"The Cultural Landscape of a Site in Old Montreal: Reflections on *Urban Memory*"

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"*Urban memory*…commonly indicates the city as a physical landscape and collection of objects and practices that enables recollections of the past and that embody the past through traces of the city's sequential building and rebuilding."[1]

While cities, and particular sites within them, have evolved and undergone extensive physical transformation over the centuries, many analysts argue that traces of the past perpetually linger in such spaces, triggering a process of remembrance that Mark Crinson has called "urban memory." What differentiates this urban memory from the human form of memory is that it is collective; unlike the human memory that is generally restricted to an individual's lifetime, *urban memory* can be perpetuated and retained for centuries. It is the ability of urban memory to re-emerge continuously, throughout successive generations, which makes it a particularly intriguing concept to explore in relation to a city environment that has been built and rebuilt over time.

Dolores Hayden has also suggested that "place attachment," defined as "a psychological process similar to an infant's attachment to parental figures" is another concept that helps to account for the way individuals can develop a strong affinity for a particular urban environment or place.[2] Place, as Hayden defines it, encompasses man-made and natural elements as well as the tangible and intangible human experience; it is also considered to be a site capable of arousing all five senses.[3] This essay utilizes Hayden's concept of *place*, a term derived from interpreting the built environment as a "cultural landscape", to consider how the extensive physical transformations that have

occurred within a particular site in the historic district of Montreal have influenced the collective *urban memory*.[4] The specific site that will be discussed is actually quite small, but this area alone has undergone significant developments that are worthy of mention from the perspective of cultural landscape theory.

The place or site to be examined is situated in the Old Port of Montreal. The Old Port is located next to the St. Lawrence River, close to the Lachine Canal, and this area has been designated as "Old Montreal" because it constitutes the original portion of land on the island of Montreal that was first colonized and settled by the French in the mid seventeenth-century. It extends from the south-side of Rue Saint Paul to the harbourfront, including Bonsecours Basin, and is bound by Rue Bonsecours to the East and Rue du Marche Bonsecours to the West.

Many physical and structural changes have occurred within this space over the past two centuries, including its evolution into an industrial port facility and commercial center, as well as into a world-renowned tourist attraction. This area, together with the entire region of Old Montreal, fell into disuse and neglect in the second half of the twenty-first century until the city embarked upon an elaborate and costly project to preserve the Old Port of Montreal. The city recognized the historical significance of this area by declaring it a protected "historic district" in 1964.[5] From this time onward, Old Montreal, which includes the site discussed in this paper, underwent substantial renewal and was subjected to extensive architectural changes and alterations. One of the most noteworthy changes to occur in Old Montreal since the 1960s is its transformation into a highly commercialized tourist venue.

Many of these physical changes have been categorized as forms of historic preservation but, as the following analysis will show, historic preservation encompasses many different kinds of architectural and spatial interventions. For instance, historic preservation includes the distinct processes of *restoration* and *adaptive reuse*, each of which can have significantly different impacts upon the architectural structures that are being preserved. In being transformed into a tourist setting, Old Montreal has come to resemble what Dean MacCannel has called "a stage set," characterized by its perceived difference from regular spaces, its emphasis upon "serious social activity" and its possession of historically significant sites and objects.[6] Similarly, when a site is characterized as a tourist destination the subsequent developments it undergoes often become premised upon what MacCannel calls the "staging of originality and authenticity" intended to support the illusion that the tourist space is more historically genuine and authentic than other areas of daily life.[7]

Although the site is contained within the area designated as the historic district of Montreal, it is also evident that other important architectural elements, predominantly those associated with the city's grain and shipping industries, have not been subjected to preservation, but rather demolition. Thus, only certain architectural structures contained within this site have been safeguarded and preserved while others have literally been destroyed. It therefore becomes possible to claim that this selective preservation process constitutes a form of staged authenticity. Tourists are not presented with an original prototype of this space in Old Montreal, they are instead given an incomplete and distorted picture of architectural structures and residues that have been preserved but they are rarely exposed to those structures that have previously existed on this site. This

fragmented representation of an original site as it is currently presented to the tourist can be considered a form of staged authenticity because it emphasizes certain aspects of the historical space, while entirely eclipsing and omitting others.

Dean MacCannel has described the staging of authenticity as a process that is enacted upon many tourist spaces through which the designated site is manipulated and controlled in an effort to create the effect that historical authenticity and originality have been preserved.[8] For the sake of clarity, this paper will adopt the touristic stance and "consciousness" that MacCannel has characterized as the search for the authentic experience that apparently compels the tourist to enter tourist settings such as this site in Old Montreal.[9] Although it is contestable, this study will work with assumption that the authentic or original functions and appearances of buildings and architectural structures are those that have the greatest potential to activate urban memory and collective attachment.

Evidently, there is more contained within the process of preserving a historic district than one would think, and the following analysis intends to make critical reflections upon the impact that some of the different forms of urban intervention have had on this area, both in relation to the concepts of staged authenticity and urban memory. This study is particularly concerned with the physical transformations that have occurred within this site since its designation as a "historic district" in 1964 because some of these changes can be seen as having compromised authentic urban memory by successively rendering it more difficult to recollect certain aspects of this place as an industrialized and fully operational port facility with bustling commercial activity and civic life unfolding along Rue de la Commune and Rue Saint Paul. It is by standing back

and contemplating the extensive physical alterations that have taken place within this site *as a whole* that this study will argue that certain urban interventions have strengthened the urban memory while others have reduced the potential for urban memory to recall many of the original characteristics and authentic experiences that this site historically contained.

Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel and the adjoining school situated at the juncture of Rue Saint Paul and Rue Bonsecours have undergone extensive renovations and alterations, particularly since the late nineteenth-century, many of which have influenced the urban memory of this site. The Chapel itself has recently undergone the process of conservation and consolidation while the school has been entirely re-structured to accommodate a museum over the past two decades. The chapel has had fewer physical alterations and transformations than the school, and these less invasive measures have helped to strengthen authentic memory of this site in a way that the school has not. By exploring the distinct processes of conservation and consolidation as well as adaptive reuse that have been undertaken in the chapel and school, respectively, it is also possible to emphasize that these two forms of intervention have different implications for the preservation of the collective urban memory.

While the most recent renovations to have taken place within the chapel have been restricted to minor forms of restoration, such as the cleaning of stonework, there have historically been more intrusive measures introduced within this building. This is why it is accurate to consider such chapel interventions as forms of conservation and consolidation. As James Marston Fitch suggests, the process of conservation and consolidation can "range from relatively minor therapies, such as stone cleaning, to very

radical ones" like intervening in the "actual fabric of the building to ensure its continued structural integrity."[10] The chapel epitomizes the range of such practices, having undergone numerous changes over the years, including both the distinct processes of conservation and consolidation.

With respect to consolidation, it is important to indicate that the chapel had two entirely new façades, constructed in the neo-classical style by the architects Perrault, Mesnard, and Venne in 1886, that were simply glued onto the former façades of 1771.[11] The addition of an octagonal tower took place in 1892 and successive renovations re-occurred within the chapel in 1920, 1952 and then again in 1958.[12] Although designed and constructed by some of the most prominent and gifted architects of the nineteenth-century, notably the tower by Edouard Meloche, such additions can be considered as having fundamentally altered the original appearance of the former church of 1771. This becomes apparent particularly if one compares the earlier images of the chapel to the photograph of the North façade, taken just after its renovations of the late twentieth-century. After the interventions of 1890s, the chapel no longer resembled the modest and inviting structure that was associated with the original stone church of Marguerite Bourgeoys; it had become far more extravagant and ostentatious in appearance. The neoclassical architectural elements found on both of the chapel's façades are, furthermore, not consistent with the architectural style of the former chapel. These consolidations have commonly been considered architecturally refined and impressive, but it is also arguable that such additions have erased the urban memory's capacity to recollect the formerly simplistic, but authentic church of Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours.

There have also been more recent forms of consolidation to take place within the chapel that have further changed its former appearance and character in ways that can be seen as compromising the urban memory. One such consolidation was the removal of six stone statues, three angels and three theological virtues, designed by the renowned sculptor Laperle, from the South tower during the renovations of the late 1990s.[13] The removal of these statues was apparently required by the practical and structural problems posed by their heavy weight upon the church; this measure was undertaken in order to reduce and "lighten the weight" upon the heavy South tower.[14] Thus, structural considerations can necessitate that the process of consolidation involve the removal and displacement of objects from their original site(s). The sculptures have lost their prominent positions on the South façade of this chapel and can no longer be viewed or remembered. Their absence also increases the likelihood that the urban memory of these sculptures will disappear as well as their original functions of greeting all those who entered the port by ship.

The interior has been altered by the removal of certain objects, notably the hundreds of votive ships that hung from the ceiling, which were offered to the Virgin of the chapel in gratitude for safe sea voyages. As McGurk has suggested, the fact that these miniature boats were historically suspended from the ceiling served as a constant reminder of the chapel's identity as the "sailor's church."[15] These votive ships apparently also occupied a particularly prominent role in the memories of individual people. In a 1997 article from *The Gazette*, Susan Semenak suggested that "generations of Montrealers recall magical childhood visits to the chapel with fleets of model ships

strung from the ceiling, like stars, gifts from the mariners, each one twinkling with the light of a votive candle."[16]

Over time, many of these ships have been removed, and only a handful of these maritime offerings still hang from the chapel's ceiling today.[17] The votive ships evidently had a strong impact upon many people that visited the chapel, and the loss of the great majority of these ships has rendered it more difficult for the people who have fond memories of gazing upward at these objects to recall the particular experience of doing so. Furthermore, as a historical testament to the chapel's identity as "the sailor's church," the absence of these miniature boats may cause visitors, especially those who have not visited the chapel before, to remain ignorant of this unique maritime component of the church's history. Thus, in the case of Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours chapel, some of the changes accompanying the process of consolidation have resulted in the removal of critical objects from the original church, such as the statues and the votive ships. These complete "removals" can be seen as contributing to the erasure of concrete residues of the *urban memory* associated with the chapel as well as presenting an incomplete version of history.

The chapel has also undergone extensive physical transformations as a result of the process of conservation, some of which, in contrast to the consolidations, have helped to strengthen and preserve the urban memory associated with the structure's unique history and original appearance. For example, all of the individual stones found in the building's interior and exterior were carefully cleaned and repaired in order to ensure that the chapel maintained its characteristic gray stonework, graystone being the material with which many buildings were historically constructed in Montreal.[18] Such careful

preservation of the original stones used to construct the 1771 chapel has enabled the building to retain the distinctive grey color of its exterior.

An unexpected archaeological discovery, which occurred as a result of the need to repair the entire floor of the chapel, has also revealed many architectural remains, such as the foundation of the first wooden chapel, originally erected in 1672, pieces of the city's fortification walls that have since been destroyed, as well as an Amerindian campsite that is thought to be 2000 years old.[19] To find such archaeological remains is to expose and reveal many important aspects of the original spatial history associated with this site. Although no longer intact, these physical traces of structures that no longer exist serve as a reminder that this particular site embodies many distinct layers of history; such objects attest to the perpetually changing and evolving nature of the urban environment. While it may be difficult to envision such structures as complete and fully recognize the implications of their existence within this site, they still have a strong capacity to activate an urban memory that can be traced back to many generations.

Unlike its neighbor, the Ecole Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours (adjoined to the Eastern side of the chapel) has not had the fortune of being conserved or consolidated; rather it has been subject to large and intrusive physical interventions as a result of the process of adaptive reuse. This nineteenth-century square building of modest scale was, like the chapel, constructed with Montreal graystone, and was built in 1893 to house a local school that was attended by local French and English-speaking Catholic children until it was closed in 1968.[20] The school is a three-storey building equipped with a North and South façade that are both characteristically simplistic and formally restrained in appearance.[21] The school was changed into a museum between 1996 and 1998, and this

required, according to Maurice Desnoyers, the architect who led the project, that there be extensive changes made to all of the interior spaces of the building, except for the exterior facades that could be preserved and left in their current state.[22]

In light of the fact that such extensive changes had to be made to the interior while the exterior was able to be preserved completely, it appears evident that the alterations can be considered an example of the process of adaptive reuse. As Joseph P. Luther has defined it, "adaptive reuse is a process by which structurally sound older buildings are developed for economically viable new uses."[23] This is clearly the best way to describe the modes of intervention that took place in the late 1990s within the Bonsecours school; the building, which *was* structurally sound, was successively altered and adapted to the new economic requirements of a museum.

As Maurice Desnoyers indicates, in order to construct the Marguerite Bourgeoys Museum, he and his fellow architects had to make extensive changes to the basic layout and interior structure of Bonsecours school. All of the former classrooms as well as the original chaplain's office had to be destroyed.[24] Nothing remains of these historically memorable and significant spaces that were previously contained within the school after the alterations, except for a segment of the North foundation wall that is now put on display with the archaeological remains of the chapel and museum.[25] The museum itself also places the bulk of its interest upon recounting the life and experiences connected to the Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys and her religious community, the Congregation of Notre-Dame; the exhibition has left few concrete traces of the building's former occupation as a school. As this little school continues to be occupied and adaptively reused by a museum it becomes progressively easier to forget its original function and importance.

Although an operating museum may be more economically viable in this day and age than an abandoned school, it is also essential to note that a museum is fundamentally profit-oriented in a way that a school is not. Through adaptive reuse, this building has shifted away from its initial non-profit origins to encompass more financially-driven activities. It therefore becomes possible to argue that both the loss of the classrooms as well as the adoption of profit-oriented activities within the space of the school have significantly altered both the physical and symbolic features of this former educational institution. The specificities of the urban memory are also considerably more threatened as a result of the alterations that have occurred within the school than are those within the chapel. While certain minor changes or conservations and consolidations that have taken place within the chapel *have* compromised the fabric of the *urban memory*, the much more radical and extreme physical interventions that the school has been subject to as a result of the process of adaptive reuse have endangered the preservation of the urban memory in a substantially more significant way. The whole interior has been drastically changed to comply with the requirements of a museum; it no longer retains its original form or function. Reality is now staged and the authentic has been sacrificed for the creation of a museum.

The world-renowned Bonsecours Market, designed by the architect William Footner, is also a monumentally impressive structure that is situated within the site, located directly to the West of the chapel on Rue Saint Paul. This building has also been subject to the process of adaptive reuse. Bonsecours Market is a building that has historically occupied a particularly prominent position in the daily lives of Montrealers and many public surveys have revealed that citizens feel particularly attached to this

architectural structure.[26] There is also a strong fondness for the market's characteristic silver-plated dome that imbues the building with a sense of grandeur as well as dominating the port's skyline. Specifically, survey results of public opinion have indicated that for many, Marche Bonsecours is considered to be a patrimonial monument of the finest quality, possessing refined architectural and symbolic values that necessitate its preservation[27]

Since the early years of the 1990s, this world-renowned marketplace has undergone significant changes, having its exterior preserved and its interior radically altered and modified to accommodate new uses. Through examining this process of adaptive reuse, it can be argued that Bonsecours Market has, in many ways, been transformed into a mere shell of its former self as public marketplace and historic civic center. As James Marston Fitch has suggested, through the adaptive reuse of historic buildings a "new use is [often] inserted into the old container," or exterior shell "with the minimum visual dislocation."[28] This is evidently the strategy that has been adopted by the various individuals involved in preserving Bonsecours Market, as there has been a great deal of emphasis on allowing the building to retain its characteristic neoclassical exterior, but very little concern for protecting the historic value of the interior. As a form of historic preservation, the adaptive reuse of Bonsecours Market as well as that of Ecole Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours, are better defined as processes through which the outer shell maintains its original appearance while the interior is entirely re-structured. The interior of Bonsecours Market has assumed an entirely new identity that replaces its former one as a lively public center of commercial and civic activity and it is this fundamental

alteration of the interior that has rendered it difficult for the urban memory to recall the full scope of the building's authentic historical vocation.

Before considering urban memory in relation to the dramatic changes that have occurred within the interior, it is also worth emphasizing the original and unique and historical experiences that Bonsecours Market formerly provided, especially with respect to food. Construction on Bonsecours Market began in 1843 and continued until 1852, although the building was inaugurated in 1847. Over the course of the following century, this immense building functioned as a busy public marketplace and destination for human encounters and exchanges.[29] The structure was multi-functional from its inception, but the primary role of this particular building was to serve as a public market, where fresh produce of all varieties could be purchased.[30]

The building served many diverse civic functions as it was equipped with a great hall that could accommodate thousands of visitors and be used for many different kinds of activities such as exhibitions, balls, or public meetings.[31] The selling of fresh produce and food items, however, is the activity that seems to best characterize the general atmosphere of the market historically as this was an activity that occurred on a regular and daily basis. The entire two first floors inside the building were apparently "assigned to the display and sale of foodstuffs" and food vendors also occupied stalls attached to the ground level of Rue Saint Paul and Rue de la Commune.[32] If one is to observe an image of the site from the mid twentieth-century, it becomes evident that the marketplace was regularly bustling with activity and that crowds of people gathered there to purchase and taste food and partake in the community life.

Although the extensive interior alterations of adaptive reuse during the 1990s were intended to preserve Bonsecours Market's fundamental identity and primary function as a venue dominated by food sale and consumption, it is evident if one enters the interior of the space that this has not actually been the result of the modifications. In the Societe Immobiliere de Patrimoine Architectural de Montreal, or SIMPA's plan to "rehabilitate" the market, it is clearly indicated that the entire first floor, at the level of Rue de La Commune, will be designated for the sale of edible commercial products.[33] Similarly, a 1996 article from *Le Devoir* states that the physical alterations that are about to be undertaken within the building will involve the construction of thirty-two stalls, or openings, that are destined to be occupied by vendors selling "agricultural products."[34]

The stalls have indeed been constructed as originally planned but these commercial spaces have not been allocated to the sale of agricultural or food products but rather to upscale art, design, and fashion boutiques. There are restaurants located in the basement, but evidently these provide vastly different experiences from those of wandering around and tasting or purchasing fresh food items in a public marketplace. There are many upscale and trendy boutiques that are also situated on this floor and it can be argued that the replacement of selling food with the sale of expensive luxury items such as paintings, vases and lamps, radically transforms the very nature of this space. Such boutiques seem to have rendered the interior somewhat elitist, which seems to sharply contradict the building's original function as a popular, public market.

In considering Hayden's concept of place attachment, it is also possible to suggest that the boutiques contained within the marketplace have significantly weakened the urban memory associated with this site's historical and authentic function of selling fresh

food. Hayden suggests that in certain cases, individuals that have particularly fond memories for a demolished site, such as a lost neighborhood, can exhibit "the process of mourning" because they are so deeply troubled by the physical loss.[35] Hayden, as previously mentioned, also suggests that the essential concept of place refers to tangible and intangible elements, which can activate memory by stimulating any of the human senses. In light of such considerations, the very absence or presence of fresh food within the marketplace has important implications for the urban memory as well as for the notion that authenticity is currently staged within the market.

Historically, individuals could regularly see, smell, taste, and touch many of the edible items found in Bonsecours market as well as hear the lively noises of a busy public commercial venue. Today, many of the original experiences related to foodstuffs can no longer be recalled as the essential element of fresh food is now absent. For example, one can no longer smell the enticing aromas of fresh bread within the new boutiques and one can no longer sample food items, it is only possible to eat a *full* meal in the restaurants now contained within the market. The sounds of a bustling marketplace have also been silenced - it is now a very quiet and formal venue that resembles the atmosphere of a museum. The sense of touch has also been completely forgotten within this space, as many of the boutiques have posted large signs that forbid visitors from touching the objects being displayed. The simple facts that fresh food is no longer sold within this building and that upscale boutiques have appeared in the place of food vendors, have created an artificial and staged atmosphere that have also reduced the ability for urban memory to retain the original experiences associated with buying fresh produce items in Bonsecours Market.

Although the entire place being addressed in this paper is contained within the historic district of Montreal, other important architectural structures found within this site have not been historically preserved, but have instead been subject to demolition. This is the worst case scenario for a historic building because it does not merely involve the removal of certain parts of its structure, as does the process of consolidation, but it actually entails the destruction and removal of the building itself from an original site. There are numerous buildings and architectural constructions that have been demolished within the site since the city embarked on its plan to revitalize the "historic district of Montreal" in 1964 but there are two of particular importance in relation to the urban memory: the grain elevator #2 and the port police station.

Grain elevator #2 was one of the numerous silos that were constructed to transport grain during Montreal's era of bourgeoning industrialization as a port city following the turn of the twentieth-century. Elevator #2 was built to the south of Bonsecours market and was situated at the harbourfront of Bonsecours Basin.[36] As Pauline Desjardins has suggested, "there is no structure that better exemplifies how important the port of Montreal was in the trans-shipment of grain than the grain elevator."[37] Designed and constructed by the John S. Metcalf Company of Chicago, Elevator #2 was considered to be "the latest technological and architectural wonder" when it was erected in 1912.[38] The elevator was built with reinforced concrete, a new building material that also proved to give the structure a distinctive appearance.[39] Beyond its innovative and extensive capacities to revolutionize the city's grain operations, the structural design of Elevator #2 was also considered by many, including the acclaimed French architect Le Corbusier, to be an impressive example of modern, functionalist architecture of the industrial age.[40] It

is also interesting to note that Le Corbusier in fact thought so highly of the aesthetic value of Grain Elevator #2 that he chose to reproduce it on the cover of his famous book, *Vers un Architecture*, while simultaneously excluding the Bonsecours market situated adjacent to it.[41] As Cohen indicates, "in one of the most notorious falsifications in the history of modern architecture, Le Corbusier retouched the photograph of the silos in Montreal, hiding the dome of the Bonsecours market."[42]

For Le Corbusier, the designs of engineers were superior to those of architects, a fact that helps to account for his preference of the grain elevator above the neoclassical Bonsecours market.[43] For Le Corbusier, engineers designed better architecture than architects because they produced constructions that were both visually impressive and useful to the modern, industrialized world.[44] He apparently had "unreserved admiration for engineers…who work for what is useful, strong, and healthy" and argued that the "*aesthetic of the engineer* exposes the decrepitude and sterility of architects."[45]

Despite the fact that many individuals, including Le Corbusier have characterized Grain Elevator #2 as a historical monument of the industrial age, it was unfortunately not preserved within this site but was demolished in 1978.[46] This demolition occurred as a result of the port authorities' plan, begun in the early 1960s, to modernize the historic district of Montreal.[47] The disappearance of Elevator #2 provoked a public outcry among the group of residents that had formed the Association/Le Vieux-Port and who had not been consulted before its destruction in 1978.[48] Given these popular oppositions to the loss of Grain Elevator #2, it is evident that many have considered this building to be of significant historical importance as well as being worthy of preservation. It can also be

argued that the decision to destroy Elevator #2 significantly altered the site's authentic cultural landscape especially in light of the popular protest that resulted from its loss.

By looking at the image of Bonsecours Market with the elevator visible behind, it is evident that this remarkable structure became a regular sight in this place in Old Montreal. This immense structure was not only visible to those entering the port from Bonsecours Basin and those walking along Rue de La Commune, it could also be seen behind the monumental Bonsecours Market. The remains of the elevator were preserved and displayed in front of Bonsecours Basin from 1992 to 2003, but it is apparent that such remains cannot account for the physical absence of this imposing building (see figure 14).[49] Today, even these few remains are no longer displayed and the entire site once occupied by Elevator #2 for over six decades has been covered with grass. This innovative and imposing structure, considered a wonder of modern architecture when originally erected in 1912, has literally vanished without a trace. One can only imagine how Le Corbusier would have cringed if he knew that the elevator he so greatly admired was destroyed less than a century after it was built. In the absence of any concrete traces of this building's existence, it has become especially easy for urban memory to entirely forget the fact that this particular grain elevator ever existed on this site.

The port police station, another historically significant component of this site in Old Montreal, has also been subject to demolition despite its designation as a federal heritage building in 1996.[50] The building was erected in 1924, designed by the architect Theodose Daoust, and built by the Montreal architect firm Collet Freres.[51] The police station, known as the "New Wharf Office Building," was situated at the entrance to Clock Tower Quay, one of the quays that is directly adjacent to both the Chapel of Notre-Dame-

de-Bon-Secours as well as Bonsecours Market.[52] It was a three-storey building designed in the Italian Renaissance style and "covered with buff-coloured glazed bricks that contrasted sharply with the concrete and steel of the surrounding structures."[53] In addition to the police force, the police station also housed the office of the harbourmaster, a store, a weigh station, a blacksmith's shop, and a garage.[54] With such essential technical and administrative functions being contained within the building, it can only be assumed that the police station also had a prominent role to play in the urban memory of this site. Not only did this structure visually impact the site with its distinctive appearance and unique reddish-colored bricks, but it accommodated the port police for over seven decades, who eventually vacated the building in 1985.[55] As in the case of Elevator #2, the fact that this building has been destroyed and no physical traces of its existence remain threatens its disappearance from the urban memory of this site.

Finally, it is important to consider the urban interventions that have occurred within the harbourfront of this place over time. A particularly effective way to grasp the implications of these changes is to contrast two images that reveal the transformations that have taken place between the space of Rue de La Commune and the St. Lawrence River. The photograph from 1897 exposes the former identity of this space as a landing place for barges and sailboats. It becomes apparent in comparing these two images of the harbourfront of this site that this area has been sanitized for the tourist population and fundamentally altered by being filled in, paved in cement, and covered with grass.

The successive urban interventions that have been carried out within this space have had the obvious effect of reducing Bonsecours Market's physical proximity to the St. Lawrence River. In 1897, when visitors arrived in boats that landed along the harbour,

they merely had to walk a few meters to enter Bonsecours Market, nowadays, the distance between the market and the river is much further. The historical element that has been lost within this space is its fundamental connection with the water. The port is now somewhat of a world apart - separated by railway tracks, grass and the Quays Promenade. When such radical physical changes have been introduced to separate Rue De La Commune from the water, it can only be assumed that the urban memory of the site's historical proximity to the water has also been jeopardized. This progressive separation of Rue de La Commune from the river has rendered the authentic and original experience of this port-side site into a staged reality that caters to tourists.

The decision to preserve the structure known as Shed 16, situated on Clock Tower Quay, and directly visible from Bonsecours Market, however, can be seen as a way that the port authorities have preserved the authenticity of this space and sustained the urban memory of the harbourfront of this site. Built between 1904 and 1920, Shed 16 was a permanent storage shed, in contrast to the temporary sheds that were initially constructed.[56] Its primary function was to serve as a storage space for goods that were unloaded from the ships entering Bonsecours Basin.[57] With the decline of the grain and shipping industries in the mid twentieth-century, however, this building eventually fell into neglect and disuse and has not undergone any fundamental alterations since its construction, aside from the addition of graffiti to its exterior.[58]

In contrast to other sheds found elsewhere within the Old Port, this storage shed has neither been demolished nor turned into a parking lot.[59] Shed 16 also has the best-preserved exterior and Pauline Desjardins has suggested that it is a building that is merely "awaiting restoration."[60] One does not yet know what structural interventions await this

storage shed but it can only be hoped that they will not be the process of demolition. The fact that Shed 16 has not been demolished as of this writing in 2008 is hopeful because this means that it has survived despite the extensive physical changes that have occurred within this site since over eighty decades. As a result of Shed 16's preservation, the urban memory associated with this structure's particular role as a storage shed for goods entering the historically active port site has been maintained. One can only hope that whatever forms of intervention may be undertaken within this shed in the future will not be drastic or invasive and will not fundamentally alter its original character and infringe upon the fabric of the urban memory.

Therefore, as the previous analysis has shown, there have been many different forms of urban intervention that have occurred within this place in Old Montreal over time, and these distinct types of intervention have also had variable effects upon the urban memory of this site. As we have seen, the processes of conservation and consolidation can range from relatively minor alterations to more substantial changes, such as the removal of concrete objects from their original sites.

In general, the process of conservation does not seem to jeopardize the urban memory, as seen with many parts of Bonsecours Chapel, but the process of consolidation, in contrast, can result in the loss of objects that possess significant historical value, as seen with the removal of the sculptures of the Chapel's South façade. The form of historical preservation known as adaptive reuse, however, has even greater potential to weaken the collective urban memory by creating tourist attractions that attempt to represent and stage the authentic, as the cases of the Marguerite-Bourgeoys Museum and Bonsecours Market have illustrated. In these two examples, adaptive reuse essentially

constituted a process by which the exterior shells of original buildings were preserved while their interiors were radically transformed and restructured for entirely new uses. The most radical forms of urban intervention that have occurred within this place in Old Montreal, however, have undoubtedly been the occasions where former historical structures, such as Elevator #2 and the police station, have been demolished. Demolition, best characterized as a form of total destruction as opposed to historic preservation, is evidently the process that this paper has argued most severely threatens to erase the urban memory.

Reminiscent of a palimpsest, "a paleographer's term for scraping off parchment surfaces to allow new writing to supersede old,"[61] this small "place" within Montreal has had many subsequent layers of architectural and spatial history written and re-written upon its surface over time. Certain layers have been completely erased, but many still remain within the site, and as new urban and developmental projects are successively undertaken, it seems inevitable that urban memory will continually have to change and adapt to the perpetually evolving nature of the urban environment and the ephemeral cultural landscapes it brings into being. There is, after all, no way to stop the ongoing process of urban development from introducing extensive physical alterations upon this site in Old Montreal over time. It becomes increasingly difficult to determine what is original and authentic in the context of such endless urban transformation. It therefore seems more reasonable to conclude that urban memory, like the city, cannot be restricted and bound to a particular historical moment perceived as an authentic past but must rather be as flexible as the city itself, operating and existing within a state of constant flux.

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