so today than before. Yet, we can question how beneficial it really is. The organization of the community has improved the housing conditions and the quality of life in Regent Park, but it has not altered the functioning of the power relations that govern this space. Evidence for this has been provided earlier in the discussion on the ongoing struggle of the residents against the administration, on the persistence of crime and violence, and of the negative representation of the community. But above all, it is the redevelopment project that underlines the community’s inability to achieve significant change. Regent Park appears rather powerless in face of how the government handles the whole process.

Here, de Certeau’s ideas on resistance and everyday practice (1984) prove insightful for making sense of what happens in Regent Park. The nuance is between what de Certeau calls ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’. The community organization corresponds more to the tactics than to the strategies. It is more a form of survival practiced by the margin to cope with the discourse and the practices ‘from above’,
than an opposition that really challenges hegemonic power 'from below'. This nuance is explicitly stated in Maria Long's comment on the fact that without community organization it would be impossible to live in Regent Park. Her remark acknowledges the importance of local action, but it also suggests that the community organization represents more a means of survival than a weapon of resistance. By servicing the community's needs, it makes life in Regent Park bearable. What happened is that the residents themselves developed those facilities necessary to accommodate a disadvantaged population, such as recent immigrants, unemployed, children, single mothers and many others, that are not provided by the government and the administration.

This raises another important issue on how to interpret the organization of the community in Regent Park. We may wonder whether the changes that the margin is able to introduce do not in fact benefit the interests of the centre. In this case, the community organization fulfills the role of the government by supplying those services that are expected to be the responsibility of the (paternalistic) welfare state. This statement has to be understood in relation to the current political and economic context of Toronto which is marked by significant government cut backs in the social services, the withdrawal of the welfare state, and the decentralization of the institutional power, duties and responsibilities. By organizing itself, the margin serves the interests of the centre and even, to a certain extent, reproduces its marginality. This argument questions the degree of empowerment of the margin: could it be that the centre determines which changes created by the margin are to be introduced depending on whether they benefit its hegemonic interests? In this case, the self-sufficiency of the community of Regent Park seems nicely to match the interests of the government.

The postmodernist vision of the margin as a self-sufficient unit further problematizes the level of empowerment of the oppressed and their ability to bring change. The idea of a self-sufficient unit stems from the notion of community which is
essential in the postmodernist interpretation of the margin. It represents the margin’s source of empowerment, while simultaneously celebrating the existence of the margin in and for itself. Regent Park’s self-sufficiency corresponds to both aspects of this notion — it is a source of power and a celebration of the population’s diversity. However, the community organization of Regent Park appears as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is empowering in the sense that it provides the residents with the facilities that allow them to live normal lives as much as possible, its ultimate goal being the integration of the residents in the larger society through the means of various support services. On the other hand, because the community organization exists in and for itself, it isolates the population of Regent Park from the outside world. The main explanation for this is probably that the services and the facilities are almost exclusively geared toward the residents of Regent Park. For example, the Media Arts Program offered by the Regent Park Focus Community Coalition enrolls only youth from Regent Park. Thus, although the students have the opportunity to participate in this program and to acquire skills, they do so by remaining in their own community. The same rules apply to most of the services, such as day care, recreational activities, and also to such essential services as unemployment programs. In other words, while the community organization means to integrate Regent Park with Toronto, it in effect shuts the community away from the larger society. One of the consequences is the fear of some residents of leaving the protection of their community, their homeplace, and reaching out the world outside.

It is because of the possibility of further marginalization of the margin through its being a community that the extent of its empowerment needs to be questioned. In

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The notion is based on the argument that the community creates and brings change in and for itself, and not necessarily against its oppressor, which is expressed in bell hooks’ idea of a ‘homeplace’ (1990: 47). Homeplace stands for a symbolic space in relation to the issue of the production of identity and of difference, but I extend its meaning to represent the real and physical space of the community organization of Regent Park.

Some explain the presence of a few families in Regent Park over several generations with the controversial theory on the cycle of poverty. Regent Park still stands as a transitional type of housing and the community organization is a form of intervention that allows the breaking of this cycle (Higgins, personal interview). There are many stories of success and achievement among the residents of Regent Park (Zapperoli, 1999).
her discussion on the practices of homeless people, Susan Ruddick tackles the contradictions of having an organized marginal group reproducing its marginality (1996: 44-45). Her argument, however, is that although the resistance of marginal groups is tactical, i.e. a means of survival, its role is significant for other reasons. It defines the margin’s position – which is not that of passive acceptance, in addition to consolidating identity – and it forces those in power to make concessions. She concludes that the benefits of the margin (its empowerment and its access to resources) outweigh their marginality, which further stimulates “new and creative forms of resistance, at both the symbolic and the practical level” (45).

Looking at the social meaning of space, Ruddick is interested in how groups secure power ‘from below’ through a larger form of resistance – one that combines the subjective creation and change of identity in and for itself with the subordinate’s use of gaps in the institutional structure to negotiate its relationship to the state. According to Ruddick, the problem of power relations is less about the level of empowerment of the acts of resistance and of their degree of immediate change, than about their symbolic impact on the oppressor’s ideology which in the long run can lead to changes implemented ‘from above’. In her opinion, the impact of resistance should be evaluated in both a spatial and a temporal dimension (Ruddick, personal communication). These ideas suggest a more subtle understanding of power, one that introduces a multiplicity of relations between the dominant and the oppressed.

The goal of the above discussion is to better understand the limits of the postmodernist approach and its implications for the conceptualization and use of the margin. Because of the nuances in the margin’s empowerment and its ability to bring change, one should be aware that as a space of resistance, creation and change it could benefit more the interests of the dominant group than those of the oppressed. In contrast to the modernist perspective, the shortcoming of the postmodernist view is its interpretation of how the empowerment of the oppressed can be a source of change. Thus the weakness of both approaches lies in their understanding of power relations.
The modernist viewpoint limits the hegemonic relation between the dominant and the oppressed to a simple opposition in which the actions of the subordinate often legitimize the extant power structure, whereas that of the postmodernist simplifies the impact of resistance to its degree of immediate change.

The problem in the understanding of the functioning of power relations further affects the understanding of the production of space, the politics of representation, and the notion of space. Nevertheless, the question comes down to the issue of the relation between the oppressor and the subordinate. It is time to look more closely at the relation between the centre and the margin in order to draw links with the other issues connected to the concept of the margin.

Linking the production of physical and of imagined spaces

Rob Shields' sociocultural perspective on the margin will allow an elaboration on the interaction between dominant and subordinate groups relevant for understanding the ways in which space is produced and imposed. In *Places on the Margin* (1991), he demonstrates the complex connection between such issues as the social construction of space – what he calls social spatialisation –, discourses on and discourses of space – or place-images and myth-places. He is interested in "how social divisions are spatialised as geographical divisions and how places become 'labelled', much like deviant individuals" (11). Shields examines the ways in which the social definition of marginal places and spaces corresponds to a system of cultural categorization, based on the construction of binary oppositions (high/low, centre/margin). Further, he looks at the social impact that spatial conceptions and discourses on space (place-images) have on individuals and on everyday perceptions and conceptions of oneself and of reality. Finally, he studies the processes through which place-images are constructed, shared and transformed by analyzing how discursive practices come to label places (a question of reputation and representation) and produce systems of shared meanings.
Shields looks at places on the margin from a cultural perspective in that he stresses the horizontal relations between spatial and sociocultural practices, and links production of space to sociocultural practices. The interest of Shields' work is that it ties together concepts taken from different disciplines, such as Lefebvre's notion of the production of space and ideas on the carnivalesque and liminality taken from anthropology and sociology, in order to highlight the importance of the social impact on space.

Shields explains that the underlying problem comes down to another set of concerns: order and norms. This is the reason why he relies directly on Foucault's ideas about societal norms and the implementation of order. This concern is manifest in the discussion of the social spatialisation. What is more, he links the production and use of space to the issue of discourse — another important element in Foucault's work. Shields analyzes discourses on space and discourses of space. Influenced by de Certeau's work, he moves beyond social conceptions to examine more closely everyday practices and the experience of reality. He studies the ways in which perceptions of places are produced and shared through the use of language, images and myths.

One of the most important issues raised in Places on the Margin is the multiple, reciprocal relation between the centre and the margin. Shields explains that the margin is the (modern) counterpart to the centre. The margin and the centre go hand in hand; they are bound in a series of social, political, and economic relationships. The margin represents an alternative site that provides critical insights for understanding the centre. This is why Shields thinks that marginality is central to Western culture and thought (276). He even goes one step further and argues that from the postmodern point of view, the margin is everywhere. In fact, the margin has become the centre, so much so that it can be found everywhere: "while a position of exclusion, [it] can also be a position of power and critique" (277). Marginal places and spaces offer a new perspective from which practices and spatial uses that we take for
granted can be critically considered. The hegemonic production of space is challenged by the new possibilities and alternatives created by the margin.

This presentation of Shields' notion of the margin demonstrates that although marginality operates on different levels – political, social, economic, and even architectural – its various aspects, its physical and imagined forms, are interlinked. Because margins can be seen everywhere, what should be considered is the degree of intensity of different forms of marginality. Despite the links between the different levels of marginality, some of them raise profound issues. This is particularly true in terms of structural marginality, which often reflects strong social, economic, and political inequalities, such as in the case of homelessness and public housing. These have significant implications for people's everyday lives. Nevertheless, other aspects of marginality, such as the sociocultural practices, should not be overlooked. These provide insights into the social production and reproduction of space, as well as into the meaning of places and spaces in people's everyday reality. There is thus a strong link between the issues of the production of space and of the politics of representation, both of which in turn depend on power relations.

The relevance of Shield's work lies in his notion of social spatialization. In his idea, the physical production of space cannot be dissociated from the imagined production of space. In other words, he directly connects the production of space to the politics of representation. Discourses on space, such as the institutional practices that produce physical space, are linked to discourses of space, place-images and place-myths that represent imagined space. Thus the labeling of space is not so much the outcome of the production of physical space itself as it is that of its representation.

This argument helps make sense of two elements about Regent Park. First, it explains that Regent Park's marginality is due not only to its physical and imagined dimension, its design and the composition of its population. Rather, Regent Park has become a place-image and a myth-place reflecting societal norms and values about such issues as poverty and unemployment, homelessness and housing.
race/ethnicity and immigration. Furthermore, the notion of social spatialization makes clear why the negative representation of Regent Park persists despite the community’s efforts to fight against it. Social spatialization highlights the fact that the hegemonic ideology manifests itself in the sociocultural discourses and practices; in other words it is expressed in the centre’s imagined space. Thus, as long as the norms and values of the larger society on the issues listed above remain the same, it is uncertain whether Regent Park residents will be able to successfully change the image of their community.

In addition, Shield’s ideas are helpful for understanding how and why Regent Park has become a margin. At the time of its construction, Regent Park embodied the dominant ideas about how to deal with poverty and housing. As long as it corresponded to these, it was portrayed as a success story and used to illustrate its positive dimensions. In a way, Regent Park symbolized the centre, since it reflected the power of mainstream values, and became a model for public housing projects across Canada. However, as soon as these ideas grew marginal, as explained in the previous chapters, so did Regent Park’s image.

The shift in representation affected Regent Park from several points of view. The representation of its design and state of degradation is more marginal than it is in reality. Furthermore, the physical conditions became more marginal than they were originally because the quality of the management and of the maintenance decreased as a result of the negative images. These have certainly contributed to the decay of the physical space of Regent Park. As an imagined space, the community is viewed more negatively than what in reality it is. But again, Regent Park has become socially worse than it was due to the fact that the negative media image has probably attracted the gangs that have brought crime and violence into the community. Thus, the argument that the representation of the community has made Regent Park more marginal than it was originally emphasizes even more the ties between production of space and the politics of representation.
Interestingly, the very opposite happened in the production of the new Cabbagetown, the gentrified area which today lies north of Gerrard St. In the mid-1960's, the part north of Regent Park was due to experience urban renewal. This did not happen, however, because of the changes in ideas about urban planning and more particularly because of the citizens' intervention – itself motivated by the threat of the destruction of neighborhoods, both in terms of community and historical preservation. The area underwent a 'marginal' form of redevelopment, the process known as gentrification today, which was not part of the official discourse and practices of that time. Gentrification in its early stages was a deviant practice falling outside society's norms and values. But Cabbagetown gradually turned into one of Toronto's most desirable and fashionable residential neighborhoods. Cabbagetown today represents the dominant's socioeconomic and cultural ideal, and for this reason can be said to symbolize the centre.

Two details need to be clarified. Cabbagetown went through the reverse shift from being somewhat of a margin into a space symbolizing the centre. The reason is probably that in addition to representing the hegemonic norms and values, Cabbagetown came to benefit the centre's interests. For example, the land values of this area are economically competitive; politically, this neighborhood is home to those in power. There is a critical distinction here between Cabbagetown as an imagined and as physical space: what matters more is who it represents rather than where it is located. In this case, the margin was powerful enough not only to bring about change, but actually to be integrated by the centre. The only explanation for this change is that the margin was working toward the dominant group's interest which confirms the idea that the extent of the margin's empowerment depends on the centre's willingness to accept it.

The second detail appears as evidence in support of this argument. As in Regent Park, Cabbagetown's image does not exactly correspond to reality; it is obviously not as ideal as promoted. The area still contains several rooming houses,
and the part west of Parliament St. suffers from the presence of prostitution and drug dealing (Guspie, personal interview). Yet Cabbagetown’s representation is not affected by these problems in any way. This point shows that the link between production of space and politics of representation works both ways. Furthermore, Cabbagetown’s reverse experience stresses how important the functioning of power relations are for this discussion. In particular, it supports the argument that the centre determines the margin’s empowerment depending on whether it benefits its interests.

Shield’s notion of social spatialization is helpful for understanding the impact of sociocultural practices – the discourse on and of space – on the production of space. Its ultimate contribution, however, is to grasping the functioning of power relations. Based on ideas on the construction of binary oppositions (self/other), the notion of social spatialization establishes an interesting relation between the dominant and the subordinate, or between the centre and the margin. In this perspective, the centre and the margin are associated in such a way that their actions cannot be understood independently. The centre does not work in isolation from the margin, and vice versa. The innovative aspect of this interpretation is that it moves beyond the problem of power relations encountered with the modernist and the postmodernist approaches. Here, since the centre and the margin are interdependent, power relations are understood as being multiple and reciprocal. The centre affects the margin, but then the margin responds to the centre. Although the centre is more powerful than the margin, the margin is certainly not powerless and passive and is able to influence the centre.

In the case of Regent Park, the community does not have enough power to successfully alter the situation for its own advantage; nevertheless its resistance is significant. As Ruddick argues, resistance, even if it is only tactical, plays an essential role for both the margin and the centre to the extent that it can increase the awareness of the other’s position and sometimes even bring about concrete changes, such as access to resources for the margin and concessions on the part of the centre. For
Regent Park, the community was able to drastically improve the life of the residents and has made a difference for a number of individuals in offering them a chance to succeed. Furthermore, resistance can make a considerable difference in the long run by influencing the hegemonic ideology imperceptibly and introducing changes 'from above' indirectly. In this case, the margin determines the choices of the centre through its offering a range of new possibilities.

Finally, the notion of social spatialization ties together all the issues discussed above. It first links the production of space to the politics of representation, and then it shows how both are associated with the functioning of power relations. The contribution of this perspective is the establishment of multiple, reciprocal relations between groups with unequal power, which simultaneously transforms the understanding of the production of space and of the politics of representation and identity. In addition, social spatialization shows the connection between the production of physical and of imagined space. Shields moves beyond the mere understanding of power relations as a simple opposition between dominant and oppressed. Rather, he demonstrates that power relations imply interaction and dialogue between power groups whose actions feed upon one another. This opens the way to a new conceptualization of the margin that goes beyond both the modernist and the postmodernist interpretations.

Border theory: the boundaries, frontiers, edges and lines of the margin

The conceptualization of the margin to which I now turn finds its inspiration in colonial and postcolonial studies which have led to the emergence of what is known as border theory, or what others call a 'third way' (Soja, 1996). Here, I will use the ideas developed by Jane M. Jacobs in her book *Edge of Empire* (1996). She thinks that we need to move beyond the modernist and postmodernist static rhetoric on space. She even criticizes the postmodernist perspective for having become part of the modernist discourse – mirroring the role of the oppressed in a hegemonic power
structure – for it only describes the multiple, subjective experiences of the subordinate groups without challenging the functioning of power relations (8). From Jacobs' point of view, contemporary structures of domination and subordination are unclear and disorganized; they take the form of “uneven politics” (preface: xi) which differs from the previous, straightforward binary forms of opposition such as class struggle. Thus the use of spatial metaphors is no longer helpful in making sense of the contradictory forces that produce and reproduce space today. Jacobs' argument is that we need to study the processes of change that shape contemporary geographies, not the objects of change themselves. Furthermore, she strongly believes that all processes of production are filled with politics, which explains her interest in understanding the negotiation of power structures. This implies looking at the production of physical and of imagined spaces as ongoing political struggles.

An essential aspect of Jacobs' approach is that, like Shields, she considers power relations to be multiple and reciprocal instead of taking the form of binary oppositions. This means that space, both physical and imagined, is also seen as a constant process, as being in a state of 'becoming' analogous to Massey's progressive sense of place. This notion of space is made explicit by Jacobs' extensive use of the language of mobility. She talks of constant change, transformations, displacement, overlapping and so forth. However, what is even more significant is that unlike the modernist and the postmodernist perspectives, this approach does not associate space with power groups; the margin does not represent the powerless and passive, nor does it correspond to the space of the subordinate's empowerment and that of the celebration of difference. Rather, in Jacobs' interpretation, the margin as a political space is the space 'in between' power groups. It is the space where the dominant and the subordinate meet. The margin is the border, the frontier, the edge where power structures are challenged and negotiated, where conflict and resistance take place, but also where negotiation and consensus can be reached, and even a space of hybridity. Finally, Jacobs thinks that contemporary cities are 'meeting places'
filled with possibilities of destabilizing power structures, where places and identities are negotiated, unsettled, reconciled, where eventually some sort of hybridity between power groups can appear.

To sum up, Jacobs’ perspective is based on a multiple and reciprocal understanding of power relations and emphasizes the process of change, this being in terms of the production of space and of power structures. Attention should not stop at the issue of the imposition of space or the experience of space, but rather at the ways in which space reflects changes and offers opportunities for change. This is important because of the political dimension of the processes involved in producing not only cities, but society at large.

Through time, the Cabbagetown neighborhood has undergone some interesting changes in its boundaries, borders and frontiers. The area’s historical development explained in the introductory chapter is filled with ironies and contradictions. The first irony is that Hugh Garner’s ‘Cabbagetown’ designated the area located south of Gerrard St., but the term now refers to that lying on the northern side. Furthermore, what originally was the old, true Cabbagetown no longer exists. Fifty years ago, the rehabilitation project cleared the houses and the community and Regent Park replaced what formed Cabbagetown. The ultimate irony, however, is that the very term Cabbagetown was used derogatorily until the Second World War, since it applied to one of Toronto’s worst slums, whereas today it carries the prestigious connotations of a desirable, gentrified community. On the other hand, it is Regent Park that is now associated with the negative images of a stigmatized community. In a way, Regent Park has replaced both the physical and imagined old Cabbagetown, as a symbol of and for the centre’s ideas.

How are these changes to be interpreted in light of Jacobs’ ideas? Real changes have been implemented with regard to the physical and imagined space of Cabbagetown, with the result that it has shifted from being a margin to being a centre. It was a margin in that it was a space of conflict between a group of citizens opposed
to the official renewal scheme. Cabbagetowners used a marginal form of urban development to upgrade the area, a form of creative resistance to the institutions that wanted to implement traditional urban policies. But because the citizens' action benefited those in power, Cabbagetown became a space of reconciliation between the two groups. The process of gentrification has even been appropriated by the centre to the extent that Cabbagetown symbolizes the ideal values and attitude of the elite. This is the reason why it now represents the centre.

On the other hand, no real change has occurred in Regent Park, which remains a physical and an imagined margin. As a space of ongoing conflict between power groups, it truly corresponds to Jacobs' conceptualization of the margin. What makes it a margin is the fact that it is a space where power structures are constantly contested and challenged, not because it has been imposed or experienced as such. The continuous exchange between the community of Regent Park and the larger society stands as evidence for the multiple, reciprocal relations between power groups. The residents resist the official discourse and practices through community organization, to which the government responds either by accepting the changes brought by local action such as the construction of certain facilities and the self-management of certain services, or by rejecting them. The creation of the MTHA, an intermediate body of administration between the residents and the OHC, and the handling of the Regent Park northeast redevelopment project by the government, represent two examples of the dominant group's opposition to drastic changes. In other words, there is no change in terms of the structure of power relations in Regent Park. Does that mean that Regent Park will remain a margin as long as it is the space where the dominant and the subordinate groups meet to challenge one another, or until some form of reconciliation and consensus between the two is reached, as in Cabbagetown?

As described in the introduction, there are two additional border zones in the Cabbagetown neighborhood, Gerrard and Parliament Streets, that are worth analyzing from Jacobs' perspective. Gerrard St. seems to play the role of a line of
separation, even of segregation, between the communities of Cabbagetown and of Regent Park. Being the space where the two extremes are juxtaposed, it literally is the meeting point between the dominant and the oppressed. But it appears more as a space of demarcation that expresses the tension between the two positions than as a space where conflict takes place. The design of the streetscape and its use, or rather its lack of use, reflect the opposition between the two groups. People probably avoid Gerrard St. because the tension is too obvious. Thus, this line has become a major thoroughfare without any socioeconomic activity. However, the recent opening of a Goodwill store and soon that of a second hand furniture store (Rice, personal interview), might change the aspect and the uses of Gerrard St.

In contrast, Parliament St. can be interpreted as a true meeting space between the populations of Cabbagetown and of Regent Park, to the extent that is has become a hybrid space. The activity that takes place on Parliament St. accommodates the needs of both groups. The hybridity not only comes from the mixing of the populations of Cabbagetown and Regent Park, but also from the presence of a variety of different groups, these being socioeconomic, cultural or ethnic, coming from the nearby St. James Town and the gay district. Furthermore, Parliament St. offers many kinds of business activities, from grocery and convenience stores, to cafés and restaurants, clothing and hardware, and even entertainment. However, we can sense a certain level of conflict even on Parliament St. While Regent Park residents are satisfied with the quality and the affordability of the goods and activities provided on Parliament St. (Rice, personal interview), Cabbagetowners are not as happy (Kurtin, personal interview). It seems that they would prefer more upscale shops and stores, businesses that reflect their socioeconomic and cultural status. This is the reason why the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Association and to a lesser extent the Cabbagetown Preservation Association work at attracting more upscale businesses22.

Thus, Gerrard and Parliament Streets represent margins, although they

22 Nevertheless, a difficulty at another level is that the present day local population would be unable to sustain such businesses (Milgrom, personal interview).
correspond to a different scale and to a different kind of margin than Regent Park. As streets, they are a margin that plays the role of social divide between the two communities, especially Gerrard St. Both conform to the idea of a space where opposed groups meet and express their conflict. They are border zones that mark the tension between the populations of Cabbagetown and of Regent Park in two different ways. The conflict is cruelly open and exposed on Gerrard St., while it is subtle and almost invisible to the unaware eye on Parliament St. The former is almost a violent marginal border, whereas the hybridity of the latter suggests possibilities of negotiation and reconciliation.

These two lines where Regent Park and Cabbagetown intermingle reveal the nature of the relationship between the two contrasting yet juxtaposed communities; on a different scale, this relationship stands for that between the dominant and the subordinate groups. When I asked my informants about the relationship between the populations of Regent Park and Cabbagetown, they gave mixed answers suggesting the existence of a multiplicity of interactions. Joice Guspie, who has lived in this part of the city her whole life, said that the relation between the two communities is good. She supported her opinion by mentioning the special space provided for the residents of Regent Park during the Cabbagetown festival. On the other hand, Peggy Kurtin thinks that the two communities do not really know one another and live rather independently. She pointed to the fact that the situation is different for the southern part of Cabbagetown. Because of its proximity to Regent Park and of the presence of youth from the public housing project, it is not as safe as the streets farther north. In a way, Regent Park and Cabbagetown overlap in the area north of Gerrard St.

Richard Milgrom gave a more nuanced answer. He explained that Regent Park residents interact with the community of Cabbagetown as is suggested by their use of Parliament St. and by their participation in the Cabbagetown festival. However, the reverse is not true; Cabbagetowners do not attend Sunday-in-the-Park, the festival of Regent Park, and they are not involved in the community. Finally, the most radical
position with regard to this question was expressed by Maria Long. With irony, she replied "What relation? Is there a relation between Regent Park and Cabbagetown?". Then she argued that the participation of Regent Park residents in the Cabbagetown festival is possible only on certain conditions. The first is renting a display stand for an amount of money that no resident of Regent Park can afford. The second requirement is the approval of the Cabbagetown festival committee for the handicrafts and other artwork being sold. In her idea, this is equivalent to judging whether the contribution of Regent Park residents is up to the standards of Cabbagetowners.

The above statements on the relationship between the two communities further indicate that the Cabbagetown neighborhood itself is a margin. This idea is based on the evidence of the presence of different forms of conflict, negotiation and hybridity between the community of Cabbagetown, symbolizing the dominant, and that of Regent Park, those who are oppressed. Depending on the individual perception of each informant, there are multiple levels of interaction, constant fluxes and unsettled positions between the two groups.

Jacobs' conceptualization of the margin is powerful in explaining processes of change. Based on a multiple, reciprocal understanding of power relations, it considers the production of space to be in a constant state of becoming. While space is the outcome of the interaction between dominant and oppressed, the margin is the medium through which conflict and negotiation are carried out, and possibly where hybridity can be reached. Furthermore, the interest of this interpretation lies in that it highlights the ways in which the production of space is associated to the politics of representation. The production of physical space and that of imagined space are closely interlinked, and actually feed upon one another. This perspective is helpful for understanding the processes that made Regent Park marginal and those that maintain its marginality. Despite the inaccuracy of the official representation of the community and of its resistance, the power structure that governs Regent Park has not (yet) changed. Cabbagetown, on the other hand, illustrates a situation where changes
were implemented after the reconciliation between the interests of the two groups.

In addition to making sense of the meaning of space, Jacobs' approach is insightful for interpreting processes of change. In this case, her conceptualization of the margin, of power relations and of the production of space, explains not only the significance of the contrasts between Cabbagetown and Regent Park, but also the origins of their juxtaposition. Regent Park does not represent the power of the centre to impose itself over a disadvantaged, passive and powerless group. Nor does it simply stand as the space of appropriation and of empowerment of the oppressed, a space of resistance, creation and change. Rather, Regent Park is the space where the conflict between the two power groups has been taking place for over fifty years. In contrast, on the northern side of Gerrard St., the two power groups were able to settle their conflict since the changes brought by the margin – gentrification – were beneficial to the interests of the dominant. It is this very notion of settlement that makes Cabbagetown a form of centre, the opposite of a space of conflict, so much so, that today it actually symbolizes the ideal values of the elite.

The redevelopment project for the northeast corner of Regent Park represents another process of conflict and of negotiation between the oppressor and the subordinate. Compared to the original rehabilitation project that led to the construction of Regent Park, this project is rather recent and stands as a different scale of margin, a temporal difference. The slow and difficult process of the implementation of the redevelopment plan exemplifies the subtlety and the multiplicity of power relations which are peculiar to border theory.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have investigated the meaning of the concept of the margin in urban social geography by exploring its different usages and by applying it to one case study. First, using the modernist vision, I was able to understand in what ways the margin is a space produced and imposed 'from above'. I illustrated this view by
showing how Regent Park is the outcome of the institutional discourse and practices on public housing after the Second World War. Then, taking a postmodernist perspective, I analyzed the experience of the margin ‘from below’, which is incomplete in the first approach. I demonstrated that Regent Park is also a space of resistance, of creation and of change. This interpretation, however, romanticizes the empowerment of the oppressed and idealizes their ability to successfully implement change. This is the reason why I finally turned to border theory. Influenced by postcolonial studies, this conceptualization of the margin emphasizes the analysis of processes of change over that of the objects under examination. Looking at the Cabbagetown neighborhood as a space of conflict, of negotiation, and of hybridity, it is possible to understand not only the existence of the multiple contrasts in this area of Toronto, but also the origins of the juxtaposition of Cabbagetown and of Regent Park.

This research has led me to investigate issues related to the production of space and to the politics of representation, as well as the notion of space. Nevertheless, the most important question has been that of the functioning of power relations which is a fundamental dimension for making sense of space. The multiple, reciprocal perspective taken by Shields and Jacobs allows us to go beyond the obstacle of the problematic power structure presented by both the modernist and the postmodernist approaches.

In addition, this discussion underlined the fact that spatial phenomena are tied to other societal processes. Here, I paid particular attention to the construction of representation and identity. Using the notion of social spatialization, I demonstrated that sociocultural discourses and practices have a strong impact on the production of space. The consequence is that the production of physical space cannot be dissociated from that of imagined space. Finally, an underlying theme of this research has been the political dimension of space. Physical space as much as imagined space is filled with politics, it is the outcome as well as the medium of power relations. Space is the product of the conflict, of the negotiation, and of the possible hybridity.
between groups with unequal power, while simultaneously being the symbol of this conflict, negotiation and hybridity.
### APPENDIX A

#### Data from the Census of Canada 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile of CT(1)</th>
<th>Toronto (535) 00001</th>
<th>CT 30</th>
<th>CT 31</th>
<th>CT 67</th>
<th>CT 68</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population, 1996 (100% data)</td>
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<td>6492</td>
<td>1672</td>
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<td>0.67</td>
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<td>Total population by sex and age groups (100% data)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Total number of census families in private households by family size (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>550</td>
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<td>520</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
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<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>415</td>
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<td>Total families of now-married couples</td>
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<td>820</td>
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<td>Total without sons and/or daughters at home</td>
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<td>180</td>
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<td>150</td>
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<td>Total lone-parent families by sex of parent (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>605</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of never-married sons and/or daughters at home (20% sample data)</td>
<td>1461945</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>2735</td>
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<td>Average number of never-married sons and/or daughters at home per census family</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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<td>Average number of persons per census family</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
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<td>2.7</td>
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<td>Single-detached house</td>
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<td>Total number of private households by household size (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>815</td>
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<td>2 persons</td>
<td>412415</td>
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<td>535</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>430</td>
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<td>4 - 5 persons</td>
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<td>Profile of CT(1)</td>
<td>Toronto (535)</td>
<td>CT 30</td>
<td>CT 31</td>
<td>CT 67</td>
<td>CT 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>6 or more persons</td>
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<td>6490</td>
<td>1675</td>
<td>2445</td>
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<td>3390</td>
<td>5175</td>
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<td>Citizenship other than Canadian</td>
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<td>1320</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total population by place of birth (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>Born in province of residence</td>
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<td>Total immigrant population by period of immigration (20% sample data)</td>
<td>1772905</td>
<td>2205</td>
<td>3820</td>
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<td>885</td>
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<td>Before 1961, period of immigration</td>
<td>264630</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>120</td>
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<td>1961-1970, period of immigration</td>
<td>269870</td>
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<td>115</td>
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<td>1971-1980, period of immigration</td>
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<td>655</td>
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<td>1981-1990, period of immigration</td>
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<td>2075</td>
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<td>1405</td>
<td>1765</td>
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<td>French</td>
<td>52355</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>Non-official languages</td>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>3755</td>
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<td>595</td>
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<td>6495</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>2445</td>
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<td>3580</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>1235</td>
<td>1850</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>280</td>
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<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neither English nor French</td>
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<td>345</td>
<td>810</td>
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<td>Official language minority - (number)</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>English and non-official language</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>French and non-official language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total population 15 years and over by labour force activity (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>2920</td>
<td>4680</td>
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<td>2165</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the labour force</td>
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<td>1585</td>
<td>2110</td>
<td>1290</td>
<td>1410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
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<td>1165</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1235</td>
<td>1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>206995</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1106115</td>
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<td>2550</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation rate</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>45.3</td>
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<td>Employment-population ratio</td>
<td>61.1</td>
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<td>32.2</td>
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<td>61.4</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>805</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
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<td>665</td>
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<td>CT 67</td>
<td>CT 68</td>
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<td>88.8</td>
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<td>39.8</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<td>25.1</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<td>Females 15 years and over by labour force activity (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>2450</td>
<td>735</td>
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<td>In the labour force</td>
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<td>855</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>545</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>550</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Not in the labour force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation rate</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>78.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment-population ratio</td>
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<td>35.4</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>54.9</td>
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<td>Unemployment rate</td>
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<td>27.8</td>
<td>28.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>220</td>
<td>330</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending school full-time</td>
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<td>670</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
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<td>Attending school part-time</td>
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<td>Total population 15 years and over by highest level of schooling (20% sample data)</td>
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<td>2925</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<th>Females with postsecondary qualifications by major field of study (20% sample data)</th>
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<th>CT 31</th>
<th>CT 67</th>
<th>CT 68</th>
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<td>CT 67</td>
<td>CT 68</td>
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<td>Average value of dwelling $</td>
<td>238511</td>
<td>174553</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>351464</td>
<td>277395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owned</td>
<td>869570</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented</td>
<td>618800</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band housing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular maintenance only</td>
<td>1007110</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>1450</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor repairs</td>
<td>368430</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major repairs</td>
<td>112835</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, before 1946</td>
<td>213860</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, 1946-1960</td>
<td>266365</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, 1961-1970</td>
<td>294250</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, 1971-1980</td>
<td>299495</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, 1981-1990</td>
<td>306385</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of construction, 1991-1996</td>
<td>108015</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of private households by household type (20% sample data)</td>
<td>1488370</td>
<td>1320</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>1155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-family households</td>
<td>1032225</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-family households</td>
<td>49770</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-family households</td>
<td>406380</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons in private households (20% sample data)</td>
<td>4218470</td>
<td>4115</td>
<td>6495</td>
<td>1615</td>
<td>2355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of persons in private households (20% sample data)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant one-family households without additional persons</td>
<td>297260</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>1360</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average gross rent $</td>
<td>758</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>1281</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross rent spending 30% or more of household income on shelter costs</td>
<td>270165</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner one-family households without additional persons</td>
<td>610300</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average owner's major payments $</td>
<td>1070</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>1308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner's major payments spending 30% or more of household income on shelter costs</td>
<td>206940</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Interviews


Long, Maria. Regent Park resident and single mother of three children, previous volunteer in many local action groups including the Sole Support Mothers’ Group. Personal interview. 9 July 1999.

Milgrom, Richard. Architect, volunteer at the North Regent Park Residents’ Steering Committee, also working with Regent Park residents on the redevelopment project of the northeast corner of Regent Park. Personal interview. 11 June 1999.

Rice, Doug. Regent Park resident and active volunteer in many community groups, including the North Regent Park Residents’ Steering Committee, the Tenants’ Action Group and the North Regent Park building representatives. Personal interview. 6 July 1999.


Zapparoli, David. Previous Regent Park resident, photographer and author of the photographic exhibit “Regent Park. The Public Experiment in Housing” (The Market Gallery. March 13 - July 11, 1999), and youth coordinator at Dixon Hall. Phone interview. 26 June 1999.
Events


Second tour of Regent Park with Doug Rice. 6 July 1999.


Visit of a Regent Park building and apartment. 9 July 1999.
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