At the Heart of the City:
The Battle for British Marketplaces, *c.* 1925-1979

by

Sarah Mass

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Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Kali Israel, Chair
Professor Rita Chin
Professor Geoff Eley
Associate Professor Andrea Zemgulys

Sarah Mass

smmass@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0000-0003-0630-100X

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To my parents
Sheila Merritt and Robert Mass

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Abstract

At the Heart of the City examines how small-scale retail adapted to economic globalization in twentieth-century Britain. More specifically, I argue that during a long mid-century (the 1920s through the 1970s) characterized by bouts of economic decline and stretches of modernist urban renewal, the salience of the town or city-center market helped a variety of historical actors rearticulate how publicly managed retailing spaces served a contemporary social good. A history of economic life and urban development told from the provincial margins, *At the Heart of the City* draws from over ten local archives in England, Scotland, and Wales to reassemble how shoppers, sellers, planners, and politicians defended localism as a form of everyday commercial citizenship and belonging in modern Britain.

The first section examines how retailing communities at the market were forged along class and ethno-national lines during the interwar depression and the wartime economy of rationing and austerity. Using the market trade journal *The World's Fair,* local market archives from cities such as Glasgow and Leeds, inter-war life writing, the novels and films of J.B. Priestley, and Board of Trade records from Second World War, I argue that markets were at once expansive in their economic ethos of "fairness," yet increasingly bound in their ethno-national terms of social inclusion.

The second section considers the market's malleable and polyvalent role in the British built environment, concentrating primarily on the postwar period. Attending to the way in which modernist planner-architects such as Frederick Gibberd in Harlow New Town or Konrad Smigielski in historic Leicester conceptualized the purpose of the retail market in urban space,

this section also considers the economic realities of "planning for affluence" in rebuilt and newly built towns and cities. Questioning the wholesale application of Americanized retailing and the primacy of property development, markets traders—along with select small business associations and local government committees—advocated for the commercial value of traditional, low-cost market squares and market halls. This section argues that the continuing relevance of retail markets in postwar Britain accentuated the unevenness of affluence and consumerism in provincial towns and cities.

The final section concentrates on the 1970s as a period of divergence for the market's ownership and purpose. One development was the rise of private markets held on rural and semi-industrial spaces of towns and cities, beyond the control of local authorities. A second trend was the push for market preservation, with heritage activists petitioning for the protection of market places and Victorian market halls in struggling industrial towns and cities such as Bradford and Chesterfield. This final section argues that these were two products of the same political conjuncture. As Labour-backed planning and redevelopment lost favor, economic populism and local heritage emerged as alternatives. The debate over retail markets thus serves as a heuristic tool for understanding the roots of two paradoxical tenets of neoliberal Thatcherism: the iconoclasm of enterprise culture and the reverence for a "shared" British past.

As questions about the value of small-scale economies continue preoccupy twenty-first century planners, citizens, politicians, and developers, *At the Heart of the City* makes the case for historicizing how certain commercial institutions and urban spaces came to be the protected purview of a tangible, local "public" rather than an abstract, globalized "market" over the twentieth century.

Introduction

In the mid-1970s, Angela Carter returned to the South Yorkshire of her wartime childhood. The ordinariness of the northern English town of Doncaster may seem unusual fare for Carter, a writer usually associated more with Gothic magical realism than social realism. Yet, at Doncaster's historic market place, Carter relished the urban mixing that enchanted even the most ordinary of provincial British towns and cities. In "The Donnie Ferrets" (1976), a *New Society* article that is part travelogue, part social critique, Carter depicted Doncaster Market's motley assemblage of cheap goods, itinerant traders, and moveable stalls as the apotheosis of visceral urbanism. The "peaked hoods of the market stalls" had a touch of the "Ballet Russes," an atmosphere that was missing from the nearby indoor shopping center. While this collection of branded shops had a "quaint appeal" that harkened back to 1960s affluence, the market was "a different world, a different shopping experience, like stepping into a space-time warp." Weaving between the stalls, Carter surveyed the scene: the musty smell of biscuits sold loose rather than in a tin, the "burgher" quality of vendors who sold on reputation rather than artifice, and especially the viciousness of the essay's namesakes—caged ferrets—who embodied the prickly and fierce attitudes of Yorkshire itself. Absorbing this collage of items and personalities on offer, Carter wondered if "Yorkshire [ever] really left the third world," equating the close proximity of product and producer, producer and vendor, vendor and consumer to the "peasant markets of Europe" and the "oriental bazaars."[1] In Doncaster Market, Carter found an antidote to the sterile,

[1] Angela Carter, "The Donnie Ferrets," *New Society,* 11 November 1976, 113-114.

alienating impulses in modern life: the market was a corner of Britain where the pre-modern was still alive and well.

Carter's exploration of Doncaster Market took place on a vast time-scale; "burghers" and "peasant markets" rubbed alongside the "totalizing merchandising environment" of the city's shopping precinct. Sixteen years earlier, British playwright Shelagh Delaney—more readily associated with the social realist tradition than Angela Carter—reminisced about her own Salford Market on slightly more personal and modest terms. In a 1960 episode of the BBC television arts program *Monitor,* Delaney was filmed exploring her old haunts in a staged return to the northern industrial city. In *Monitor,* Delaney the Salfordian and Delaney the dramatist fused into one subject: she found common cause with her characters in *A Taste of Honey* as they reconciled their attachment to Salford as a vital place with the "restlessness" that propelled its younger generation away. In Delaney's eyes, "[Salford] people have got a terrific vitality, you've only got to go down to the market to realize that." This observation prefaced an extended, continuous shot of a thronging Salford Market, packed with children, housewives, and vendors whom Delaney can recall by name. Like Angela Carter's Doncaster Market, the past and present collapsed in this retail space. Yet for Delaney, the market was the past of her childhood, not the past of ancient civic heritage. *Monitor* director Ken Russell filmed Salford children sucking on toffee apples and candy, children who are proxies for Delaney, who is recorded in a voiceover recalling her childhood-self buying the same candy at the market on her way to the cinema on Saturday afternoons. The suspension of time at Salford's commercial heart, where "the same people working the markets now are the same people who were working the markets then," grows all the more arresting as the *Monitor* documentary progresses, taking in the empty pubs, churches, and cinemas of "old" Salford, as well as the homes in the sky being constructed in the city's new

overflow estates.[2] For Delaney, the people of Salford Market were both a touchstone of her childhood and the transhistorical place itself, one of her "tethers" that maintained emotional attachment to place through a period of rupture in the social and built environment.

Salford's ordinary landscapes—its old backcourts, new housing estates, and resilient retail markets—would have found any number of analogues in postwar Britain. Delaney's formulation of emotional "tethering" to place characterized similar attitudes towards retail space and sociability in Glasgow. In 1955, the city's Partick Camera Club joined with other amateur photographers in the city to document the visual landscape of a rapidly disappearing Glasgow. The aim of this survey, in the words of Partick Camera Club President Adam Stevens, was to "cover every phase and aspect of [Glasgow]...the streets where you live, the streets where you work, your cultural activities, your leisure, your sports and your recreations...all these are subjects for your camera and they should have a place in this survey."[3] Over 86 photographers took to the streets to capture, in 600 images, Glaswegian children at play, housewives at work, welders at the shipyards, even greyhounds at the races, in a collection eventually exhibited at the city's Kelvingrove Art Museum and People's Palace. One of the reoccurring focal points in the survey was the market life of Glasgow, including the open-air Barras Market in the East End of the city. In one set, a market scene is captured at two different angles: one looking out from a footwear stall that has gathered a crowd, the second filming the commercial activity from behind the group of shoppers. The drama of the point-of-sale draws in the spectators, but the crowd itself is the subject of the photograph: a mother and daughter caught in a loving moment, the stoic older men on the hunt for a bargain. Unlike a reader of Carter's essay or someone listening to Delaney's voiceover, the viewer of this image has no textual or aural cue to signal what about

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[2] Ken Russell (dir.), "Shelagh Delaney's Salford," *Monitor,* 15 September 1960.
[3] Fiona Hayes et al, "Introduction," *Glasgow 1955: Through the Lens* (Glasgow: Glasgow Museums, 2008), 7.

the scene is personal or timeless. Rather, the recognizable types and inter-personal relationships cue us to the fact that the market has gathered—and will continue to gather—Glasgow residents for years to come.

Each of these modes of representing the British postwar social—popular sociology in 1976, television documentary in 1960, and street photography in 1955—had complex, at times intersecting, genealogies. Carter's forum, the weekly magazine *New Society*, was the direct product of social science's importance in the public sphere of the early 1960s; *New Society* developed as a publication that claimed a role in "contributing to national prosperity and social advance."[4] Carter's first-hand account of a pre-modern market's survival in an urban landscape designed for affluence is characteristic of a magazine that "observed...tried not to judge...[and] was endlessly fascinated by the way we lived."[5] The birth of *New Society* coincided with the determinative years of cultural studies in Britain, between the publication of Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* in 1957 and the founding of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in 1964, encapsulating a historical conjunction wherein the newness of affluent Britain and the promise of a "classless society" saddled spaces like open-air and street markets with the representational weight of community stasis.

BBC's *Monitor,* likewise, arose out of a media arts moment when provincial working-class life penetrated the national cultural imagination. The late 1950s and 1960s was the heyday of Granada Television, *Coronation Street,* and television and film productions and adaptions of British New Wave novels and plays—such as Shelagh Delaney's *Taste of Honey.* The fact that Shelagh Delaney's walk around Salford Market co-existed in a *Monitor* episode lineup that

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[4] Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 113. For a more literary history of *New Society,* see Paul Barker, "Painting the Portrait of the 'Other Britain': *New Society* 1962-88," *Contemporary Record* 5, no. 1 (1991) 45-61.

[5] Barker, "Painting the Portrait," 46.

included biographies of Edward Elgar and Aldous Huxley suggested how popular culture responded to and refracted Raymond Williams's 1958 argument that "culture was ordinary, in every society and in every mind."[6] When the viewer of the *Monitor* program is confronted with an extended tracking shot of Salford Market—the number of stalls, the crowds of housewives and children, the cacophony of vendors plying their wares—she is confronted with the British New Wave tactic of "poetic realism," the surplus of documentary action that gives authorial voice to Delaney's childhood and adult *habitus*.[7]

Of course, mid-century television was not the first or only medium to use the streetscape as the visual signifier of "ordinary" working-class experience in postwar Britain. The informal use of public urban space was a *de rigueur* subject in the work of photographers such as Bill Brandt, Bert Hardy, Roger Mayne, Nigel Henderson, Oscar Marzaroli and Shirley Baker, all working in the ethnographic traditions of Mass Observation and the Institute for Community Studies.[8] Yet the message of the 1955 Glasgow Survey—that spaces like the Barras Market should "have a place" in the "factual and almost visible record" of Glasgow for future generations of citizens—harkened back to even earlier collective history practices from the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. In these years, the amateur photographer could be considered the smallest unit by which communities could create a comprehensive historical record of how

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[6] Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary (1958)," in *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism* (London: Verso, 1989), 3-14. The literature on mid-century class and popular culture is vast, see the introduction of Paul Long, *Only in the Common People: The Aesthetics of Class in Post-War Britain* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008) for a useful recent overview and Selina Todd, "Class conflict and the myth of cultural 'inclusion' in modern Manchester," in *Culture in Manchester: Institutions and Urban Change since 1850,* eds. Janet Wolff and Mike Savage (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 200-201 for the national power of Manchester in the 1950s and 1960s.
[7] Terry Lovell, "Landscapes and Stories in 1960s British Realism," *Screen* 31, no. 4 (1990), 368-369.
[8] Joe Moran, "Imagining the street in post-war Britain," *Urban History* 39, no. 1 (2012), 166-186; Stephen Brooke, "Revisiting Southam Street: Class, Generation, Gender, and Race in the Photography of Roger Mayne," *Journal of British Studies* 53, no. 2 (2014), 453-496.

and where they lived.[9] Retail markets' conviviality, occasion, and apparent timelessness would repeatedly draw in generations of amateur and professional photographers in search of capturing "everyday" community in urban Britain.

These three snapshots materialize the representational work performed by retail markets in twentieth-century Britain, but once you start looking for these sites of informal urban gathering, you find them everywhere. Retail markets were the high point of weekly shopping pilgrimages retrospectively remembered in memoir and autobiography. They were the go-to public site for print or television journalists looking to elicit a range of viewpoints and sound bites on a current event. They were the subject of "before" images of town and city shopping life prior to postwar comprehensive redevelopment. In other words, retail markets refracted what was particularly "past," "present," and "future" about everyday life in mid-century Britain.

This dissertation burrows beneath the level of representation to ask how markets came to collapse and blur definitions of "past," "present," and "future" for the British public, as well as what this process tells us about the terms of economic and cultural belonging in British towns and cities from the end of the First World War through to the 1970s. More specifically, I study the defense of the town- or city-center retail market as a form of claims-making citizenship in twentieth-century Britain. Over the course of a half-century of nationally led commercial realignment, urban redevelopment, and waning civic power, municipal markets remained resilient as the nexus of independent business and municipal belonging in towns and cities across England, Scotland, and Wales. By investigating the political culture around these commercially "anachronistic" shopping spaces, I argue that modernist planning and consumerist capitalism did

[9] Elizabeth Edwards, *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination, 1885-1918* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

not irrevocably alter the way Britons bought and sold in the twentieth century, but rather gave new affective and political value to collective commercial cultures.

The following introduction lays out the methodological interventions of my work and its grounding in the historiography of twentieth-century Britain. The next three sections, "Markets as Markets," "Markets as Publics," and "Markets as Culture" sketch out my three analytical entry points. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which retail markets cannot be studied strictly as business institution; their presence in the archive and their in-between status as both private business groupings and a public service demand a more nuanced study of "economic life."[10] Following this explanation of my lenses and methods, I will briefly sketch out the analytical purchase for retail markets in histories of twentieth-century Britain. In a field dominated by anxieties over the rise of consumerist capitalism, the centralizing force of the "nation" to the detriment of localized culture, and the rupture of the Second World War, I argue that the resilience of the retail market provides a different vantage point on the issue of change over time, in particular how Britain's short period of "social democracy" was felt unevenly and articulated in different registers at the level of local communities across town and urban Britain.[11] Finally, the introduction will conclude with a brief synopsis of the six chapters and the coda to follow.

Markets as "Markets"

In many ways, retail markets adhere to Dipesh Chakrabarty's sense of "anachronism": when retail competitors or modernizing urban planners labeled retail markets as "traditional" or

[10] William H. Sewell, "A Strange Career: The Historical Study of Economic Life," *History and Theory* 49, no. 4 (2010): 146-166.
[11] James Vernon, "The Local, the Imperial and the Global: Repositioning Twentieth-Century Britain and the Brief Life of its Social Democracy," *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 3 (2010), 408-409.

"outdated," they relegated the economic uses and cultural significance of these sites to outside of British modernity.[12] At the same time, when Angela Carter, Shelagh Delaney, or the Partick Camera Club used the same language to celebrate the "time warp" of these institutions, it was with the desire to preserve the communal conviviality sustained by market life. From both the angles of "anachronism" and "time warp," the informal, small-profit, retail market appears out of time and place in the modernist-consumerist landscapes of British town and city centers. Yet, for all the talk of what publicly owned markets symbolically "stood for" or "said about" civicness, public life, and the history of towns and cities, markets continued to play a large part in the day-to-day material lives of buyers and sellers who operated along the edges of affluent Britain. These actors leave less obvious traces in the historical archive, yet when they do enter our frame, we see the market as a forum for claims-making on the local state and as a testing ground for the bounds of economic and cultural belonging in twentieth-century Britain.

Writers, photographers, and other cultural commentators in the mid-twentieth century saw local retail markets as "timeless," in part, because their generation, their parents' generation, and their grandparents' generation could not have remembered a time *before* markets were the hub of commercial life across British towns and cities. From the mid-1930s through the 1970s, the number of "public" markets (i.e. owned and operated by the local authority) in England and Wales hovered between 400 and 500 (in Scotland, the numbers were in the single digits).[13] Many of these institutions could trace their lineage back to the Middle Ages, when two-thousand

[12] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 243-44. For more on the danger of seeing retail markets as anachronism, see Jon Stobart and Ilja Van Damme, "Introduction: Markets in Modernization: Transformations in Urban Market Space and Practice, *c.* 1800- *c.* 1970," *Urban History* 43, no. 3 (2016), 364 & 368.
[13] Numbers compiled by the author from *Markets Year Books* (Oldham: World's Fair, 1936, 1947, 1960, 1967, 1971, and 1979).

market charters had been granted by the Crown to local Lords of the Manor.[14] Late medieval and early modern European historians have therefore used the jurisdictional records in market centers as an index for the rise of a linked commercial society, the consolidation of regional political-economic hierarchies, and the forging of trust and reciprocity were enacted in economic networks still short of money.[15] The marketplace became the physical meeting space for trader self-interest, consumer demand, and state power, as well as where the relationships among these factions were constantly undermined, reworked, and rearticulated.

In the nineteenth century, there was a seismic shift in the relationship between public authority and market trading, as town and city councils created by the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act used private Parliamentary acts to purchase market rights from private individuals (usually Lords of the Manor). Newly established councils in towns and cities were now the bodies charged with maintaining the market monopoly (meaning no rival market could operate within 6.66 miles of a chartered market), setting and collecting market tolls and rents, and reinvested market profits in the public infrastructure and services fund.[16] It is not surprising, then, that this heyday of municipal growth and building projects was the "grand age" of the market hall, in which new, enclosed structures were built in expanding industrial cities like Liverpool (1822), Birmingham (1835), Birkenhead (1845), Blackburn (1848), Leeds (1857), and Bradford (1878), but also in smaller cathedral cities like Gloucester (1856) and market towns

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[14] James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 35.

[15] James Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants, and Markets: Inland Trade in Medieval England, 1150-1350* (New York: St Martin's, 1997); James Davis, *Medieval Market Morality: Life, Law and Ethics in the England Marketplace, 1200-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Dave Postles, "The market place as space in early modern England," *Social History* 29, no. 1 (2004): 41-58; Craig Muldrew, "Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England," *Social History* 18, no. 2 (1993): 163-183. For a general European overview, see Evelyn Welch, "Sites of Consumption in Early Modern Europe," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption,* ed. Frank Trentmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 229-250.

[16] 6.66 miles was the distance considered reasonable for a vendor or shopper to walk to a market, conduct their business, and return home all between sunrise and sunset on the same day.

like Chesterfield (1857). Just as open market and fairs were forged through different absolutist power structures in medieval and early modern economies, market halls were endemic to an era when economic success were yoked to the culture of middle-class display in the provincial city.[17] Historians of Britain and beyond have remained close to this temporal focus, studying the rise of modern market halls as both catalyst and product of urban-industrialization.[18]

In this dissertation, however, I am concerned with the post-1918 epilogue of this story: as supply lines grew longer with global trade, as local economies faltered with industrial and agricultural instability, as planners rethought the dense, *ad hoc* design of the Victorian city, and as American-style self-service supermarkets became the norm, what civic role remained for the practicing of marketing "in public," through pre-modern by-laws and rituals of the market place? Twentieth-century retail markets were the physical reminders that modern British, and indeed European, histories of retail and distribution have a pre-history that is deeply entangled in royal, religious, and civic regulation.[19] Medieval markets were chartered as protected arenas of commercial competition, a space where "the market" for goods took tangible form under the eye of the state. This dissertation contends that the label of markets as "anachronistic" to a late modern capitalist market in fact generated a productive tension for retailer-citizens. As local

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[17] Simon Gunn, *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).
[18] Schmiechen and Carls, *The British Market Hall*; Roger Scola, *Feeding the Victorian City: The Food Supply of Manchester, 1770-1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Paul Dobraszczyk, "Victorian market Halls, Ornamental Iron and Civic Intent," *Architectural History* 55 (2012), 173-197; Christopher Mead, *Making Paris Modern: Victor Baltard's Central Markets* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2012)*;* Candice Harrison, "The Contest of Exchange: Space, Power, and Politics in Philadelphia's Public Markets, 1770-1859" (PhD Dissertation, Emory University, 2008); Ingrid Bleynat, "Trading with Power: Mexico City's Markets, 1867-1958" (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 2013); Gergely Baics, "The Geography of Urban Food Retail: Locational Principles of Public Market Provisioning in New York City, 1790-1860," *Urban History* 43, no. 3 (2016), 435-53; Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Andrew Lohmeier, "Bürgerliche Gesellschaft and Consumer Interests: The Berlin Public Market Hall Reform, 1867-1891," *Business History Review* 73, no. 1 (1999), 91-113.
[19] Mark Casson and John S. Lee, "The Origin and Development of Markets: A Business History Perspective," *Business History Review* 85 (2011), 11. For a more British-specific chronology, see also Richard A. Hawkins, "Marketing history in Britain: From the ancient to internet eras" in *The Routledge Companion to Marketing History,* eds. D.G. Brian Jones and Mark Tadajewski (London: Routledge, 2016), 315-331.

authorities shirked or sold their shares in the local retail economy to private development or chain-store interests, market traders claimed a lineage to a local market economy whose values were forged at the intersection of the state and private commercial interests, not through diametrical opposition of the two. Combining histories of "the market" (as commercial abstraction) and the market (as place), then, allows us to see how retail capitalism interacted with local bureaucrats and politicians, architects, and commercial interest groups like Chambers of Trade and Commerce.[20]

How and why markets continued to anchor the spatial and emotional landscapes of the commercial core of a given town or city adds depth to histories of twentieth-century capitalism, especially those that aim to "decrease the space" between traditional social or communal practices and modern, rational behavior.[21] Retail markets did not disappear from the management of space and capital in the twentieth century; rather these institutions took up the mantle of the "public" in town and city life, working across professional planning, private development, and trade registers.

Markets as "Publics"

When historical actors and historians refer to markets as "public," they are not solely recognizing markets' municipal ownership; markets were (and are) institutions that take up public space in British towns and cities. Historians of medieval and early modern markets use this physical "publicness" to recreate the social world of everyday life and the political culture of local

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[20] Kenneth Lipartito, "Reassembling the Economic: New Departures in Historical Materialism," *American Historical Review* 121, no. 1 (2016), 128; Casson and Lee, "The Origin and Development of Markets," 13.
[21] Lipartito, "Reassembling the Economic," 123. Deborah Hodson, "'The Municipal Store': Adaption and Development in the Retail Markets of Nineteenth-Century Urban Lancashire," *Business History* 40, no. 4 (1998): 94-114 and Ian Mitchell, *Tradition and Innovation in English Retailing, 1700-1850*: *Narratives of Consumption* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014) go some way in doing this for the first consumer and industrial revolution, but there is no work of matching scope for the twentieth century.

communities. Markets gathered subjects in place according to the seasonal and weekly rhythms of commerce, they disseminated political news and displayed civic power, and they policed the boundaries of "acceptable" and "unacceptable" social and economic practice.[22] As examples of civic architecture, these public plazas, squares, or semi-enclosed spaces were a feature of the built environment that towns and cities of diverse morphologies could still hold in common: there was a "oneness of the marketplace" that made urban life recognizable across form.[23]

The rising demand for goods during the "industrious revolution,"[24] followed by the population growth that accompanied the agricultural and industrial revolutions, precipitated new uses for markets as "public" space. From constructing new enclosed halls to gendering the access to shared commercial space, the historical literature on ordering early modern and Victorian town and city space has used markets to think about the relationship between architecture, infrastructure, and the social at the level of municipal reform.[25] Yet, while urban markets took on more elaborate, differentiated forms in urban space—separating wholesale from retail, cattle markets from fish markets, abattoirs from city-center food provisioning—the weekly, open-air mixed goods market remained a fixture of town life in modern Britain. Scholars of urban

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[22] James Masschaele, "The Public Space of the Marketplace in Medieval England," *Speculum* 77, no. 2 (2002), 383-421; Davis, *Medieval Market Morality;* Postles, "The market place as space in early modern England"; Muldrew, "Interpreting the Market."

[23] Donatella Calabi, *The Market and the City: Square, Street, and Architecture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2016), 75.

[24] The "industrious revolution" is a term used by early modern economic historians to refer the period between the mid-seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. These scholars argue that this span—when household labor and capital increasingly became directed towards the production and consumption of marketed goods—helped lay the economic foundations for the industrial revolution. See Jan De Vries, "The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution," *The Journal of Economic History* 54, no. 2 (1994), 249-270 for a helpful overview.

[25] Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 107; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2002), 241 & 286; Christopher Otter, "Locating Matter: the Place of Materiality in Urban History," in *Material Power: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn,* eds. Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (London: Routledge, 2010), 52; See also Scola, *Feeding the Victorian City*; Mead, *Making Paris Modern*; Patrick Joyce, *Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (London: Verso, 2003); Roger Horowitz et al, "Meat for the Multitudes: Market Culture in Paris, New York City, and Mexico City over the Long Nineteenth Century," *American Historical Review* 109, no. 4 (2004), 1055-1083.

modernity, such as Judith Walkowitz, have recently focused on the resilient power of *ad hoc* street markets as a feature public life in twentieth-century London, where a modern sensibility based in visceral mixing reigned over "the dead hand of the city planner."[26] The metropolis, therefore, remains the most common unit of study in studies of urbanism that take street life seriously as a mode of molding public space *in opposition to* the planning eye.[27]

This dissertation adds geographic diversity of scale and region to thinking about the politics of public space in modern Britain. I draw from eleven local record office archives, covering municipalities ranging in size and character from the Essex new town of Harlow to the Scottish industrial center of Glasgow (Figure 0.1); this is not city biography or comparative urban history in the tradition of the two or three case study approach. Nor is my methodology focused on one register of scale or typology. Instead, it uses a single unit of town or city life to uncover and link the myriad meanings that politicians, traders, shoppers, and other residents attached to local markets as sites of "publicness." In addition to the local authority records, I use the organizations and press of market trading professionals to reconstruct the networks that allowed retail market communities to "talk to each other" in spite of the geographic and bureaucratic silos that kept them separated in real time. The National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) and the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) had a footprint across the constituent nations of the United Kingdom (and hardly any presence in London itself), representing transient market traders, stallholders with stable lock-up businesses, and market managers and superintendents. These trade and professional organizations lobbied for retail

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[26] Judith Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 144.
[27] Peter Jones, "Redressing Reform Narratives: Victorian London's Street Markets and the Informal Supply Lines of Urban Modernity," *The London Journal* 41, no. 1 (2016), 60-81; Victoria Kelley, "The Streets for the People: London's Street Markets 1850-1939," *Urban History* 43, no. 3 (2016), 391-411. See Andrew Davies, "Saturday Night Markets in Manchester and Salford, 1840-1939," *Manchester Region History Review* 1, no. 2 (1987), 3-12 for an earlier Manchester and Salford case study.

markets' viability and vitality across a range of British towns and cities, rooting their arguments in the historic role of markets as "public" institutions that were run for and by the people.

Figure 0.1. Map of relevant market sites

As property developers and the creep of privatization have transformed twentieth-century public space, sociologists and geographers have moved from focusing on how people create space[28] to how corporate power and property confine people *in* space.[29] American historians have been in the vanguard of thinking about the relationship between urban "privates" and "publics," in particular how postwar affluence changed the way in which retail mediated the boundary between these spheres. Lizabeth Cohen's 1996 article "From Town Center to Shopping Center" remains a key text on the historical roots of this topic.[30] Cohen's argument—that retail property development in postwar America commercialized, privatized, and feminized public space—remains salient in American and international research on downtown shopping revitalization, postwar planning, and, more recently, land speculation and private-public development partnerships.[31]

Publicness—especially its grassroots defense—is a set of values and demands rooted in the very history of the city as a human habitat. I will be specific about how the historical actors in this dissertation understood celebrated British retail markets as "public" institutions. Australian urban geographer Kurt Iveson provides one of the clearest road maps for navigating

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[28] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992); Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor, 1959); Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977).

[29] Lynn A. Staeheli and Don Mitchell, *The People's Property?: Power, Politics, and the Public* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[30] Lizabeth Cohen, "From Town Center to Shopping Center: The Reconfiguration of Community Marketplaces in Postwar America" *American Historical Review* 101, no. 4 (1996), 1050-1081.

[31] Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004); Vicki Howard, *From Main Street to Mall: The Rise and Fall of the American Department Store* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *James Rouse, America's Salesman of the Businessman's Utopia* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004); Alexia Yates, *Selling Paris: Property and Commercial Culture in the Fin-de-siècle Capital* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Erika Hanna, *Modern Dublin: Urban Change and the Irish Past, 1957-1973* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Tracy Neumann, *Remaking the Rust Belt: The Postindustrial Transformation of North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

what an urban "public" means at any given moment in time. In *Publics and the City* (2007), Iveson cautions against two impulses that animate contemporary urban studies: the lament for the "loss" of topographical urban space[32] and the discursive dichotomy between "private" and "public" ways of being.[33] Instead, Iveson sees cities as "publics" in three different, yet interlocking, modes: they are "venues of public address, they are objects of public debate and connection, and they are collective subjects which serve as the common horizon for diverse publics."[34]

While rooted in cultural geography and urban studies, Iveson's framework is useful for thinking about the multi-modal "publicness" of urban retail markets in twentieth-century Britain. When these retail sites supported the face-to-face sale relished by Angela Carter, they also addressed a public far beyond the point of purchase. When market traders spoke of the "common good" or "value for money" they provided, or when market authorities celebrated the return that markets provided "the ratepayers" of a given polity, they invoked an audience not physically within the market, but a public built on a shared sense of fair, transparent commercial practice and civic engagement. As British local authorities ceded ground to private development interests—particularly in the 1960s and 1970s—retail markets became the object of physical and ideological debate over the ownership of the urban commons. And finally, retail markets were both vessel and vocabulary for urban resilience; town and city dwellers used the constancy of the

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[32] Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*; Michael Sorkin, *Variations on a Theme: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992); Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (New York: Guilford Press, 2003); Sophie Watson, *City Publics: The (Dis)enchantments of Urban Encounters* (London: Routledge, 2006).

[33] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992); Seyla Benhabib, "Models of Public Space: Hannah Arendt, the Liberal Tradition and Jürgen Habermas," in *Situating the Self: Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992); Mimi Sheller and John Urry, "Mobile Transformations of 'Public' and 'Private' Life," *Theory, Culture & Society* 20, no. 3 (2003), 107-125.

[34] Kurt Iveson, *Publics and the City* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 21.

market to mediate their own changing relationship to space and place. In the *Monitor* program, Salford Market was shorthand for traditional Salford, which was itself shorthand for Delaney's formative years. In the 1955 Glasgow photography survey, the market "crowd" connoted the practiced ritual of urban mixing and encounter. As postwar planners imagined new sites for nurturing civic publics—namely the council estate and the new town or city center—markets remained the subject of those "ordinary landscapes" that "nurtured citizens' public memory" and "encompassed shared time in the form of shared territory."[35]

Markets as "Culture"

Accessing what particular shopping spaces or the act of shopping *meant* to consumers is one of the persistent barriers in retail and marketing history: how do we get consumers to speak back to their experience and evaluate the shopping worlds created in their name?[36] This difficulty can be partially attributed to the institutionalization of marketing and retail history in business schools, where a focus on "mass" (either production, distribution, or marketing) makes the individual consumer an elusive object of study.[37] The dominant "realism" paradigm in business histories also separates them from the shopping histories and ethnographies associated with the "cultural" turn and disciplines like anthropology in the 1980s and 1990s, research that was concerned with identity formation and agency.[38] Anthropologists and sociologists of shopping, for example, have

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[35] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 9.
[36] Stefan Schwarzkopf, "Marketing history from below: towards a paradigm shift in marketing historical research," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 7, no. 3 (2015), 298.
[37] Tracey Deutsch, "Exploring new insights into retail history," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 2, no. 1 (2010), 136.
[38] On the dominance of "realism," see Schwarzkopf, "Why business historians need a constructive theory of the archive," *Business Archives* 105 (2012), 2; Deutsch, "Exploring new insights," 132.

long studied the mundaneness of shopping *place* through ground-level ethnographies.[39] Recent work from Arlene Dávila has expanded on the anthropological turn in retail history, exploring how the localism of everyday shopping practices fit into the historical and contemporary growth of Latin American shopping malls as symbols of "modernity."[40] Dávila's research finds that shopping centers were not the consumerist dreamscapes that retailers and developers often promised, but rather were highly circumscribed spaces where "everyday social imaginaries" were controlled according to ethnicity and class. Dávila belongs to a group of historians, anthropologists, and sociologists who have used ethnographies of shopping to explore how and to what end retail developers' ambiguous cultural values like "security," "comfort," "authenticity," and "community" in fact obfuscate the very real capitalist power structures built into race, class, and gender difference.[41]

In truth, there are a number of archival and methodological issues with trying to study markets simply in terms of turnover and profitability. On the local level, even the most complete market records often subsume market returns under one category, meaning that researchers cannot differentiate between market profits deriving from rents at the retail, wholesale, or other associated properties of the Markets Department. As this dissertation is concerned primarily with the *retail* function of local markets, this lumping makes quantitative accuracy and consistency difficult. In addition, the scale and mobility of individual market traders or firms means that the

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[39] Daniel Millet et al, *Shopping, Place, and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1998); Paul du Gay, *Consumption and Identity at Work* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1996); Steven Miles, *Spaces for Consumption* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2010).

[40] Arlene Dávila, *El Mall: The Spatial and Class Politics of Shopping Malls in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016); Matthew Bailey, "Written testimony, oral history and retail environments: Australian shopping centers in the 1960s," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 7, no. 3 (2015), 356-372.

[41] Sharon Zukin, "Consuming Authenticity: From Outposts of Difference to Means of Exclusion," *Cultural Studies* 22, no. 5 (2008), 724-48; Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Walmart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Tracey Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise: Gender, Government and American Grocery Stores in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

economic life of a single stall is nigh impossible to trace. On the national level, the Census of Distribution—the postwar business historian's reliable source for structural changes in retail profit shares among chains, independents, supermarkets, etc.—was inconsistent in its numeration and categorization of retail markets. The 1961 Census subsumed all market trading data in the category of ordinary shops, while the 1966 Census only tallied lock-up market stalls; this discrepancy is indicative of the methodological problems with studying retail markets as discreet economic establishments and as a sector of a larger market.[42] For example, the quantitative sources integral to marketing, retail, and economic histories render the retail market a hopeless backwater in a world of trade and distribution, with one source suggesting that they only accounted for 1% of all retail trade in the early 1960s.[43] And finally, consumer surveys, especially those conducted by researchers in the postwar period, were more concerned with the division between new forms of shopping (like self-service supermarkets) and all other forms of "traditional" retailing. Thus, these surveys were unlikely to differentiate between shopping done at retail markets and shopping done at any number of independent greengrocers or butchers.[44]

This difficult, incomplete picture of the quantitative "value" of local markets, however, is a boon for creative histories of everyday economic life. Geographer Tim Cresswell labeled the research and labor that went into creating an archive of Chicago's Maxwell Street Market as "gleaning," or the "gathering of images and things and people that were often invisible and undervalued by mainstream society."[45] "Gleaning" characterizes the approach of historical

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[42] J.H. Kirk et al, *Retail Stall Markets in Great Britain* (Ashford: Wye College Marketing Department, 1972), 3-4.
[43] Kirk et al, *Retail Stall Markets,* 4.
[44] See British Market Research Bureau Ltd., *Shopping in the Seventies* (London, 1970); Michael Bradley and David Fenwick, *Shopping Habits and Attitudes to Shop Hours in Great Britain* (London: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1970); National Economic Development Organization (NEDO), *Future Pattern of Shopping* (London, 1971), 25; NEDO, *Urban Models in Shopping Studies* (London, 1970).
[45] Tim Cresswell, "Value, Gleaning and the Archive of Maxwell Street, Chicago," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 37 (2012), 170.

subjects like Angela Carter to Doncaster Market, Shelagh Delaney to Salford Market, or the Partick Camera Club to the Barras Market. These actors cast traditional markets as sites that were misunderstood or overlooked in the context of the shopping developments that transformed British society in the mid-century; they used their privileged "street-level" position to recover the market as a site of community value in an increasingly commercialized world. I also consider myself to be a gleaner of the cultural value of retail markets, one step removed from the likes of Carter, Delaney, or the Camera Club. In assembling my archive of journalistic accounts, auto-ethnographic inquiries, photography surveys, and other sources that capture retail markets in a representational mode, I am constantly questioning *why* my actors found cultural value or larger significance in the informal practices of market buying and selling.

Even while approaching retail markets against the grain of their nominal economic function, there are subjectivities which are difficult to capture through the "gleaning" of cultural sources. Carter, Delaney, and the Partick Camera Club returned to retail markets, in part, because they could recognize their own stories in the unchanging localism of the market (Delaney and the Camera Club are more explicit about this connection, Carter more indirect). Novels, films, heritage activism, and even urban planning proposals reify this subject-community relationship on a larger scale, foregrounding the retail market as an unchanging local hub. That said, critical race, feminist, and queer theorists have repeatedly drawn our attention to the analytical danger in taking the invocation of "community" and "place" as fixed entities. Étienne Balibar and Doreen Massey situate race and ethnicity at the heart of these categories of belonging; to speak of "place" as foreclosed and static imposes limits the subjects who can claim a stake in its

communalism.[46] Miranda Joseph's *Against the Romance of Community* (2002) takes this line of thinking against this uncritical invocation of localism a step further, as it allows those community "insiders" to insulate themselves from the realities of social change and the global forces of capitalism.[47]

These theoretical interventions help us read the representational absences in artifacts of market culture in mid-twentieth-century Britain. Returning again to the cases of Carter, Delaney, and the Partick Camera Club, we can interrogate why "timeless" representations of community privileged relative homogeneity over the ethnic and racial diversity that was actually changing the social and economic communities on the ground in provincial cities; There is not a single person of color in Carter's essay, Delaney's television episode, or the Partick Camera Club market photographs. This dissertation will highlight when immigrant, ethnic-minority, and other "othered" traders entered the historical record, and what their marginality reveals about the unfixed nature of markets as cultural places in twentieth-century Britain. Yet I also seek to answer a more ambiguous, open-ended question: when and why did functionally "public" institutions—like retail markets—in fact narrow, rather than broaden, categories of economic and cultural belonging?

What Can Retail Markets Tell Us About Twentieth-Century Britain?

Privileging the survival and importance of the traditional town or city market in twentieth-century Britain is, admittedly, out of step with much of the scholarship coming from an explicitly retail and consumption set of priorities. From the interwar rise of "new consumerism" (in which

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[46] Étienne Balibar, *Masses, Classes, Ideas: Studies on Politics and Philosophy Before and After Marx* (London: Routledge, 1994), 201; Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (St Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 168.
[47] Miranda Joseph, *Against the Romance of Community* (St Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 1.

new retail outlets targeted affordable durables at middle-class households)[48] to the postwar development of American-style supermarkets[49] and the cultural politics of advertising,[50] histories of Britain's development as a consumer society tend to focus on capitalism's insatiable drive for new markets and increasingly advanced modes of buying and selling.[51] Beyond its embeddedness in retail and business, historians who study the politics of consumerism as a practiced and discursive form of citizenship predominately hold up the central state or centralized institutions—the welfare state, the BBC, etc.—as the key spaces in which British citizens became active stakeholders in the nation.[52] That said, in the decade and a half since Frank Trentmann called for historians to push against consumerism's reliance on modernization theory and focus on individualism, research on Britain has expanded in promising directions.[53] One avenue has been the study of consumerism as a political movement driven by the myriad ways in which purchasing power reoriented individual and collective relationships between the

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[48] Sue Bowden, "The new consumerism," in *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change,* ed. P. Johnson (London: Longman, 1994); Peter Scott, "Mr Drage, Mr Everyman, and the creation of a mass market for domestic furniture in interwar Britain," *Economic History Review* 62, no. 4 (2009), 802-827.
[49] Gareth Shaw et al, "Selling Self-Service and the Supermarket: The Americanisation of Food Retailing in Britain, 1945-1960," *Business History* 46, no 4 (2004), 568-582; A. Alexander et al, "The Co-Creation of a Retail Innovation: Shoppers and the Early Supermarket in Britain," *Enterprise & Society* 10, no. 3 (2009), 529-558.
[50] Stefan Schwartzkopf, "They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics," *Contemporary British History* 19, no. 2 (2005), 133-150.
[51] For useful overviews, see Jon Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain, 1880-1980* (London: Longman, 1994); Erika Rappaport et al (eds.), *Consuming Behaviours: Identity, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015); Peter Gurney, *The Making of Consumer Culture in Modern Britain* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).
[52] Matthew Hilton, "Social activism in an age of consumption: the organized consumer movement," *Social History* 32, no. 2 (2007), 121-43; Lawrence Black, *Redefining British Politics: Culture, Consumption and Participation, 1954-1970* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Pat Thane, "The 'Big Society' and the 'Big State': Creative Tension or Crowding Out?" *Twentieth Century British History* 23, no. 2 (2012), 408-29; David Vincent, *Poor Citizens: the State and the Poor in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London: Longman, 1991); Glen O'Hara, "The Complexities of 'Consumerism': Choice, Collectivism and Participation within Britain's National Health Service, *c.* 1961-*c.* 1979," *Social History of Medicine* 26, no. 2 (2013), 288-304. For the distinction between "formal" and "informal" citizenship, see Matthew Grant, "Historicizing Citizenship in Post-War Britain," *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 4 (2016), 1189.
[53] Frank Trentmann, "Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 3 (2004), 386 & 391.

market and the state in twentieth-century Britain.[54] A second, separate, trend has been the study of independent retailers' resilience in the face of increasingly efficient and diffuse distribution networks.[55] While each of these research clusters coalesce around different methodological traditions—one around new political history, the second around business and management studies—they both conceptualize twentieth-century British retail and consumption not as a zero-sum battle for market dominance, but as a complex negotiation of state regulation, localized shopping traditions, and affective appeals to consumer loyalty. If historians want to take our contemporary turn towards localist inflected small-scale economics seriously, we must reconsider how an institution like the local market hall, the market place, or the street market appealed not only to the pockets, but to the hearts and minds of traders and consumers.

In tracing the fortune of one almost-universal feature in Britain's towns and cities from the post-1918 years through the 1970s, this dissertation also bridges the common chronological break in histories of Britain's built environment, which tend to cluster on either side of the Second World War. Rebuilding Britain's cities was a key feature of the post-war welfare state, which brought together architects, planners, and local and central government to collaborate on new housing, hospitals, town centers, motorways, and other features that have come to stand for Britain's "modernity" in the postwar period. Social and cultural historians,[56] architecture and

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[54] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Consumption, Civil Society and Commerce in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Lawrence Black and Nicole Robertson (eds.), *Consumerism and the Co-operative Movement in Modern British History: Taking Stock* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Nicole Robertson, *The Co-operative Movement and Communities in Britain, 1914-1960* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Peter Gurney, "Co-operation and the 'new consumerism' in interwar England," *Business History* 54, no. 6 (2012), 905-24.

[55] Simon Philips and Andrew Alexander, "An Efficient Pursuit? Independent Shopkeeping in 1930s Britain," *Enterprise & Society* 6, no. 2 (2005), 278-304; Andrew Alexander and Simon Phillips, "'Fair Play for the Small Man': Perspectives on the contribution of the independent shopkeeper 1930-1945," *Business History* 48, no. 1 (2006), 69-89; Mike French, "Cultures of service: strategies of Scottish grocers, 1915-1965," *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research* 18, no. 3 (2008), 269-282.

[56] Peter Mandler, "New Towns for Old: The Fate of the Town Centre," in *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain 1945-1964,* eds. B. Conekin et al (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1999): 208-27; Simon Gunn, "The Rise and

planning historians,[57] popular writers,[58] and more recently historians of the economy[59] all use the war years and the immediate postwar period as the pivotal moment when the state made a concerted effort to shape the present and future physical landscape of Britain society. I do not deny the social imperative of reconstruction, nor the innovative importance of governmental bodies like the new Ministry of Town and Country Planning, nor the architectural modernism that infused everyday life in New Towns or rebuilt cities; rather, I seek to understand how ordinary citizens, architect-planners, and politicians sustained one *unbuilt* feature of the urban environment: market trading. In this respect, my research questions are guided by Rebecca Madgin's and Joe Moran's work the hidden, affective histories of urban life across various twentieth-century landscapes.[60] This dissertation is an urban history that sees the power of postwar planning as secondary to the networks and practices of everyday economies that traversed the 1945 divide.

Through this focus on small-scale economic life and its rootedness in physical and affective landscapes, this dissertation offers a new vantage point from which to study the

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Fall of British Urban Modernism: Planning Bradford, *c.* 1945-1970," *Journal of British Studies* 49, no. 4 (2010), 849-869; Guy Ortolano, "Planning the Urban Future in 1960s Britain," *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 2 (2011), 477-507; Selina Todd, "Phoenix Rising: Working-Class Life and Urban Reconstruction, *c.* 1945-1967," *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 3 (2015), 679-702.

[57] Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Nicholas Bullock: *Building the Post-War World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2002); Mark Clapson and Peter Larkham (eds.), *The Blitz and Its Legacy: Wartime Destruction to Post-War Reconstruction* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); John Pendlebury et al (eds.), *Alternative Visions of Post-war Reconstruction: Creating the Modern Townscape* (London: Routledge, 2014); Otto Saumarez Smith, "Central Government and Town Centre Redevelopment in Britain, 1959-1966," *The Historical Journal* 58, no. 1 (2015), 217-244; Elain Harwood, *Space, Hope, and Brutalism: English Architecture, 1945-1975* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

[58] John Grindrod, *Concretopia: A Journey Around the Rebuilding of Postwar Britain* (London: Old Street Publishing, 2013).

[59] Sam Wetherell, "Pilot Zones: The New Urban Environment of Twentieth Century Britain" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2016).

[60] Joe Moran, "Crossing the Road in Britain, 1931-1976," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 2 (2006), 477-496; Rebecca Madgin et al, "Connecting physical and social dimensions of place attachment: what can we learn from attachment to urban recreational spaces?" *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 31, no. 4 (2016), 677-693. Also see Lucy Faire and Denise McHugh, "The Everyday Usage of City-Centre Streets: Urban Behaviour in Provincial Britain, *c.* 1930-1970," *Urban History Review* 42, no. 2 (2014), 18-28.

relationship between national identity and emplaced community in twentieth-century Britain. Historians like James Vernon have framed Britain's ascendant social democracy in the twentieth century as a form of citizenship and belonging that developed in tandem with Britain's waning imperial and global prestige.[61] I argue that the scalar focus of this approach perhaps falls short of helping us understand the regional and sub-national anxieties that underpinned recent referendums around Scottish independence Scotland and European Union membership. Brexit, national independence movements, regionally uneven public investment, and the on-going effects of David Cameron's locally devolved "Big Society" continue to strain the relationship between citizen and the state; these political events have refocused regionalism and the municipal realm as objects of debate in Britain's fractured social democracy. Recent scholarship on interwar civics and municipal governance, voluntary associations, and post-war tenant and action groups take up these contemporary issues through a historical lens, exploring how citizens melded the local civic public into a force of public address towards Westminster or other anonymized forces of central power.[62] My research extends this work into the histories of economic life and commercial citizenship, arguing that markets—as locally managed retail hubs meant to serve the needs of a locality's buyers and sellers—are a critical site from which to elaborate a more emplaced and materialist form of citizenship and belonging.

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[61] Vernon, "The Local, the Imperial, and the Global," 409.

[62] Tom Hulme, "Putting the City Back into Citizenship: Civics Education and Local Government in Britain, 1918-45," *Twentieth Century British History* 26, no. 1 (2015), 26-51; A. Peter Fawcett, "A tale of two cities: Sheffield and Nottingham architecture and the provincial city in inter-war Britain," *Planning Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2000), 25-54; Charlotte Wildman, *Urban Redevelopment and Modernity in Liverpool and Manchester* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016); Lucy Hewitt and John Pendlebury, "Local associations and participation in place: change and continuity in the relationship between state and civil society in twentieth-century Britain," *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 1 (2014), 25-44; John Davis, "'Simple Solutions to Complex Problems': The Greater London Council and the Greater London Development Plan, 1965-1973," in *Civil Society in British History,* ed. Jose Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003): 249-274; Peter Shapely, "Civil society, class and locality: Tenant groups in post-war Britain," in *The Age of Voluntarism: How we got to the Big Society,* eds. Matthew Hilton and James McKay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 94-113; David Ellis, "On taking (back) control: lessons from Community Action in 1970s Britain," *Renewal* 25, no. 1 (2017), 53-61; Alex Campsie, "Populism and grassroots politics: 'New Left' critiques of social democracy, 1968-1994," *Renewal* 25, no. 1 (2017), 62-75.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation spans a shorter "short twentieth century,"[63] running from the end of the First World War to the end of the 1970s. My choice to begin in the interwar period makes sense for a number of historiographical, archival, and analytical reasons. Histories of British markets often begin in the nineteenth century and end at the Second World War, a chronology that casts the 1920s and 1930s as the "end" of the story of informal retailing in Britain's towns and cities.[64] This chronological focus means that the work of NMTF and NABMA (founded in 1910 and the 1920s, respectively) and the trade press journal *Market Trader's Review* (launched in 1922) have gone relatively unexamined in histories of retail associational life. In addition, starting this project in the interwar period rather than at 1945 makes analytical sense for one of my key questions: how did the retail market ground "the people" and "the public good" in a type of socio-economic space that crossed eras, *i.e*. space that was "cross-historical"? The rise of Labour in local and national communities; the first wave of anxiety over Britain becoming a nation of "consumers" rather than "producers"; and the expanding forms, subjects, and audiences in popular culture in the interwar period all affected the purpose and meaning of the retail market in particular ways. Chapter one, "The People's Market" will explore these channels of influence at the level of both retailing politics and cultural production in the 1920s and 1930s, when, for traders, citizens, and politicians alike, markets functioned as the physical marker of the intractable "public good" in an era of economic uncertainty. This chapter draws from a wide variety of sources concerned with civic life in the interwar period—from the provincial press to

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[63] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).
[64] See Kelley, "The Streets for the People"; Walkowitz, *Nights Out*; Davies "Saturday Night Markets"; Jones, "Redressing Reform Narratives"; and Scola, *Feeding the Victorian City.*

council proceedings, personal memoir to J.B. Priestley's film *Look Up and Laugh* (1935)—to sketch out how and why individuals cast retail markets as sites of resilient community.

Chapter two, "When is a Market a 'Black Market'?," looks at the inverse of the "market as community" argument: if markets could cohere a sense of civic belonging in periods of social and economic flux, this belonging was built on the persistent exclusion of certain retailers and retailing networks. While the methods of dividing commercial "insiders" and "outsiders" can be difficult to track in official records, the popular and trade press did elucidate the fears around transient newcomers in the post-First World War era. The primary focus of this chapter, however, will be on the 1940s, when the wartime economy and the expanding oversight of the Board of Trade (and its local committees) brought the informal economy of retail markets into the spotlight. In particular, non-British commercial actors (mostly from the Indian Subcontinent, but also from the Middle East, as well as some European Jews) were seen to subvert the perceived "fair play" and "common good" integral to the retail market's purpose. The image of the "alien trader"—coded as both external to the town, the city, and the nation—exemplified the type of ethnic and xenophobic provincialism that would ultimately undermine the market's promise to serve "ordinary" buyers and sellers through its low-cost and flexible retail structure.

The second section of this dissertation considers the market's malleable and polyvalent role in the British built environment, concentrating primarily on the 1950s and 1960s. Chapter three, "The Kind of Problem a Market Is" examines the perceived purpose of the retail market in post-war Britain from the planning perspective, focusing on the meaning of these sites of communal commerce in bombed cities, new towns, and historic market towns across Great Britain. This chapter is the most design-focused of the dissertation, examining the day-to-day interactions and affinities of urban surveyors, designers, and architect-planners. Focusing on the

case studies of rebuilt Swansea, Harlow New Town, and redesigned Leicester, I argue that retail markets revealed the limits that experts faced as they tried to engineer an elusive shopping "atmosphere" into the built environment.

Chapter four, "Shopping as Development," shifts from the design debate about urban space to the issue of capital and consumerism: did private capital or public investment serve the best interests of Britain's newly affluent communities? In the 1960s, development firms like Arndale, Ravenscroft, and Hammerson often worked in conjunction with local authorities to fund and built new shopping precincts at the heart of Britain's urban communities. The proposals and rationales of these private firms were steeped in expanding research on consumer behavior and retail geography carried out by groups like the Consumers Association, the National Economic Development Council, and the Retail Outlets Research Unit. However, even the backing of capital and expertise could not argue away the social, affective modes of traditional retailing, which drew people back to older establishments, including retail markets. Consumer surveys and retail distribution studies carried out in the late 1950s and 1960s found that shoppers—in particular, the omnipresent "housewife"—continued to privilege the social aspects of town or city center shopping and the value of comparison buying, characteristics inherent to the retail market. This chapter will conclude with the case study of Seacroft Civic Centre, a publicly funded development carried out by Leeds City Council that was meant to attract private businesses. When private firms did not materialize as expected, an impromptu retail market that provided the new Seacroft estate with its community "heart." The relative success of the retail market at Seacroft suggests how underdeveloping retail spaces served the needs of urban communities left behind by modernist planning and private development initiatives.

The final section concentrates on the 1970s, which I argue was a period of divergence for the market's ownership and purpose. Chapter five, "The Great Philanthropist of the 1970s," will look at one branch of this divergence: the rise of the "private market" as a competitor to the traditional public model. Private market operators—often working against the authority of the local state—expanded their open-air market businesses during the years of inflation in the early to mid-1970s, targeting those areas of Britain that had weaker marketing traditions, particularly the outskirts of London, the West Country, and Scotland. These rogue businesspersons argued that local authorities were no longer fulfilling the public market's role as a guarantor of value and a site of entrepreneurial freedom. The debates between private and public marketers raged in the pages of the trade press and local and national newspapers, as well as at the meetings of local Chambers of Commerce and Trade. Private markets drove a wedge between the local state and the "public good," arguing that the everyday needs of the consumer and trader were better served *outside* local government.

Chapter six, "Commercial Heritage as Democratic Action," examines the second branch of this reorientation of market culture in the 1970s: the campaigns to preserve traditional markets and market halls in struggling industrial and semi-industrial towns and cities. As Labour-backed planning and redevelopment lost favor among select ratepayers and politicians, local residents and preservation groups leveraged the local heritage of the market to manifest the "will of the people." This chapter focuses on two concurrent campaigns to "Save the Market," one in the Derbyshire town of Chesterfield, the other in the West Yorkshire industrial city of Bradford. By concluding the dissertation with these two 1970s heritage campaigns, we can see how the themes introduced in the first chapter on interwar markets find their echo almost fifty years later. Heritage campaigns idealized the market as a public institution: these commercial institutions

were the property of a cross-historical "people," and the local state was but a temporary manager. In joining forces, ratepayers and preservationists cast local authorities as the enemy of public space and public history, blinded by new ways to monetize the town or city center in a faltering industrial economy. In short, this chapter explores how the retail market came to be "historic" in the heritage battles of the 1970s.

My dissertation argues that marketplaces were the lynchpin in the changing temporalities and modes of belonging to local economic culture from the interwar period through the 1970s. The three sections of this dissertation track how a wide range of historical actors attempted to define the boundaries of these modes of belonging in the interwar and war periods, how planners and developers tried rationalize and commercialize urban space in a way that threatened these networks in the 1950s and 1960s, and how rival market traders and a burgeoning preservation movement attempted to reassert these networks and places of community in the 1970s. I will conclude with a coda that considers the state of retail markets in Britain today, focusing especially on how regeneration, gentrification, and neoliberal urbanism have threatened the diversity and equity built into these institutions. As debates over the ownership and future of the urban commons preoccupies planners, citizens, politicians, and developers, it is more vital than ever that we understand the historical context in which certain sites and practices have come to be regarded as the property of "the people."

Chapter 1: "The People's Market"
Communalism and Commerce in Interwar Britain

Introduction

In mid-1927, controversy erupted in Nottingham. The pressing issue was the potential removal of the East Midlands city's market from the open-air Market Square to an enclosed location half a mile away on King Edward Street. The displacement of the market was part of Nottingham Council's 1925 plan to build a neo-Baroque City Hall on the square: in the opinion of the Council, the informal retail use on the site fronting the new building would diminish the civic grandeur of the space.[1] The *Nottingham Journal* and the *Nottingham Evening Post* spear-headed a two-week public engagement campaign starting on May 16, asking readers to "prove their citizenship" by filling out a ballot with their views on "transferring" or "partially removing" (i.e. keeping stalls unaffected by hygiene concerns) the market.[2] This two-week ballot was a trenchant example of what Michael Bromley and Nick Hayes have labeled the provincial press's amplification of the "ubiquitous civic voice" in interwar Britain. Provincial newspapers, faced with the increasing commercialization of Fleet Street in the 1920s, turned to actively promoting the "common good" affecting the "community at large," cleverly switching the direction of influence between the capital, London, and farther afield towns and cities.[3]

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[1] A. Peter Fawcett, "A Tale of Two Cities: Sheffield and Nottingham - Architecture and the Provincial City in Inter-war Britain," *Planning Perspectives,* 15, no. 1 (2000), 30.
[2] "Should the Market be moved? Have you voted on the Nottingham Market question?" *Nottingham Journal,* 27 May 1927, 6.
[3] Michael Bromley and Nick Hayes, "Campaigner, Watchdog or Municipal Lackey? Reflections on the inter-war provincial press, local identity and civic welfarism," *Media History* 8, no. 2 (2002), 198.

Nottingham Journal columnists and citizen letter writers debated the terms of this commercial "value" in the newspaper's pages. Liberal councilors EH Lee and Fred Lane applauded the *Journal*'s intervention in the market issue, hoping that it would allow the Markets and Fairs Committee to, for once, be guided by "public opinion."[4] The potential removal of the Nottingham open-air market touched not only on the transparency between Council dealings and public opinion, but also on the finances of all concerned parties: the £45,000 building in King Edward Street would cut into the £6,000 annual profit that market rentals made for the Council. Furthermore, if the market was moved to a different commercial area in the city, the established businesses in and around the Market Square would feel the effects in lost shopper footfall. Removing the market, therefore, ran the risk of "jeopardizing the livelihood of 378 families in the city" (corresponding to the number small firms dependent on a central market location) and the many "independent businesses run by ex-servicemen."[5] Detractors argued that the market had "passed the sphere of usefulness" and was "no longer performing a public service," while nearby shopkeepers responded that as long as the market was the central hub in the city's pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns, it would have "value."[6] Alongside these calls to protect generations-old shopping goodwill and the reinvestment of commercial profit into public institutions, many observers latched on to the language of the market as a "people's right" that crossed historical epochs. The open square was the site of citizen assemblage, where they came together to mourn, to celebrate, and to keep the name of "Nottingham before the public" far and

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[4] "Have you given your vote? More varied views as to Market's future," *Nottingham Journal,* 20 May 1927, 6. The *Journal* was founded by local millionaire Jesse Boots (Boots the Chemist) in 1918 and was committed to the "progressive" movement in municipal politics, a set of policies most often characterized by pro-active welfare provision and building projects.

[5] "'Save Market' Campaign. Amplifiers at opening protest meeting. Economy Plea," *Nottingham Journal,* 8 August 1927, 6.

[6] "Have you given your vote? More varied views as to Market's future," *Nottingham Journal,* 20 May 1927, 6.

wide.[7] When the market controversy circulated in the national press, outside observers echoed these more ephemeral "values," using the East Midlands case as an exemplar of an age where traditional customs, like open-air marketing, were woefully unprotected by the law and therefore susceptible to the modernizing machinations of local authorities.[8]

For Nottingham's market traders, the threat of removal awakened their sense of engaged citizenship. J Millar Mackie, ex-president of the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) and then-president of the Nottingham Stallholders' Association, accused the Council of disregarding the "people's birthright" when they ultimately voted to move the market in July 1927. Anxious stallholders worried that the letting system at the new indoor market hall would be dominated by out-of-town multiple and chain stores who could afford higher rental rates, crowding out those ratepaying Nottingham stallholders who had traded over generations.[9] This stallholder argument found material form in public protests and placard making, where market defenders used messages such as, "What would Robin Hood say?", "The people cannot live on statues and ornamental squares," and "If you want rates increasing, support the autocrats." These messages drive an ideological wedge between the misguided development plans of local government, on the one hand, and a deep-seated "will of the people," on the other.[10] Market traders also organized two petitions, one with 30,000 shoppers' signatures and the other with 30 small (i.e. not multiple or chain store) shopkeepers, each protesting the removal of the market.[11] Stallholders and their supporters even suggested entering their own candidates in

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[7] G.A. White in "Hear all sides. Nottingham's Market," *Nottingham Journal,* 28 May 1927, 4.
[8] Alice Goodwin, "Points from Letters," *The Times* 5 October 1927, 8; "Nottingham Market," *Manchester Guardian,* 11 October 1927, 10; "Nottingham Market Place," *The Daily Telegraph,* 20 May 1929, 8.
[9] Mr. H.E. Hart in "A Market from Saxon Days. What is your view as to its future?" *Nottingham Journal,* 19 May 1927, 6.
[10] "Nottingham Market Defence Fund's Campaign," *World's Fair,* 20 August 1927, 20.
[11] "Future of Nottingham's Great Market. Stallholders' Huge Petition," *Nottingham Evening Post,* 28 May 1927, 6.

city wards to run single-issue campaigns.[12] The debate over Nottingham Market Place, then, focused a number of different questions about who, what, and where "the public" was in late 1920s Britain. Were markets inherently "public" as historic charter institutions that transcended modern municipal politics? Were markets instrumentally "public" as sites of democratic critique and engaged economic citizenship? The frequent and flexible use of "the public" and "the people" in the above Nottingham case suggests how these two modes of engaging with retail markets—as historic birthrights and as grassroots economic engines—reinforced one another in one interwar provincial city.

This chapter explores how traders, shopkeepers, civic leaders, consumers, and cultural commentators imagined the market's publicness as a mediating force between the inconstancy of retail capitalism and the detachment of municipal power blocs as sellers and shoppers used the language of publicness to sustain and defend market life in the 1920s and 1930s. The market's "publicness" could have multiple referents: its physical siting in an open space, its management by democratically elected council, or the service it was expected to provide the economic citizens of a given polity. As the Nottingham market controversy suggests, the defense of one retail market was predicated on leveraging all of these intersecting meanings of "public" in the name of the "people," an imagined retailing and consuming group whose interests were not being met by the modernizing ethos of their political leaders.

For nearly thirty years, Ross McKibbin's work has been the reference point for histories of "the public" in interwar Britain.[13] McKibbin's argument, that the Conservative Party

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[12] "End of Laissez-Faire," *Nottingham Journal,* 28 July 1927, 6; Common Sense, "Editor's Letter Bag," *Nottingham Evening Post,* 24 August 1927, 6.

[13] Ross McKibbin, "Class and Conventional Wisdom: The Conservative Party and the 'Public' in Inter-war Britain" in *The Ideologies of Class* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 259-293. For subsequent explorations of this formulation, see McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and McKibbin, *People and Parties: England 1914-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

cultivated a British political and social "public" in opposition to Labour, has inspired a field of scholarship ranging from histories of popular politics and the media,[14] to studies of literary culture and the arts.[15] While diverse in its subjects and methodology, one analytical thread tying this body of work together is the dominant national and metropolitan scales of inquiry: by virtue of the "newness" of mass democracy, mass communication, and mass culture, the "public" was expansive and supra-regional in its reach, emanating from the core of London and the South East of England. Theories of "publics," particularly the scholarship of Michael Warner, reinforces this argument that print and media could overcome provincial or regional barriers, circulating ideas among a community of strangers who were bound by a common interest rather than a common locale.[16]

Over the past five years, however, urban historians of the interwar period have done much to push back against this retreat from lived place and provincial particularities: civic belonging and pride created, if not a "counter-public," at least an alternative community of belonging, rooted in the rhythms of local everyday life and its built environment. Recent works

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[14] For an overview, see Helen McCarthy, "Whose Democracy? Histories of British Political Culture Between the Wars," *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 1 (2012): 221-238; Sian Nicholas, "The Construction of National Identity: Stanley Baldwin, 'Englishness' and the Mass Media in Inter-war Britain," in *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990,* eds. Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), 127-146; Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Jon Lawrence, "The Transformation of British Public Politics after the First World War," *Past & Present* 190 (2006), 185-216; Laura Beers, *Your Britain: Media and the Making of the Labour Party* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[15] Dan Le Mahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communications and the Cultivated Mind in Britain between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (London: Psychology Press, 1991); Christopher Hilliard, *To Exercise Our Talents: The Democratization of Writing in Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Robert James, *Popular Culture and Working-Class Taste in Britain, 1930-39* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010); Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism and the London Underground* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[16] Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics," *Public Culture* 141, no. 1 (2002), 55-56.

on civic societies,[17] pre-National Health Service public health,[18] school building,[19] and historical pageants[20] argue that local investment in infrastructure and displays of active citizenship helped consolidate urban and town "publics" between fin-de-siècle municipal socialism and the post-war social democratic welfare state. Municipal building projects and voluntary associations not only bridged the geographic distance between national politics and local power networks, but also imported nineteenth-century ideas around civil society and middle-class civic culture to the interwar age of mass culture.

Histories of interwar retailing and consumption provide particularly useful methods for linking questions of the "public" to both national and local developments. Following on Meg Jacobs's and Lizabeth Cohen's research on an American New Deal "consuming public,"[21] historians such as Peter Gurney, Matthew Hilton, and Frank Trentmann have explored interwar consumerism in Britain, both in its ideological permutations around free trade and in the ascendency of the "consumer-citizen."[22] This "consumer-citizen," in the words of Matthew Hilton, was "everybody and as such could not be reduced to a specific interest group."[23] The

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[17] Lucy Hewitt, "Associational Culture and the Shaping of Urban Space: Civic Societies in Britain before 1960," *Urban History* 39, no. 4 (2012), 590-606.
[18] Nick Hayes and Barry Doyle, "Eggs, rags and whist drives: popular munificence and the development of provincial medical voluntarism between the wars," *Historical Research* 86 (2013), 712-740; Esyllt Jones, "Nothing Too Good for the People: Local Labour and London's Interwar Health Centre Movement," *Social History of Medicine,* 25, no. 1 (2012), 84-102.
[19] Tom Hulme, "'A Nation Depends on Its Children': School Buildings and Citizenship in England and Wales, 1900-1939," *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 2 (2015), 406-432.
[20] Tom Hulme, "'A nation of town criers': civic publicity and historical pageantry in inter-war Britain," *Urban History* 44, no. 2 (2017), 270-292.
[21] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Meg Jacobs, "'Democracy's Third Estate: New Deal Politics and the Construction of a 'Consuming Public,'" *International Labor and Working-Class History* 55 (1999), 27-51.
[22] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Peter Gurney, *The Making of Consumer Culture in Modern Britain* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).
[23] Hilton, *Consumerism,* 80.

twin ascendency, for example, of consumer co-operation on the left,[24] and the "imperial consumer" on the right, suggests how ubiquitous and malleable this subject was in political culture, linking the economies of the home and community to larger questions about Britain's place in an imperial or co-operative world.

Yet, alongside the rise of "consumerism" were entrenched patterns of inequality, exacerbated by the conditions of the Great Depression. Avram Taylor has drawn attention to the "paradox" at the heart of consumption in interwar Britain: as the availability of consumer goods such as furniture, home furnishings, radios, gramophones, vacuums, and ready-to-wear clothing widened, extreme poverty and hardship persisted in working-class communities.[25] This paradox means that definitions of a consuming public must be specified and qualified according to local economic cultures. Recent studies like Charlotte Wildman's history of Liverpool's and Manchester's urban modernism or Judith Walkowitz's exploration of cosmopolitan Soho provide important hyper-local or regional correctives to an image of interwar consumer society too-often located in the suburbs of southern England: these studies show how provincial department store magnates, civic boosters, street sellers, and working women with money to spend defined the contours of consumer cultures according to the social networks and economic imaginaries of their immediate lived environment.[26]

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[24] The co-operative movement, with its roots in the mid-nineteenth-century, espoused the value of redistributing profits back to the members of a collectively owned organization, in essence putting the means of distribution in the hands of workers rather than capitalists. After the First World War, the increasing dialogue between co-operation in Britain and the continent, establishment of the Co-operative Party, and the expansion of co-operative stores raised the profile of co-operation not only as a political movement but as an alternative consumerist political economy to retail capitalism.

[25] Avram Taylor, "'Funny Money', Hidden Charges and Repossession: Working-Class Experiences of Consumption and Credit in the Inter-War Period," in *Cultures of Selling: Perspectives on Consumption and Society since 1700,* eds. John Benson and Laura Ugolini (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 153.

[26] Charlotte Wildman, *Urban Redevelopment and Modernity in Liverpool and Manchester, 1918-1939* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 83-140; Judith Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

Part one of this chapter will continue the themes of the Nottingham case study, namely, how traders (represented by the NMTF) and market authorities (represented by the National Association of British Market Authorities [NABMA]) lobbied for the interests of traders (as professionals) and markets (as civic institutions) in the face of urban modernization efforts, and as reputable retail outlets in a crowded field of multiples, cooperatives, and independent stores. In the field of retail and business history, the 1920s and 1930s are usually discussed as a battlefield between independent shopkeepers and the growing power of national chains or large department stores.[27] As a form of shopping that is often subsumed in the "independent shopkeeper" category, the role of retail market traders has received scant attention. Yet the case of Nottingham suggests that stallholders had a particular claim to the public interest since they were simultaneously tenants of the municipal authority and low-cost retailers serving a local shopping public. These arguments were not specific to the East Midlands: NMTF's and NABMA's lobbying for markets—predominantly through the print culture of the former's trade journal, *The World's Fair*[28]—was predicated on the assumption that markets were both a form of popular commerce and a vital arm of the local state. This part-private, part-public ethos allowed markets to serve an idealized vision of "the public good," outside the major party and capital power blocs in provincial British urban cultures.

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[27] Andrew Alexander et al, "Action and reaction: competition and the multiple retailer in 1930s Britain," *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research* 9, no. 3 (1999), 245-259; Gareth Shaw et al, "The evolving culture of retailer regulation and the failure of the 'Balfour Bill' in interwar Britain," *Environment and Planning A* 32 (2000), 1977-1989; Simon Phillips and Andrew Alexander, "An efficient pursuit? Independent shopkeeping in 1930s Britain," *Enterprise and Society* 6, no. 2 (2005), 278-304; Andrew Alexander and Simon Phillips, "'Fair Play for the Small Man': Perspectives on the Contribution of the Independent Shopkeeper," *Business History* 48, no. 1 (2006), 69-89.

[28] The *World's Fair* had begun as a trade journal for showpeople, first published in Oldham in 1904. Market traders, with much occupational and spatial overlap between the world of fairs, first entered the *World's Fair* with limited editorial presence in 1922, before becoming a fully-fledged "journal within a journal" supplement in 1925. This supplement, *The Market Traders' Review,* is still the trade press outlet for the NMTF. To maintain easily searchable titles and page numbers, I am using the title of the wider publication, *The World's Fair,* in this dissertation, although all material technically comes from *The Market Traders' Review* supplement. "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 3 January 1925, 11.

Part two scales down the scope of inquiry from political culture to individual meaning-making: how did shoppers and sellers locate the retail market in an experiential map of interwar community and public space? When Millar Mackie of Nottingham labeled the market as "the place where [the people] come to mourn in times of national sorrow, and to rejoice in times of national joy," he celebrated the role that this shared institution played in the cyclical rhythms of civic life, irrespective of its commercial purpose.[29] This desire to see the market as a product of collective expression—greater than the sum of its individual buying and selling parts—is partially borne out in a survey of memoirs and autobiographies from the interwar period. In over twenty examples of life writing and oral histories, working-class writers remember the market as a site where individuals and families negotiated the delicate balance between shopping for necessity and shopping as a form of communal pleasure. From these narratives, we can extrapolate a different formulation of the consuming public in interwar Britain, one that was not spoken "for" at the level of retail politics, but one rooted in the face-to-face negotiations and visceral excitement of informal trading. In rare memoirs written by market traders themselves, the retail market appears as much a site for subject-formation as for public-making, as these salesmen used the peripatetic origins of the market to hone their pitch to the local audiences they met along their national route.

Part three explores the market as a trope in popular culture, namely in the works of J.B. Priestley. For literary and cultural historians, Priestley embodies the voice of "the people" in 1930s Britain. As novelist, journalist, and critic alike, he rooted "England" in populist opposition to the financial and elite culture of London: the national spirit resided in the provincial

[29] J. Millar Mackie, "Progress," *Nottingham Evening Post,* 11 July 1927, 6.

communities defined by their democratic, cross-class, and productivist characteristics.[30] With this formulation in mind, Priestley often used traditional markets and their constituent characters to synthesize grassroots resistance to the power bloc of retail capitalism and an un-democratic government. This final section will bring together the political stakes of the market and the subjective value of its public sociability, focusing on the Priestley novel *Let the People Sing* (1939) and the Priestly-penned screenplay for the film *Look Up and Laugh* (1935). In these two works, Priestley imagined the market as a true people's "public" beyond the control of the local state or big business. Markets were an example of the productivist spirit relished by Priestley: their activity and commerce *created* something that the community could value, rather than merely feeding into the desires of individual shopkeepers or politicians. Priestley's writings, therefore, reflect the ethos of market life celebrated by its traders and its shoppers: commerce that transcended self-interest to become a vehicle for collective feeling.

Retail Politics and the Public "Good" of the Market

Despite its reputation as a period of scarcity and hardship, the interwar period in Britain was also a crowded landscape of retail innovation, with many establishments vying for the custom of working-class consumers. The retail arm of the Co-operative movement claimed to represent the ethical interest of workers, department stores represented spectacle and pleasure, multiple chain stories introduced rationality and branding, and small shopkeepers upheld variety and convenience.[31] As an ideologically and professional distinct institution, retail markets borrowed

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[30] John Baxendale, *Priestley's England: J.B. Priestley and English Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 46; Simon Rycroft and Roger Jenness, "J.B. Priestley: Bradford and a provincial narrative of England, 1913-1933," *Social and Cultural Geography* 13, no. 8 (2012), 957-976.

[31] Gurney, *The Making of Consumer Society*; Janice Winship, "Culture of Restraint: The British Chain Store 1920-1939," in *Commercial Cultures: Economies, Practices, Spaces,* eds. P. Jackson et al (Oxford, 2000), 29; Wildman, *Urban Redevelopment*; Alexander and Philips, "Fair Play."

elements from all of these retail outlets, but what ultimately set these businesses apart was their claim to the "public" interest: markets were the retail arm of local authorities, meaning they could guarantee quality and affordability for the local populace. The ethos of associations such as NABMA attests to this intersection between markets as private businesses and markets as public utilities. Established as a joint regional body in the North and the Midlands in 1920s (expanding into Scotland later in the decade), NABMA was composed of local market managers, superintendents, and other civic figures with a direct professional interest in the running of public markets.[32] NABMA found common cause in protecting municipal trading rights from the influx of multiples, chain stores, and department stores: they were the public servants who could mediate the relationship between the consuming public and the breadth of market traders who acted as tenants, protecting the goodwill of both shopper and vendor, and acting as a counter-balance to the often-powerful shopkeeper lobby in civic government.[33]

The NMTF—the market tenants whom NABMA professed to champion—formed their own associational network during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The NMTF was founded in 1910, expanding from what had originally been a regional organization in South Yorkshire. From a communication and print culture perspective, the NMTF became truly "national" after the First World War, when the *Market Traders' Review* became a regular supplement within the *World's Fair,* the weekly periodical for travelling showmen in the United Kingdom. The fact that the editorial presence of the NMTF emerged from the world of the fairground, rather than from the world of the brick and mortar shop, speaks to the ideological affinity between the mobile world of peripatetic market trading and the circuit of traditional fairs.

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[32] *World's Fair,* 8 September 1979. NABMA didn't become officially "national" until after the Second World War.
[33] West Yorkshire Archives Leeds (hereafter WYAS Leeds) LC/MKTS Acc 3515. Northern Market Authorities. Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting. April 1927; Ernest A. Hornsby, "Forward," *Markets Year Book - Fourth Edition* (1938), 3-4.

The inaugural issue of the *Review* claimed to "further the interest of the market trader, whether he stands in the most ornate market hall or in the muddiest open market in the land; whether he stops in the same market every day, travels a regular circuit, or like the Arab of old, the pioneer market man, has no regular abiding place, but travels as fancy dictates or rumors of good business call"; however, the early history of the *World's Fair* reveals an implicit editorial slant towards the mobile rather than the stable trader.[34] Indeed, the rhetorical tension between the established market hall stallholder—often sharing more professional status with the local shopkeeping class—and the mobile open market trader—closer to the background of traveling showmen—occasionally erupted in editorial exchanges or letters to the editor in the pages of the *World's Fair*.[35]

The goals of the *World's Fair* held much in common with other shopkeeping trade journals and associations of the interwar period: to network small retailers beyond their narrow geographic and trade groupings, and to facilitate conversations around adapting and protecting local retail businesses from the incursion of larger multiple or chain stores.[36] Chain-stores—with their notable variety, clearly marked low prices, and bulk buying practices—were the most immediate threat to the small-scale retailer in the 1920s and 1930s. Stores such as Marks and Spencer and Woolworth's were not only growing in number between the wars (from 300 in 1920 to 1,200 in 1939), but their floorspace was expanding its physical dominance in town and city

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[34] "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 3 January 1925, 11; "Here There, and Everywhere" *World's Fair,* 5 June 1926, 13.
[35] "A Glasgow Association," *World's Fair,* 22 December 1928, 16; "Here, There and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 14 January 1939, 21.
[36] "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 25 June 1927, 15; *World's Fair,* 1 October 1927, 19; A. Thorpe, "Are Markets on the Decline?" *World's Fair,* 2 August 1930, 18; "Chain Stores at Oldham: Market Tenants Protest," *World's Fair,* 11 January 1936, 30; "Markets vs Stores: The Public Demands Entertainment," *World's Fair,* 8 February 1936, 22; "Around the Markets - Organize Now," *World's Fair,* 5 November 1938, 27; "Notes from Barrowland," *World's Fair,* 25 February 1939, 27.

centers.[37] Both the NMTF and the NABMA worried about the economic and cultural impact of chains and multiples, especially in industrial towns and cities in the North, where markets had traditionally been a dominant institution in the commercial core. In the mid to late 1930s, market committees and tenants in Chesterfield, Oldham, and Sheffield attributed decreases in market stall profits to the entry of larger stores and petitioned the national government to check the spread of chain stores.[38]

Market defenders accused chain stores of ultimately co-opting the design features that had long drawn customers to market halls: their internal layout was divided into internal sub-units that allowed shoppers to peruse and compare (unlike in an independent shop or the Co-operative, where the majority of goods were kept behind the counter).[39] Retail historians have identified not only these design features, but also the very geographic distribution of chain stores in the 1930s as a "history of economic competition over space"; window displays, interior layout, and regional concentration were all methods of "creating a recognizable and common image to the consumer."[40] In this struggle for the attention and loyalty of customers, the *World's Fair* urged its readers, "Think of yourself as a unit in this great business...the market is a business with a branch in every town... one huge firm... for that is how the public think of it."[41] In the world of 1920s and 1930s shopping competition, filled with "mammoth stores, the Cooperative movement, multiple shops, firms capturing trade by advertisement, and cash on

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[37] J.B. Jefferys, *Retail Trading in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 69.
[38] "The Market Hall. Chesterfield Council to consider its demolition," *Derbyshire Times,* 1 May 1936, 22; "Chain Stores at Oldham: Market Tenants Protest," *World's Fair,* 11 January 1936, 30; "Market Traders want spread of chain-store checking," *The Star (Sheffield),* 1 May 1939, 9.
[39] "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 25 June 1927, 15; WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS Acc 3515 (Booklets and Reports on Markets in the following town centres). James R. Peel, (Markets Superintendent). Proposed Schemes for the Reorganization of the Interior of the Market Hall (Blackburn). July 1931, 3-4.
[40] Alexander et al, "Action and Reaction," 248.
[41] "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 14 January 1939, 21.

delivery system," the traditional market struggled to find its place between "modern" forms of branding and its traditional appeal to the shopping public.[42]

Although their ownership and ideology were diametrically opposed, market traders saw little difference between the Cooperative movement and the ascendant chain store stores. In a period of rising anxiety over free trade, different forms of retailing were locked in a match for the title of "champion of the consumer."[43] The antagonistic world of retail and distribution in the 1920s and 1930s should also been seen against its broader political landscape, where anti-socialism and anti-profiteering anxieties narrowly defined which occupational and social groups were the true champions of the "public" interest: the middle classes and the Conservative Party.[44]

The NMTF, as I have suggested above, did not occupy an overt political position. Nevertheless, their membership did draw analogies between the profit-driven, monopolistic practices of the Cooperative [Co-op] Wholesale and Retail format and the "big business" outfits that the "socialist" Co-op publicly opposed.[45] Market trader attacks on the Co-op as a "monopoly" or a "trust" echoed similar attacks that the Co-op made against private capital and combinations. In the words of the *World's Fair*, only the market trader with "no overhead charges, small profits, and quick turnovers," who encouraged buyers to "scrutinize goods without feeling obligated to purchase," could safeguard the public against the dehumanizing forces of retail capitalism while maintaining that shopping should be a pleasure.[46] The NMTF recognized that the allure of the Co-op was as much political as it was commercial, as much cultural as it was social: what market traders needed to do was condition the "market habit" in

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[42] A. Thorpe, "Are Markets on the Decline?" *World's Fair,* 2 August 1930, 18.
[43] See Peter Gurney, "Co-operation and the 'new consumerism' in interwar England," *Business History* 54, no. 6 (2012), 905-924; Hilton, *Consumerism*, 79-136; Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation*, 191-348.
[44] McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures,* 56.
[45] Porridge, "Cooperative vs. Market," *World's Fair,* 2 January 1926, 14; "Market Traders. Some Modern Forms of Competition. President's Examples," *Yorkshire Post,* 5 April 1927, 6-7.
[46] Porridge, "Cooperative vs. Market."

shoppers the same way that working-class consumers had acquired the "Cooperative habit."[47] While city or town center retail markets could not compete with the Co-op's neighborhood ubiquity, the allure of the "divi" (the membership dividend), or their transnational political ethos, market traders nevertheless believed that they combined characteristics of public service with the personable service of the small trader, assets that would chip away at the expanding Co-op retailing system.[48]

On the opposite end of the retail competition spectrum from the Co-op was the small shopkeeper. Market traders, despite sharing common enemies with small shopkeepers in the Co-op and the chain store, were overwhelmingly dismissive of independent retailers in the 1920s and 1930s. At the height of the depression, NMTF President Edgar Hunt argued that the market was an "asset to any town, as the competition ensured that goods were sold at the lowest prices, and for that reason the system was not regarded with favor by shopkeepers."[49] During these years, small shopkeepers were adamant about their role as retail "specialists" who stocked the "slow-moving" and "less profitable" lines of goods, juxtaposed against the non-specialist "poacher" who worked fast-moving, high-turnover channels—the market trader.[50] Many in the NMTF saw councilors and shopkeepers conspiring together against market interests, a view that is at least partially corroborated by the rising profile and influence of retailers *within* interwar city councils.[51] Politically, small shopkeepers used their influence in municipal government, their

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[47] "Around the Markets - Notes from Barrowland," *World's Fair,* 22 October 1938, 21.
[48] Cooperative membership grew from 10% of the population in 1920 to 20% of the population in 1939, and in 1935 they commanded 17% and 16% of total sales of food and household goods, respectively. Gurney, "Co-operation and the 'new consumerism,'" 906-907.
[49] "Plymouth Market Praised. Proposal for change of site opposed," *The Western Morning News and Mercury,* 25 March 1930, 5.
[50] Jefferys, *Retail Trading in Britain,* 53.
[51] Barry Doyle, "Rehabilitating the Retailer: Shopkeepers in Urban Government, 1900-1950," in *In Control of the City: Local Elites and the Dynamics of Urban Politics, 1800-1960,* eds. Stefan Couperus et al (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2007), 48.

local reputations, and their associational networks to petition Parliament for protections for small retailers.[52] Market traders saw themselves as the inheritors of both a civic and a peripatetic heritage: their business was an economic good to town coffers and townspeople alike, but it was also dependent on a degree of transience across town and city boundaries. Against the ascendent civic power brokers, the shopkeeping class, the NMTF were often hopeless "outsiders," bound together by their peripatetic livelihoods rather than economic belonging in any one town or city.[53]

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that the main civic bodies who opposed the itinerancy of market traders were the local Chambers of Trade and Commerce. In the 1920s and 1930s, debates ranged from Durham to Fleetwood, Leicester to Shipley, York to Bury about whether or not Chambers of Trade and Commerce realized the revenue and custom that market days created, or whether they simply viewed market traders as interlopers who paid negligible rates and took their profits out of the town or city.[54] In his 1923 speech as NMTF President, J. Millar Mackie called Trades Councils and Chambers of Commerce "[bodies] of men who were out purely and simply for self. When the cloak was pulled aside they discovered trade jealousy, trade envy, greed, extortion, profiteering, and robbery."[55] The NMTF therefore positioned their own political goals as the geographic and ideological opposite of those Chambers protective of a narrow class of business ratepayers. When the NMTF referred to shopkeepers ("our friends the enemy") as

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[52] Alexander and Phillips, "'Fair play for the small man,'" 74-76.
[53] John S. Fisher, "Outsiders," *World's Fair,* 28 December 1929, 17.
[54] "Federated Chambers of Trade," *The Yorkshire Post,* 14 November 1929, 4; "Letters to the Editor. Shipley Chamber of Trade. The Market Question." *Shipley Times and Express,* 31 August 1929, 5; Leicestershire Record Office (hereafter LRO), DE 3257/1 Leicester Chamber of Commerce, Meeting of the committee of the retail section. 5 March 1923, 6-7; "York Chamber of Trade Wants Market Abolished," *World's Fair,* 28 January 1939, 28; "Unfair Competition. Bury Greengrocers and Market Prices. Petition to Chamber of Commerce," *Free Press & Post,* 3 April 1937, 6; "Fleetwood Chamber of Trade. President Replies to Market Stallholder Critics," *Lancashire Evening Post,* 29 April 1931, 6.
[55] "'Trades Councils of Selfishness.' Market President's Attack on Opponents," *The Sheffield Daily Independent,* 20 April 1923, 4.

"snobs" and "Little Englanders," the market trade association was calling for their members to think of their commerce in expansive terms, serving the national public at-large, as opposed to the reactionary provincialism of the shopkeeping class.[56] Market traders, in their appeals for unity among the profession and common cause with their allies, resisted the narrative that only shopkeepers paying the highest business rates were invested economically and politically in public well-being. Whereas shopkeepers were intent on protecting their market share in isolated local contexts, market traders saw themselves as a retailing force whose ubiquity across British towns and cities served a more diffuse idea of "civic" good.

When market traders claimed to represent a more equitable and inclusive model of commercial civic culture, they borrowed from and joined up with political movements and debates already afoot in interwar Britain. During the General Strike of 1926, for example, the fledgling *Market Traders Review* supplement to the *World's Fair* found a political voice, aligning itself with strikers: "we cater mainly for the working class; if he is doing well there is more business for us." Structurally, traders found themselves on the side of workers like the railway men who earned their living as "distributors and not producers."[57] Stallholders allied themselves with an imagined working public not just through occupational affinity, but also through the associational leisure and consumption practices on the rise in inter-war Britain, such as dance halls, jazz music, and racing.[58] Unlike in private shops, "the masses love to do their shopping in a crowd, as also they prefer to take their recreation."[59] The supposed habits of working-class life worked not only fit into the market's crowd atmosphere, but also to its timing:

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[56] "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 14 January 1939, 21
[57] Major Mix, "Competition," *World's Fair,* 29 May 1926, 14.
[58] This is not to mention the expansion of pre-war class- and community-based practices such as sport, the cinema, and seaside holidays. Robert Snape, "The New Leisure, Voluntarism and Social Reconstruction in Inter-War Britain," *Contemporary British History* 29, no. 1 (2015), 52.
[59] A Special Contributor, "The Utility of the Modern Market," *World's Fair,* 18 September 1926, 16.

markets stayed open late on Friday, after weekly pay packets had been collected.[60] The NMTF placed great faith in the working-class consumer to see their public market as a "buffer between the consumer and the profiteer,"[61] occupying that economic ground traditionally dominated by the Co-op, but with the addition of the fun and atmosphere absent in the neighborhood shop.

The NMTF's simultaneous condemnation of Cooperative hypocrisy and the "profiteering" habits of large and small private retailers put them in a changeable position along the political spectrum. If, in their view, the Co-op peddled a misleading narrative about their investment in the public good, then market traders also saw Conservatives and Liberals touting a very narrow defense of commercial enterprise in Britain's towns and cities. One of the *World's Fair*'s regular contributors, Porridge, explained the institution's position as such: Conservatives and Liberals saw public markets as an obsolete and dangerous civic undertaking whose members did not pay their "fair share" as private traders. Socialists, on the other hand, could not see the pure cooperation within a market of individual traders and saw instead private trading in shoddy articles.[62] The references to party politics are infrequent and heavily coded in the *World's Fair*, but delving into local case studies gives some sense of the political eclecticism of market authorities, market stallholders, and their allies. The president of the Northern Market Authorities Association in the mid-1930s was Fred Marshall, a Labour MP for Sheffield. Yet, in the Nottingham controversy detailed in the opening of this chapter, a coalition of anti-Socialist Liberals were the institution's champions in municipal government. In other cases, partisan affiliation is less clear. In 1927, the Hull and District Market Traders' Association nominated Miss Clara Eggleston as an Independent candidate for the Whitefriars constituency. Eggleston

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[60] "Leeds Market Trader and Shopping Hours," *World's Fair,* 13 April 1929, 24.
[61] Mignoette, "Is the Market Doomed," *World's Fair,* 9 May 1925, 18.
[62] Porridge, "Party Excuses," *World's Fair,* 13 November 1926, 16.

had stood Hull's open market for thirty years; she had also been an active member of local socialist organizations, and the right-leaning *Hull Daily Mail* reminded readers "her political views are pretty well known and she is not an anti-socialist."[63] Case and national studies on interwar municipal politics have focused on the alignment of what McKibbin deems the "constitutional classes" (Conservatives, Liberals, and Independents) against the rising tide of Labour.[64] As both a professional identity and a local issue, retail market politics were one platform on which communalism and individual enterprise could, ever so briefly, unite in the cause of "public" good.

To understand how these tensions and competing claims to the "public good" worked in practice, we can transition from the rhetorical debates in national trade journals and the provincial press and delve into the political culture of one city: Glasgow. Before the First World War, the physical and spiritual home of Glasgow's itinerant ("barrow") traders was along the banks of the Clyde, where petty capitalists would camp on Friday nights to guarantee a favorable stance during peak Saturday trading.[65] Relocating from the riverside for military reasons in 1914–18, traders pleaded with the Corporation to let them return to their former grounds in the early 1920s.[66] Instead, the Corporation tacitly allowed barrow traders to congregate in Moncur Street, Calton, slightly to the east and removed from the river.

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[63] "Miss Eggleston's Candidature," *The Hull Daily Mail,* 25 October 1927, 9; "Whitefriars Ward," *The Hull Daily Mail,* 31 October 1927, 9.
[64] McKibbin, "Class and Conventional Wisdom," 284; James Smyth, "Resisting Labour: Unionists, Liberals, and Moderates in Glasgow Between the Wars," *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 2 (2003), 377; Chris Cook, *The Age of Alignment: Electoral Politics in Britain, 1922-1929* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1975); Sam Davies and Bob Morley, *County Borough Elections in England and Wales, 1919-1938: A Comparative Analysis* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).
[65] "Notes from Glasgow," *World's Fair,* 2 December 1939, 18 & 21.
[66] "Spectacular Calton 'Barrows' Scene. Inauguration of Commodious and up-to-date stance. Sequel to Corporation Acquiring Ground Under Big Scheme," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 16 April 1932, 2; *Minutes of the Corporation of Glasgow,* Markets Committee Minutes, 27 October 1909, 2631; "A Glasgow Association," *World's Fair,* 22 December 1928, 16; *Minutes of the Corporation of Glasgow,* 31 October 1921, 2817; Natmart, "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 4 January 1941, 10.

The district of Calton in the 1920s was home to some of Glasgow's most desperate and transient residents. Packed with Lodging Homes and high-density tenements, the two-acre area between Gallowgate, Bain, Claythorn, and Moncur Street (the hub of this new informal retail market) was packed with 674 adults and 245 children.[67] When this area was designated as part of the 1929 Calton Improvement Scheme, Corporation officials found an area "overwhelmingly" filled with laborers, hawkers, and domestics.[68] The presence of the barrows in Moncur Street attracted a "motley crowd" of outsiders to the district, whether these were lascar seamen, traders from outlying districts, or Catholic and Protestant sectarian gangs.[69] While Calton and the Gallowgate had once been a center of the city's weaving industry, in the words of one journalist, the area was now "eloquent of prosperity decayed… a mere handmaiden of the communal need, the shop of shopkeepers."[70] In other words, the precipitous decline of the district was accentuated by the rhetorical and material distance between its productive heritage ("prosperity decayed") and its current use as a second-hand distribution center ("the shop of shopkeepers").

Yet, this decline viewed from elites or from on-high elided the on-the-ground world of informal retailing that thrived in the cleared lots, backgrounds, and open yards of the district. The records of Glasgow Corporation in the late 1920s and early 1930s bear the mark of these enterprises, which sprung up around the relocated barrows of Moncur Street: there were applications to sell aluminum from a car, to hold open-air furniture sales, and to set up barrows

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[67] Glasgow City Archives (hereafter GCA) GB243/D-HE/9/5/4/1. Corporation of Glasgow. The Glasgow (Calton) Improvement Scheme, 1929. Particulars of the Scheme, Vital Statistics, Book of Reference and Detailed Statements. Ultimately, 20% of Calton's residents refused to leave the district, while 10% moved back after being relocated. Miles Horsey, *Tenements & Towers: Glasgow Working-Class Housing 1890-1990* (Edinburgh: The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, 1990), 20.
[68] GCA GB 243/D-HE/9/5/4/1.
[69] "The Barrows - Cattle Market Site May be Used. Corporation Proposal to Acquire Powers," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 17 November 1928, 8.
[70] "Half Hours in the City Streets. Gallowgate: The Street That Made Glasgow Great. The Pulse of a City," *Glasgow Evening Times,* 15 February 1929, 7.

in a cleared site at Millroad and Claythorn Streets.[71] The shopkeepers of the district felt the effects of these impromptu retailing habits, bemoaning the "unfair competition" created by the traders who radiated out from the 200 established stalls in Moncur Street.[72]

The barrows of the East End were so successful in the late 1920s that the Corporation decided to formalize what had been their tacit support for street trading. In 1928, city leaders tested the legal potential of opening their *own*, legitimate municipal retail market at the Cattle Market, less than a mile from Moncur Street. Seeking to maximize revenue at the under-used Cattle Market, the Corporation also touted this plan as the ideal solution to solve the itinerant trading issue in the Calton, where stallholders were increasingly short of open space as the Improvement Scheme transformed the district's built environment. When the Corporation decided to acquire parliamentary powers to change the days and use of the Cattle Market, they did so with the intention to serve two different meanings of public "good": municipal trading, which would see a return to civic finances, and low-cost retailing, which would serve a vulnerable section of Glasgow buyers and sellers.

Unsurprisingly, the main antagonists in this new municipal venture were the private shopkeepers of the area and the Scottish Distributive Trades Federation (SDTF). The SDTF formally petitioned against the Corporation's expansion of powers, objecting to the direct competition in goods it would invite in the area, the comparatively low rents that stallholders would pay, and the itinerant traders' lack of connection to the district and the city. Coopting the language of the Corporation and market authorities, these shopkeepers shrouded themselves in the mantle of "public" good. They called municipal-run barrow trading a threat to "public

[71] *Minutes of the Corporation of Glasgow.* 20 December 1929, 575; *Minutes.* 5 May 1933, 1717; *Minutes.* 2 November 1931, 210

[72] "Shopkeepers Complain. Is it 'Unfair Competition? Street Traders in Trouble," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 17 August 1929, 5.

interest, public order, public health, and unfair interference with the business of legitimate retail traders," referencing how similar municipal undertakings in Scottish towns and cities had brought increased cost to the local council, not to mention bringing "undesirable" traders into civic spaces.[73]

To counter these accusations of public disorder and unfair competition, Glasgow Corporation sought successful examples of councils that had maximized municipal trading profit without sacrificing regulations or the rights of shopkeepers. In the summer of 1930, a delegation from the Glasgow Markets Department travelled south to London, where they studied Islington's Caledonian Market. Their report underscored the active role local authorities ought to play in regulating market trading as a municipal concern. In London, stalls were orderly and numbered, a large part of the space was covered, over half of the tenants were permanent stallholders, and there was even a shopkeeper contingent who used the market as an outlet for goods unsold in stores.[74] The "pitching" of auction sales was constrained to one part of the market, while street trading was minimal due to London's licensing system. The investment in infrastructure, combined with the strict regulatory powers of the London municipal authorities, were models for Glasgow's own potential retail undertaking.

Yet, after the proposal for the Cattle Market gained steam over two years of deliberation and fact-finding missions, it was ultimately defeated in late 1930 in a 64-13 Corporation vote.[75] This drastic turn against the market came at a confluence of political shifts and maneuverings, some of which would only come to light in later years. The first was the Scottish Retail

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[73] GCA A3/1/324. Glasgow Corporation Act 1929, 54-55; University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections (hereafter UGASC) UGD 214/1/4. Executive Meeting Minutes of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Retail Distributors Association, 1 March 1929 & 31 October 1930; *Glasgow Herald,* 27 November 1930, 9.
[74] Report by Councilor Strain and the General Manager of the Markets Department regarding the Pedlars' or General Market at Islington. *Minutes of the Corporation of Glasgow,* 17 September 1930, 2450-2452.
[75] "Glasgow Council Turn Down General Market Proposal," *World's Fair,* 6 December 1930, 21

Distribution Association's successful lobbying of Glasgow councilors, validating (at least in one case) the NMTF's fear of Council-shopkeeper collaboration against market interests.[76] The second was the proposal's lack of traction with Labour councilors: Tom Kerr and George Smith saw the market as "behind the times" and "retrogressive," echoing the shopkeeping concerns about hygiene and the origins of goods.[77] Finally, the coalition pushing for the general goods market was later proven to be a deeply corrupt group of civic leaders: Baillie Strain (Labour), convener of the Markets Committee, was found guilty in 1933 of accepting bribes for stances at the market. The proposal to establish a retail market at the Cattle Market was thus not an overtly or inherently party-political issue, but its failure must at least be attributed to the politicking of factions and committees working within Glasgow Corporation.[78]

The defeat of the municipal proposal, however, did not signal the end of a "people's" market for the East End of Glasgow. In 1932, a group of barrow traders in Moncur Street decided to re-locate their stances to a disused building in nearby Bellfield Street. Together, they sought to improve on the open-air model of Moncur Street, installing electric lighting, business offices, a tearoom, and space for 3,000 barrow stances. The proprietors of the new market would ask for a share of the sales returns, but "groups of traders [could] rent a number of stances and work together to their mutual advantage and profit."[79] The Bellfield Street scheme revealed that the "public" good of retail markets was not the unique domain of municipal authorities, but could be claimed by traders cooperating privately where the local state would not provide.

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[76] UGASC UGD 214/1/5. Executive Meeting Minutes of the Glasgow and West of Scotland RDA, 9 January 1931, 5 and 2nd Annual Report, The Scottish Retail Drapery Journal (December 1931), 2.
[77] "Corporation Rejects 'Barrows' Scheme. Gallowgate Project Unfair to Shopkeeping Community. Casual Traders Don't Pay Rent, Rates nor Taxes," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 6 December 1930, 2; "No Pedlars' Market for Glasgow. Exposed Food Peril. Plan Defeated," *Glasgow Daily Record and Mail,* 28 November 1930, 12.
[78] See Peter Jones, "Graft in Glasgow and Labour's ascendency 1933-68" in *From Virtue to Venality: Corruption in the City* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 56, 59 & 61.
[79] "A 'Barrows' Sensation. Huge Gallowgate Scheme? Remarkable Development Exclusively Announced," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 23 April 1932, 3.

If the collective ethos of this new Bellfield Street site was not clear from the language and goals of its proprietors, it was roundly affirmed in its inaugural speech in May 1932. Attended by John McGovern, MP (Independent Labour Party, Shettleston), and Glasgow Councilor Jean Mann (ILP)—Jennie Lee was originally advertised but did not ultimately speak—the opening ceremony was capped with a speech by Jimmy Maxton, MP (ILP, Bridgeton).[80] The *Glasgow Eastern Standard* announcement (Figure 1.1)—ringed by stall advertisements for used car salesmen, bargain furniture, and manufacturer's bankrupt wallpaper stock—suggests the range of aspirational durables on offer at the new stall market.

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[80] "Caledonian Market in Glasgow. Formally Opened by Mr. James Maxton, MP," *Glasgow Herald,* 23 May 1932, 8.

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Comprising SHEETS, PILLOW CASES, TABLE CLOTHS & REMNANTS of all descriptions

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On SATURDAY, 21st MAY

HISTORIC EAST-END EVENT

Opening: SATURDAY, 21st MAY

AN epoch-making event in East End open-air trading takes place at Bellfield Street (off Gallowgate) to-day (Saturday), when the Caledonian Market, the greatest of its kind in Scotland, first opens to the public.

For seventeen years—since the Great War forced open-air traders to leave their historic Clydeside site—the East End has housed "the Barrows," notably at the original site at Moncur Street and Green Street. The doom of the famous landmark was sealed recently when, although the owners had no desire to leave, the Corporation, exercising their legal powers, took over the site for the Calton rehousing scheme. The blow at first appeared to be disastrous, as the number of alternative sites was strictly limited, and not always suitable. But the Corporation bombshell turned out a blessing in disguise.

MR. JAMES MAXTON, M.P.

There was brought to the attention of the management a great area in Bellfield Street, capable of housing 3000 stances under a covering roof, and of such extent as to hold 100,000 of the general public.

Those behind the venture at once saw that their problem was over. Largely-attended meetings of traders and shopkeepers were held, and the advantages of the site impressed itself on them no less than on the organisers. Events moved rapidly. Workmen were called in, the site was cleared, excellent stalls erected, and everything put in ship-shape order for the great day—Saturday.

Mr. Peter Muir, the popular manager, has arranged for an East End celebrity, Mr. James Maxton, M.P., to perform the opening ceremony, while the Corporation Gas Department Band will discourse sweet music. The market opens at 8 in the morning, and at about ten minutes to three in the afternoon a stoppage will be called until Mr. Maxton performs the official ceremony, in his inimitable way. Presentations will add a delightful touch.

Mr. Muir is confident that the development will be a great boon to East End traders and shopkeepers, and also the business people from all over Scotland and some parts of England who will participate.

Among the enterprising East End firms taking part is the Gallowgate Drysalteries, which at the main passage will submit a splendid stock of wallpaper, etc., to the public. At their nearby shops (614 and 718 Gallowgate) they have a great wireless battery service. Dunn's famous aerated waters will be available; while for more potent refreshments "The Shandon Bells" public-house at 616 Gallowgate will have many visitors.

In the Market, Muir's Stance, with its splendid £500 varied stock, will be a centre of attraction. Mr. Alexander Greig, of the Bellfield Motor Mart, will break new ground with a great display of motor cars; while Mr. S. Phillips, Belfast, will sell a beautiful stock of all kinds of Irish linen.

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A WORD TO MR. AND MRS. PUBLIC
Drink DUNN'S Lemonade
PUREST AND BEST GLASGOW'S MOST POPULAR MINERALS SOLD EVERYWHERE

Figure 1.1. *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 21 May 1932, 7.

Yet the message of Maxton's speech, made before 40,000 expectant shoppers (over double the number which had gathered to hear Maxton and McGovern speak on Glasgow Green for May Day),[81] was not a celebration of the goods to be bought and sold at a market, but a condemnation of the capitalist system that had destroyed the essential ethos of a "people's market." Context is critical here: coming only a year after Maxton introduced a second reading of the Living Wage Bill in Parliament, and mere months before the ILP disassociated from the Labour Party in the summer of 1932, the Glasgow ILP in mid-1932 was campaigning as the face of "ethical socialism," distinct from Ramsay MacDonald and the National Government.[82] The opening of the dubbed "Caledonian Market"—developed explicitly by the residents of Calton to serve the residents of Calton—symbolized a grassroots ethical retail capitalism tailored to local social networks and economic needs, a type of community-based consumer conscious political action that would have resonated in a city with the memory of the 1915 Rent Strike still vivid.[83] Maxton used the speech to criticize the "few men" who controlled hundreds of millions of pounds of capital and who undermined commercial systems that had long depended on intimacy and locality. In the context of the Depression, when the "monster machine of production and distribution" had failed the common worker, the retail market "gave people with limited capital who are out of work an opportunity of earning a livelihood."[84] In a nod to the desperate economy and origins of barrow trading, Maxton reserved judgment for those working-class entrepreneurs

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[81] "Scots Demonstrations. Glasgow's Smaller Turnout," *The Scotsman,* 2 May 1932, 10.
[82] See Neill Riddell, *Labour in Crisis: The Second Labour Government, 1929-1931* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Alan McKinlay and R.J. Morris (eds.), *The ILP on Clydeside, 1893-1932: From Foundation to Disintegration* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).
[83] On rent strikes as a form of working-class consumer activism, see Marcel van der Linden, "Working-Class Consumer Power," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 46 (1994), 113.
[84] "Caledonian Market in Glasgow," *Glasgow Herald*; "Mr. J Maxton, MP, Opens Glasgow Market," *World's Fair,* 28 May 1932, 22.

of “initiative, independence, and individuality” who would “work out their own trade and commerce salvation on the basis of their own ability and their own energies.”[85]

A cynical reading of Maxton’s speech might write off his calls to democratize shopping and consumption as a cheap appeal to a captive Glasgow audience of working-class distributors and customers, made with the evangelical fervor characteristic of his relationship with his East End constituents.[86] Indeed, Maxton had been making public proclamations on capitalism’s “imminent” collapse since late 1931, including a speech at the Coliseum Theatre in Glasgow only a month before his speech at the new Caledonian Market.[87] Yet, when we consider the Caledonian Market within the context of Glasgow’s longer struggle over municipal trading and the nationwide context wherein market tenants and authorities defended their institution as a public service, Maxton’s words take on another meaning. Caledonian Market represented of the economic will of “the people,” opposed to profiteering chain stores, shopkeeper interest groups, and the burgeoning Co-op. In its embeddedness in the economic culture of the local district and its commitment to low overheads and modest profits, the Caledonian Market represented, for Maxton, the bulwark against the destructive and dehumanizing forces of large-scale, financial capitalism.[88]

There is a postscript to the Caledonian Market story that suggests the limits of the marketplace’s retailing purpose. Merely a month after the Glasgow market opened, Manager Peter Muir began leasing the space for boxing matches and band contests. In the press, references to the market’s original barrow trading function faded away, giving way to sport and

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[85] “Caledonian Market in Glasgow,” *Glasgow Herald*.
[86] Alan McKinlay and James J. Smyth, “The end of the ‘agitator workman’: 1926-1932” in *The ILP on Clydeside 1893-1932,* eds. McKinlay and Morris, 187.
[87] William Knox, *James Maxton* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 102.
[88] Knox, *James Maxton,* 80-81.

entertainment. From its opening, Muir had guaranteed that leisure and shopping would co-mingle at the market: he hired the Glasgow Corporation Gas Band to play at the opening, while Maxton referenced the market's "pleasant form of entertainment and amusement."[89] An economic institution of "the people," Caledonian Market's trajectory was shaped by this group's varied and unpredictable consumer demands. These demands for economic opportunity and for popular leisure should not be seen as diametrically opposed or working against the goals of one another.[90] Rather, the origins, promotion, and evolution of Caledonian Market was an example of petty capitalists shaping the urban environment according to their own consumption behaviors and community interests.

Interwar Life-Writing and the Invoked "Public" at the Market

Retrospective, working-class life writing on interwar communities gives historians another point of entry into the market's "public" resonance for economic and cultural meaning-making. The memoir and autobiography genre that proliferated from the late 1960s on often latched on to the lost "sense of home-place" that had supposedly been demolished with tenements and back-to-backs.[91] While focus on the built environment has often been tied to these residential communities, it should be noted that from the mid-1960s on, the landscape of shopping in British towns and cities altered dramatically, with enclosed centers and out-of-town hypermarkets altering the relationship between consumption and space. While these developments will be explored in further detail later, the context for retrospective life writing is critical: "traditional"

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[89] "Caledonian Market. Historic East End Event," *Glasgow Eastern Standard* 21 May 1932, 7; "Caledonian Market in Glasgow," *Glasgow Herald.*

[90] See Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Leisure, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

[91] Chris Waters, "Autobiography, Nostalgia, and the Changing Practices of Working-Class Selfhood," in *Singular Continuities: Tradition, Nostalgia, and Identity in Modern British Culture,* eds. George Behlmer and Fred Leventhal (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 181.

shopping like markets carried a weight of commercial nostalgia, coming to stand not only for lost or diminished forms of retail, but also the communal practices that had once gathered family and strangers in public space. Retail markets were the affective landscape through which writers understood their changing relationship to family, consumption, and community.

Consider the memoirs of two of Leeds's most famous sons: Richard Hoggart (b. 1918) and Keith Waterhouse (b. 1929). While both Hoggart and Waterhouse are best remembered for their sociological and fictional mid-century writing, each turned to autobiography at the end of the century—Hoggart with *A Local Habitation* (1988) and Waterhouse with *City Lights* (1994). In each of their memoirs, Kirkgate Market anchors the commercial landscape of two childhoods marked by constant crossings between working-class districts to visit friends and family. Of the retail nodes in this working-class grid—which Hoggart labeled, "Woolworth's, the Markets, a favorite pork butcher's, and Lewis's"[92]—the Market was by far the most appealing to children, not fully aware of the decision-making processes in frugal working-class economies. Waterhouse reminisces that he:

> Must have been a tiresome companion for my mother, since our ideas of what constituted the attractions of Town differed. Hers veered towards the cheap clothing stores and cut-price shops; mine, reasoning that one could get all that sort of thing in Hunslet, towards the municipal grandeur of City square, the Majestic news scanner, the Bovril sign and suchlike wonders of the world...But our tastes did converge in our next port of call — a leisurely wander around Kirkgate market, with which I believe she felt almost as close an affinity as I.[93]

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[92] Richard Hoggart, *A Local Habitation* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1988), 33.
[93] Waterhouse, *City Lights: A Street Life* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1994), 34.

The struggles and small luxuries of depression-era shopping are among the most common recollections in interwar memoir and autobiography, as the market's melding of commerce and entertainment structured these mindscapes in which "each made their own city from the other city, according to taste and the lengths of their purses."[94]

The ebbs and flows of working-class consumption—cycling through the pawn shop, investing in club trading, anticipating the Co-op dividend—made market shopping one contingent commercial practice in 1920s and 1930s economic life.[95] Market trading peaked between Friday and Saturday evening, when stallholders could jockey with each other for workers' ready cash after they were paid wages.[96] Elsie Gadsby (b. 1912) of Ilkeston remembered these weekend markets for their "bargaining and spieling," where household goods like kitchen pots and linoleum were sold alongside cut-price candy.[97] Slightly older writers remember markets for the channels they created into "respectable" family life: Richard Heaton (b. 1901) recalled buying the first tea service for his young family at Smithfield Market in Salford.[98] Retail markets—with their second-hand, overstock, or bankrupt firms' supply of goods—were one place where a cross-section of the British working class might access the promise of "new consumerism"; Betty McAllister (b. 1931), Frank Bennett (b?), and Molly Weir (b. 1910) remembered the Barrows in Glasgow's East End as the destination for party dresses, ballet shoes, or an indulgent bottle of perfume.[99] In making a "luxury" purchase at the retail market, working-class consumers gained not only the satisfaction of a new household item, but

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[94] Hoggart, *A Local Habitation,* 34.
[95] See Peter Scott and James Walker, "Working-Class Household Consumption Smoothing in Interwar Britain," *The Journal of Economic History* 72, no 3 (2012): 797-825.
[96] "Leeds Market Trader and Shopping Hours," *World's Fair,* 13 April 1929 24.
[97] Elsie Gadsby, *Black Diamonds Yellow Apples* (Ilkeston: Scollins and Titford, 1978), 16-17.
[98] Richard Heaton, *Salford: My Home Town* (Swinton: Neil Richardson, 1982), 16.
[99] Betty McAllister and Frank Bennett in *Barrapatter: An Oral History of Glasgow's Barrows,* ed. Elspeth King (Glasgow: Friends of the People's Palace, 1983), 10 & 19; Molly Weir, *Molly Weir's Trilogy of Scottish Childhood* (Broxburn: Lomond Books, 1985), 326 & 418.

the sense that they had "bargained" to make it their own. The retail market—unlike the moralism of the Co-op or the efficiency of the multiple store—was one place where transgression was possible, where Elsie Oman (b. 1904) of Salford remembered you could come "in your bare feet and go away in your motor car."[100] In this respect, they functioned along the lines of Simmel's "adventure" that "drops out of the continuity of life," while at the same time representing a node in the everydayness of local, quotidian culture.[101]

In retrospective life-writing that touches on market culture, authors often remember the sellers or "pitchers" of these goods in vivid terms. The age of many postwar memoirists undoubtedly played a role in this focus: memoirs written at this time were most often composed by middle-aged adults remembering the "golden years" of their interwar childhoods, so they might tend to focus on fantastical experiences rather than household economies. Richard Heaton (b. 1901) and Jack Preston (b. 1910) remembered their Salford Markets as spaces where "fun could be had for free," "just walking around and listening to the many and varied stallholders."[102] Likewise, at Leeds Kirkgate Market, Stan Pickles (b. 1913) recollected particularly persuasive arguments or phrases used by the stallholders, those "clever salesmen [who] could hold an audience for ages with their sales patter."[103] Market traders, with their products and productions, became part of a retrospectively constructed civic and communal realm, where life—especially childhood—was lived in public spaces as much as behind the walls of the home.[104]

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[100] Elsie Oman, *Salford Stepping Stones* (Swinton: Neil Richardson, 1983), 3-4.
[101] Georg Simmel, "The Adventurer," in *On Individuality and Social Forms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 190.
[102] Heaton, *Salford: My Home Town,* 16; Jack Preston, *Memoirs of a Salford Lad* (Swinton: Neil Richardson, 1983), 13.
[103] Stan Pickles, *This Was My Life Between the Wars* (Leeds, 2009), 33-34.
[104] Mathew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

In this low-profit, high-turnover, shopping-as-entertainment landscape, markets supported their own retail and consuming "public." Edith Hinson of Stockport (b. 1910) stressed the mutual interest in the relationship between seller and shopkeeper, referring to them as "friends."[105] Each customer had their favorite vendor, yet the reality was that stallholders depended on a wide array of advertising and showman tactics to get shoppers to "part with their money."[106] Practices like the Dutch auction, where the price of goods was dropped until a buyer was found, were common on the market, where perishables needed to be sold before the end of trading.[107] Besides price-dropping by auction, there were other, more subjectively persuasive methods that made retail markets transgressive spaces. Peter Donnelly (b. 1914) of Barrow juxtaposed the "subtle, insidious" honesty of the multiple shopkeeper against the honest lies of the "Orientals who come to market places with rugs and trinkets" because they exaggerate "the quality of their goods and their starving families as an artist tells a story."[108] Donnelly's taxonomy of trust and community was rooted in the different expectations he carried for shopping done "legitimately" in stores and shopping done casually in streets and squares: the former relied on the objective distance of retail capitalism, the latter, on the intimacy of street theater. Similarly, Thomas Callaghan (b. 1924) of Newcastle remembered exaggeration and storytelling as a key component of his aunt's stall at Newcastle's Saturday Market. Callaghan's aunt served a steady clientele of foreign seaman who came to Newcastle to replenish their

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[105] Richard Heaton likewise stressed the friendly transactional relationship between buyer and seller: one clothes seller (Abe Sacks) would give you a suit, shoes, shirt and socks for a pound, then gives you a shilling back to have a drink on him. Heaton, *Salford,* 17.
[106] Edith Hinson, *Mary Ann's Girl: Memories of Newbridge Lane* (Stockport: Metropolitan Borough of Stockport, 1984), 23; Gadsby, *Black Diamonds,* 16.
[107] Hinson, *Mary Ann's Girl,* 23-24; Thomas Callaghan, *A Lang Way to the Pawnshop* (Newcastle: Zymurgy Publishing, 2001), 4; Hoggart, *A Local Habitation,* 107; Pickles, *This Was My Life Between the Wars,* 34; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 30 April 1932, 21; "That 'Late Saturday Night' Shopping Habit," *World's Fair,* 11 July 1936, 25; "Lines from Leeds," *World's Fair,* 6 November 1926, 15.
[108] Peter Donnelly, *The Yellow Rock* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1950), 102-103.

wardrobe from her second-hand stock. When bargaining with these outsiders, Callaghan remembered his aunt's brazen boasts about dress coats previously belonging to an ex-Lord Mayor of the city, made by one of "the most expensive tailors in Britain."[109] Men and women like Callaghan's aunt depended not only on a steady supply of second-hand or cut-price goods that appealed to their working-class customers, but also on their rhetorical dexterity. Market traders were trafficking not only in goods, but also in affective persuasion.

The importance of self-fashioning a "pitch" to the public was not lost on the market trade press in the 1920s and 1930s: The *World's Fair* is littered with editorials, letters, and feature articles about the phenomenon of selling oneself alongside one's consumer goods. Again, market trading's origins in, and continuing overlap with, fair culture is critical here: *The World's Fair* was not the domain of butcher or grocer stallholders, but increasingly catered to traveling salesman who worked in new durables lines like toys, ready-to-wear clothing, home goods, and even the older traditions of fortunetelling. The *World's Fair* brought these traders' brands to their readership, following the exploits of vendors like "Morna the Gentleman Maori." Columnists urged their readers to "notice [Morna's] method in contrast to your own." As both "salesman and philosopher," Morna used his life story—military service in Gallipoli, a career of travel across Britain, America, and the Continent—to simultaneously assure and transport his audience. Morna was only one in a cohort of foreign-born traders whose circuit around the Britain attracted the interest of the *World's Fair*: columnist "Semi-Detached" regularly detailed the circuits and spiels of traders like "Essadi the Arabian," "Ahmed, An Eastern Gentleman," and "Sam the Coloured Crocus," men who traveled extensively and brought the promise of exotic goods or mystic

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[109] Callaghan, *A Lang Way to the Pawnshop,* 99-100 & 106-107.

powers to the corners of provincial Britain.[110] In a business where singular personality mattered as much as your chosen goods, the market was a "cosmopolitan little world standing on about two acres [where] everyone is fighting hard for an existence."[111] In adopting these explicitly foreign performance identities, characters who often reified ideas about exotic, eastern spiritualism, non-white traders were both leveraging their pitch against white competitors and establishing commercial trust through their own limited avenue: authenticity.[112] The way for non-white, traveling marketers to establish trust with their audience was to adopt an exotic persona far outside the local shopping public's realm of knowledge.

The focus on exoticism and showmanship in the market business runs the risk of flattening the vendors into their performative selves. Accounts written by traders, especially ethnic and racial minority traders, are very rare, but there are a select few from the interwar period that help contextualize the world of "patter" described by shoppers and the trade press. For example, *Cheapjack* (1934) was a first-hand account of gypsy life along the traveling fairs and market route, as related told by a failed-student-turned-spieler Philip Allingham, who tenuously "passed" as part of this ethnic minority community. *Bengal to Birmingham* (1967) is a retrospective telling of Faizur Rasul's journey from the Calcutta bazaar to the street markets of Britain in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Each of these memoirists would characterize themselves as "grafter," one who worked a line or gimmick at a fair or a market, where there was a permeable boundary between selling a story and selling a good. Each, for example, started out

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[110] Semi-Detached, "Pitchers," *World's Fair,* 3 March 1934, 23; Semi-Detached, "An Enjoyable Weekend in Glasgow," *World's Fair,* 21 April 1934, 25; Semi-Detached, "Old Pals Meet in Glasgow," *World's Fair,* 28 April 1934, 29.

[111] "A Visit to Birmingham's Rag Market," *World's Fair,* 29 January 1938, 28.

[112] LaShawn Harris, *Sex Workers, Psychics, and Number Runners: Black Women in New York City's Underground Economy* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 100-101; Sumita Mukherjee, "The Reception given to Sadhu Sundar Singh, the itinerant Indian Christian 'Mystic', in Interwar Britain," *Immigrants and Minorities* 35, no. 1 (2017), 21-39.

in the future-telling business in the London street markets. However, due to the capital's saturation in this field, both Rasul and Allingham sought new pastures to stay afloat, the former honing his "Eastern" persona in provincial locales where he was greeted as a novelty, the latter switching to demonstrating and selling a hair "waver" machine for household purchase.

Each showmen in their own capacities, Allingham and Rasul embodied features of the market trader that endeared them to local shopping publics across Britain: the excitement of a "fresh" pitch and the exoticism of the fetishized Other. Mica Nava has explored the department store as one commercial site that essentialized and normalized ethnic and racial difference in the first decades of twentieth-century Britain,[113] but it is worthwhile to remember how these affinities moved and acted in other corners of British economic and cultural life—in the case of Rasul, *away* from London and into market towns and provincial cities. For example, Rasul recounted how he was told by an East End shopkeeper to move on to provincial markets and "put a turban on, dress funny and look Eastern, and make a row in the market to get a crowd, and then pick the plums," advice the fortune teller takes when he moves first to Nottingham, then to Leeds, and then on a provincial circuit in search of new audiences and new profits.[114] In Rasul's words, "People thought my trade was illegal, and therefore attractive, and I kept up the impression."[115] Rasul's memories of being the market newcomer echoes Peter Donnelly's characterization of "Oriental" traders and market trade journalism about the figure of the "Coloured Worker"[116]: the consuming public craved an outsider and was willing to be carried away by fantastical stories and liminal status.

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[113] Mica Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture, and the Normalisation of Difference* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 37.
[114] Faizur Rasul, *Bengal to Birmingham* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1967), 179, 182 & 184.
[115] Rasul, *Bengal to Birmingham,* 177-178.
[116] J.S. Fisher, "Etiquette on the Road: More Hints to a Beginner. The Coloured Worker," *World's Fair,* 11 April 1936, 22.

Allingham faced a different, although inter-related, challenge in his journey through Britain's markets: instead of accentuating his ethnic difference from competing traders, Allingham fed on the "newness" of each fresh crowd he encountered in his professional life. This was a mode of self-preservation: he had to move between towns and cities at such a rate that those who knew him as a fortune teller would not recognize him as a hair waver demonstrator or door-to-door salesman; for, "to make money on the markets you must keep on the move the whole time. It's the fresh face that does it."[117] Allingham's chosen line—a hair waving machine—speaks to the aspirational quality of certain retail market goods, remembered in the aforementioned memoirs of Heaton, McAllister, Bennett, and Weir. Peripatetic market trader's murky supply lines and low-overheads brought "luxury" goods within the realm of possibility for some of Britain's most deprived communities, serving an analogous function to the door-to-door salesman (an increasingly visible presence in interwar Britain).[118] Just as the traveling salesman depended on the one-off "transactional" sale of expensive durable goods, Allingham depended on the "freshness" of his pitch and the attractiveness of his goods to endear him to countless market publics through provincial Britain.

If not a paradox, then one tension in the modality of the interwar retail market was between the intrinsic "mobility" of its vendors with the institution's rooted place at the "heart" of community life. The market authorities and boosters discussed in the previous section focused their political pressure on the tangible civic value of the market: market activity was presented as a benefit to council rates, working-class economies, and petty capitalist entrepreneurship. Yet, the shoppers and traders who used retail markets on a day-to-day basis did so not from this

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[117] Philip Allingham, *Cheapjack* (London: Golden Duck, 1934), 189 & 257-8.
[118] Peter Scott, "Managing Door-to-Door Sales of Vacuum Cleaners in Interwar Britain," *The Business History Review* 82, no. 4 (2008), 761-788.

ideological belief that "publicness" was tied to civic investment, but rather that to be part of the market "public" was to be part of an unfixed community.

J.B. Priestley and the Political Culture of the "People's Market"

J.B. Priestley's prolific output in the 1930s makes him a both a popular subject and useful prism for literary and cultural historians alike, each interested in the ways in which the nation was evoked and represented amidst the changing landscape of mass culture. While some scholars take a more skeptical view of Priestley's nostalgia for pre-1914 England as an adequate frame for interrogating the contours of interwar working-class culture, others see the author's retreat from class as the key instrument in the transformation of a mythical, cross-historical English "people."[119] Each of these approaches positions Priestley *against* the social and cultural norms of the age: as a socialist, he did not ascribe to the Marxist language of class, and as a writer, he railed against the condescension of modernists who saw his themes and subjects as "middlebrow." Priestley is thus out-of-sync with the 1930s, being neither sufficiently political nor suitably literary. I argue, however, that seeing Priestley as an anachronistic outsider undermines the contemporary politics of his work: Priestley's writings were not merely nostalgic yearnings for a pre-1914 England; they reflected and refracted the collective potential of what we would now recognize as anti-privatization and the defense of public institutions.

For Priestley, the English landscape—both its built and natural forms—held pride of place as a marker of belonging across timescapes. Priestley's often-quoted "Three Englands" passage from *English Journey* (1934) has become a shorthand mode of describing his uneasiness

[119] Chris Waters, "J.B. Priestley: Englishness and the politics of nostalgia," in *After the Victorians: Private Conscience and Public Duty in Modern Britain*, eds. Susan Pedersen and Peter Mandler (London: Routledge, 1994), 216; Baxendale, *Priestley's England*, 41.

with the pace of change and fracturing of timescapes in the country: the Englands of "cathedrals and manor houses," "Gothic churches and Mechanics' Institutes," and "giant cinemas and Woolworths."[120] This patchwork vision of England's cultural landscape might capture anxieties around mass culture and the "Americanization" of the nation, but by using this passage to stand for Priestley's "narrative of England," we lose perspective on the day-to-day work that Priestley's subjects undertake to make "pre-industrial" or "industrial" England *speak* to the realities of post-1918 England; Priestley used the emplaced nature of association life to actively construct, not just laud, this social form's opposition to mass culture.

Priestley often uses the local retail market as a generative site of association and sociability in his fictional and non-fictional works. Consider Priestley's real and hypothetical returns to his beloved Kirkgate Market in Bradford, recounted in *English Journey*. In Bradford, Priestley's relationship to the market was defined by childhood memories and unwritten local codes: the stalls of the 1930s were owned by the same vendors "since he [could] remember."[121] He forgives aggressive stallkeeper behavior simply as the action "we use with one another in Bradford."[122] Ultimately, Priestley represents Kirkgate Market as a bridge figure between the sociability he idealized in his childhood and the retail landscape of contemporary provincial Britain:

> I think that if I had a shop in Bradford, I should insist upon its being in the market, where they all know one another and are always having cups of tea. You see Funeral Wreaths hobnobbing in a genteel fashion with Cheap Biscuits, Dress

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[120] For works that use this quote to speak to the "newness" of the age, see Winship, "Culture of Restraint," 17; Rycroft and Jenness, "JB Priestley: Bradford and a provincial narrative of England, 1913-1933," 958; Ben Clarke, "Orwell and Englishness," *The Review of English Studies* 57, no. 228 (2006), 92; Juliet Gardiner, "'Searching for the Gleam': Finding Solutions to the Political and Social Problems of 1930s Britain," *History Workshop Journal* 72, no. 1 (2011), 107.
[121] J.B. Priestley, *English Journey* (Bradford: Great Northern, 2009), 175.
[122] Priestley, *English Journey,* 175.

> Goods and Fents listening to the troubles of Toffee and Humbugs, Ladies' Shoes smiling over the teapot at Scarves and Jumpers. I might do worse, when I am old and out of fashion and bankrupt of ideas, a faded scribbler, than return to my own town and take a bookstall in the Market, there to smoke my pipe, have my cup of tea like the rest, and lend a benevolent ear to the confidences of the girls in the Sheet Music and the Cut-Price Grocery lines. I should be snug all day under that great roof, could stare at the bright little pageant of humble commerce, could eat frugally in the neighbouring pews, and when I died there might easily come my way a free Funeral Wreath, only a trifle damaged.[123]

The marketplace is, above all else, a varied world on not only goods, but of people. Priestley focuses on the same metonymic market qualities that Rasul and other itinerant traders embodied: in this space, the vendor as much as the good was on offer. This is the world of commerce and sociability where the elderly Priestley, with his old-fashioned bookstall, can trade alongside the shopgirls peddling the cheap new consumer goods of the age. It is no coincidence that "girls" peddle the durables and foodstuffs of a new mass culture; cultural historian Chris Waters has noted that Priestley saw women as the "conduit" for new trends and products that "infect" local communities.[124] This physical mixing of Priestly, "out of fashion" and "bankrupt of ideas," with the feminine harbingers of a new age, nevertheless, sustains Kirkgate's eclectic charm. In this "little pageant of humble commerce," retail capitalism and the turning of profits does not structure the market; sociability, rather, defines the market "public" and their proffered goods.

Priestley's interest in market culture extended beyond his travel writing; this trope also undergirded his characters and plot points in multiple works of fiction. Two lesser known works,

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[123] Priestley, *English Journey,* 176.
[124] Waters, "Priestley, Englishness and the politics of nostalgia," 212-213.

the 1935 Gracie Fields film *Look Up and Laugh* and the 1939 BBC radio serial/novel *Let the People Sing*, fixated on the politics of "the public" as it moved through and shaped local retail markets. In each of these works, Priestley used the very ownership and authority at the market to tease out the power of "the people" to defend the public good from local government and big business interests. Markets—as nodes of intersecting social and commercial networks—gathered a mix of local insiders and traveling outsiders who spoke with the voice *of* "the public" rather than *for* the public.

When *Let the People Sing* was commissioned by the BBC, its billing heralded the populist subject material of the work itself: advertised as the "first" novel to be serialized for radio, its broadcast in the summer and fall of 1939 fell during the outbreak of the Second World War. It was labeled a novel "about the England of today," with Priestley himself calling the story a "cross-section of the English people at the present time."[125] The narrative relies on some of Priestley's familiar tropes, namely an out-of-work, slightly out-of-step with the times character, Timmy Tiverton, who sets off on the road to find opportunity and adventure. Along the way, he meets his companions, almost caricatures in their "contemporary" legibility: the brash and bold "new" woman, Hope Ollerton, and the wise but frightened immigrant, Professor Kronak.

Tiverton, a struggling music hall performer, eventually leads the group to the fictional East Midlands town of Dunbury. The novel's key plot point revolves around a public space at the heart of this community: the two-hundred-year-old market hall that was gifted to the Dunbury citizens by the Foxfield family, the local lords of the manor. Traditionally used as a music venue for local artists, the hall is now under threat from two sources. The first is from United Plastics, an American company whose branch in Dunbury has now become a main employer in the area.

[125] *The Times,* 5 July 1939, 4; *The Daily Mail,* 5 July 1939, 98.

United Plastics wishes to turn to the hall into a showroom for their goods. The second is from the patrician classes who dominate Dunbury Council, who think the town would be better served with the market hall used as a museum celebrating the town's "ancient" character, a motive that Priestley directly relates to the nouveau industrial image wrought by United Plastics.[126]

Two of Tiverton's companions—the spunky Hope and her traveling auctioneer uncle Mr. Hassock—have traveled to Dunbury expressly to sell cheap goods and entertain the audience gathered at the town's commercial core. Hassock believes in the populist appeal of his profession: he sells "genuine stuff, better value for money than anything you'll find in shops. But where I can beat the shops is that I get my customers all together and in a good temper, and there's a bit of competition." Echoing the remembered tactics of traders and shoppers explored in the previous section, Hassock boasts to "give 'em a bit of a free show, get 'em laughing and singing, and then when they're all in a good humor I sell 'em my goods."[127] Yet when the band of companions arrive in Dunbury, they discover that in the midst of the battle between United Plastics and Dunbury Council, the license for music and entertainment at the Market Hall—where they have rented space for their business—has been revoked. Priestley uses this mundane detail of municipal bureaucracy to set up the comedic paradox: can Hassock and Hope Ollerton carry on their business and evade prosecution without "entertaining"?

Let the People Sing was not Priestley's first work to use the marketplace as a key institution of resilient publicness in provincial England. Four years earlier, he pursued similar themes in the Gracie Fields vehicle *Look Up and Laugh.* This 1935 film kept the team that had created the well-received, commercially successful *Sing As We Go* only a year earlier: Priestley

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[126] J.B. Priestley, *Let the People Sing* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1940), 100-101.
[127] Priestley, *Let the People Sing,* 80-82. In fact, one of Priestley's characters in *The Good Companions* (1929) references *The World's Fair* as "our paper," confirming that the author was at least cognizant of the periodical and its role in peripatetic trading circles.

as screenwriter, Fields as star, and Basil Dean as director. In its plotting, *Look Up and Laugh* relied on *Sing As We Go*'s northern "local culture in crisis" mode of storytelling: an occupational or financial disruption sets Gracie on an unexpected path, replete with colorful characters and comedic mishaps. In the case of *Look Up and Laugh,* Fields plays Gracie Pearson, a thinly veiled version of her singer/comedian self. The film opens with Gracie, fresh from a traveling musical revenue, returning to her native Plumborough. However, this triumphant return is dampened almost immediately: her brother is in arrears with the moneylender, while her father—the longest-serving trader in Plumborough's covered market—has suffered a stroke caused by the shocking news that Plumborough Council may close the market after the surreptitious lobbying of local department store magnate, Mr. Belfer. Priestley uses many of the same themes and tropes to characterize Plumborough Market as he did to describe Bradford's Kirkgate Market in *English Journey* (written only a year earlier): each had the economic and affective capacity to support "old" and "new" trades in the interwar period, as well as the comradery of veteran and younger stallholders. The "humbleness" of market commerce all subtly elided a self-sufficient world of affordable, practical goods.

In the film, Gracie Pearson is the bridge character between a world of "mass" culture threatening the rhythms of Plumborough life, and the "traditional" culture that sustains the social and economic ties of the community. Pearson's campaigning is built on the idea that stallholders need to sell the *idea* of the market as much as the goods – a rationale that can be traced to the words Jimmy Maxton used to discuss the opening of Glasgow's Caledonian market or NMTF strategies to compete against department stores. In both *Look Up and Laugh* and *Let the People Sing,* it is a young woman—Pearson or Hope Ollerton—who take on the mantle of "disrupting" the complacency of the town and the power blocs who control their public space. While Priestley

is rightly criticized for equating the "Americanization" of English working-class culture with the feminization of a decidedly masculine tradition, the women in these works serve the vital role of transforming the habits and spaces of buying and selling into political battlegrounds.

Each of these young women argues that enemies of "the people" attempt to speak *for* the public, rather than letting the public speak for itself. In the unholy alliance of capital (represented by either Belfer or United Plastics) and local government (in Plumborough and Dunbury Council), the "people's market" recedes as a space of exchange and debate. At the mid-way climax in *Let the People Sing,* Hope serendipitously finds herself in the same building where a secret meeting of the Dunbury Museum Committee—led by the local aristocracy and their allies—is discussing the need to turn the market hall into museum. "The townspeople have shown themselves unfit to use it properly," the committee declares; "A museum will show the people what those traditions are. It will prove a bulwark against dangerous tendencies."[128] Hope, hidden to the members of the meeting, must be silent as the attendees speak for the morals and characters of Dunbury's residents and how to "better" them through controlling public space. Gracie Pearson, on the other hand, is vocal and visible when she and a deputation of market traders lodge their petition at a Plumborough Council meeting. Gracie's adversary in all matters is Belfer, who has set his sights on destroying the market. At the meeting, Priestley depicts an inept and inert Council in the pocket of Belfer, whose arguments about the market's utility ("We say the market's out of date! The building's old fashioned! Does not comply with the new regulations against fire!") echo the juxtaposition of tangible "use" and intangible "value" that colored the Nottingham Market controversy in 1927. Both Gracie's and Hope's parting words to the Committees underscore the democratic void at the core of their supposed town

[128] Priestley, *Let the People Sing,* 169.

"improvement" schemes. Hope tells Dunbury's leaders, "don't think you'll collar that [Market] Hall," because she will "wake people up here."[129] Similarly, Gracie reminds Plumborough Council that "the town should be run for the people, not for Belfer's stores... You don't realize what this means to the people of the market, you're rich and they're not." The market's value, in this case, exceeds the price of its land or the total profit of its stalls; it is a communal refuge from the forces of heavy-handed bureaucracy and expanding retail outlets.

Hope's call to "Let the People Sing" and Gracie's refrain of "Up the Market" were ultimately enacted in the climax of each Priestley work: the improvised Saturday Market auction sale in Dunbury and the barricade and siege of the Market in Plumborough. In Dunbury, Hope and Tommy spur on a popular uprising of Dunbury's awoken citizens who have gathered for Saturday market day. Hope addresses the crowd gathered in the Little Market Hall, urging the market shoppers gathered to

> Buy some of our things. First, for the principle of the thing. We came here to do business, and we're not going to be diddled or bullied out of it...We're not millionaires, we have all this stuff here, and my uncle has a contract to take so much stuff every few weeks, so we can't afford to take it all away with us... I'll let you have everything at cost price, less than you'd get it in any shop. Honestly I will.[130]

In lieu of a standard entertainment pitch, Hope makes an appeal to the hearts and pockets of Dunbury's gathered shoppers: Hassock and his team share with the people of Dunbury a fundamental belief in the "bargain" and its mutual benefit for humble buyer and humble seller alike. In a frenetic auction, Hope and Tommy sell "two dozen gents' shirts, three dozen gents'

[129] Priestley, *Let the People Sing*, 180.
[130] Priestley, *Let the People Sing,* 229-230.

ties, ten dressing-gowns, four dozen pairs of silk stocks, and eight imitation pearl necklaces," along with "the very best bargain [Hassock] had this year": stainless steel cutlery from Sheffield which came to "them as a bargain, and they're coming to you as a bargain."[131]

The crowd gathered in *Look Up and Laugh* is comprised not of market shoppers, but market traders; after the Council finally gives stallholders notice to quit, Pearson calls for all involved to barricade themselves inside the Hall until their demands are met. This action was not only a classic Priestley "populist resistance" set piece, but also a nod to the belief that the market was self-sufficient; any good you would need could be found under its roof. In a humorous twist, Pearson becomes the market community's *de facto* mayor during their siege, fielding complaints and questions from the band of booksellers, watchmakers, flower vendors, grocers, and sheet music vendors. In the face of local government and Belfer's accusations that the market is outdated and serves no function, the siege becomes a vehicle for market stallholders to assert their commercial and political viability. At both Dunbury and Plumborough Markets, sellers and shoppers used the bonds of low-cost, informal retailing to expose the immoral aims of bureaucrats and capitalists.

Did British audiences recognize Priestley's market tropes as trenchant political statements? Could stories of local resolve reflect the dynamics of 1930s political culture? The character-driven "traditionalism" of market culture was, in fact, the major contemporary critique of *Look Up and Laugh*. Critics from middle-class, metropolitan newspapers and magazines found the film to be "richly plebian," with "strong flavor of liberty, of equality, and what is even more remarkable, of fraternity," marked by "pleasant local flavour" and a "genuinely provincial plot."[132] These positive reactions spoke both to Fields' and Priestley's strong identification with

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[131] Priestley, *Let the People Sing,* 230-231.
[132] *The Times,* 5 August 1935, 8; Graham Greene, *The Spectator,* 9 August 1935, 222.

the north, as well as to the market setting's ability to focus the sociability in a recognizable place. Where the film fell afoul, however, was in the story-telling and characterizations: remarking "not one of J.B. Priestley's brightest efforts," viewers and reviewers found the plot relied on "none too original slapstick" and "over-devised situations."[133] The market traders themselves, those "genuinely provincial" characters, were nevertheless "absurdly native" in their rendering.[134] This was despite the fact that *Look Up and Laugh*'s production team scoured northern markets to cast real tenants as extras in the film, trying to recreate Yorkshire authenticity in an Ealing studio.[135] Despite the verisimilitude of Field's persona and Priestley's script, one provincial paper still sought "a little less realism in the scenic effects" and "a little more realism in the various characters," ultimately judging the film to be "sound, profit-making, slapstick, stuff for low-brows."[136] The masking of real material struggles over property and capital behind musical interludes and comedic play, however, played to the desires of provincial, working-class audiences in the 1930s: Jeffrey Richards has found that "intellectuals" often took issue with the lack of social realism or radical solutions in Gracie Fields films, while audience members in "Worktown" (Bolton, Lancashire), overwhelming did not want to see subjects like themselves on the screen, preferring American films or musical romances.[137] Thus, while *Look Up and Laugh* had a strong sense of place (those "scenic effects"), it was the rendering of the plot and characters where *Look Up and Laugh* lost its way: reviewers believed that Priestley's and Dean's attempts to draw a distinction between the artificiality of consumerist retail and the authenticity

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[133] "Look Up and Laugh," *Kinematograph Weekly,* 4 July 1935, 22; "Look Up and Laugh," *Picturegoer Weekly,* 5 October 1935, 36; "Letters from our Readers - Miss S. Plummer," *Picturegoer Weekly,* 24 August 1935, 30.
[134] *The Times,* 5 August 1935, 8.
[135] "Search for Market 'Types.' Mr. J.R. Gregson Finishes a Harassing Task," *The Yorkshire Evening Post,* 16 March 1935, 9.
[136] "Gracie Fields' New Film. Northern Interest in 'Look Up and Laugh,'" *The Yorkshire Post*, 27 June 1935, 5.
[137] Jeffrey Richards, "Cinemagoing in Worktown: regional film audiences in 1930s Britain," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 14, no. 2 (1994), 152 & 164.

of community markets were undermined by the farcical elements of this dichotomy, in addition to the very medium itself—a mass cultural, "low-brow" object.

Similar plot and character critiques would reappear in the reviews of *Let the People Sing.* The literary establishment labeled the radio novel an "ill-composed story" and a "frail little parable" whose suggested significance was "pompous" and whose jokes had only the "northern virtue of plainness and bluntness."[138] The world of the market, richly reflected not only in Priestley's non-fiction travel writing, but also in the memoirs and autobiographies of interwar writers, was a setting uneasily translated into cinema: visceral and exciting in the eyes of participants and observers, it veered too far into the carnivalesque for the general public to accept it as a set piece for provincial social commentary.

What Priestley does capture, however, is a micro-setting of England that is as transient as it is stable, as dependent on brashness and advertising as it on subsistence shopping and bargain seeking. In Priestley's world—like the world celebrated by Nottingham market tenants or by Glasgow's East End barrow traders—markets sustained their own "publics" on sentiment and subsistence. Priestley evoked this "structure of feeling" around community, consumption, and cultural change through both non-fiction and fiction, posing the retail market as a residual cultural form.[139] Dunbury and Plumborough Markets were the resilient domain of "the people," emplacing this group's social and economic needs, even as the local state and retail capitalists attempted dislocate their businesses and speak in their name.

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[138] Graham Greene, *The Spectator,* 10 November 1939, 662; Anthony West, *The New Statesman,* 11 November 1939, 684. Graham Greene partially rescinded his unfavorable review of *Let the People Sing* after Dunkirk, when he remarked that Priestley's besieged but plucky England of *The Good Companions* and *Let the People Sing* bore semblance to the wartime nation's resolve. Graham Greene, *The Spectator,* 13 December 1940, 646.
[139] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 133-134.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that retail markets supported a number of publics in interwar Britain. Whether in the pages *The World's Fair*, in the pages of childhood and working-class memoirs, or in the pages of popular literature, retail markets were a space of exchange and community, anchoring the diverse ways in which shoppers and sellers engaged with different scales of consumption and consumerism in 1920s and 1930s Britain. There was a constancy to market life that tempered the time period's economic volatility. This constancy, however, should not be taken as conservatism. In the market square of Nottingham, the opening of Caledonian Market, and amongst the stalls of fictional Plumborough, markets encouraged a critique of interwar retail capitalism, in particular what was perceived to be the un-democratic partnership of the state and big business interests. On one hand, the populist rhetoric of these campaigns—real and fictional—transformed markets into a stand-in for the openness of urban life in interwar Britain. On the other hand, this defense of localism against the forces of disconnected, self-serving economic actors ran the risk of foreclosing the "public" that the market served, rendering its provincialism more xenophobic and anti-Semitic than anti-big business. The next chapter will look at this darker side of "people's markets" in interwar and mid-century Britain, focusing on the stakes of equating "local" with "English" in an era of rising anxiety around the bounds of these terms and geographies.

Chapter 2: When is a Market a "Black Market"?
Debating Opportunism and Belonging in Mid-Century Retail Cultures

Introduction

1949 was a year of contrasts for Braintree, Essex. An air of pomp and ceremony hung over the town as it celebrated the 750th anniversary of its market charter, nominally seen as the foundation of the community. In June of that year, the charter was feted at the Town Hall and viewed by visitors from the American town of Braintree, Massachusetts, who relished the bustle and goods on sale in their British counterpart's traditional open-air market.[1] Dampening this celebration of Braintree's history, however, was the fear that still loomed over countless British towns and cities in the late 1940s: the black market. For Braintree, this idea occupied a physical space. For two years, the local press had fixated on the street trading at the town's market square as ground zero of illicit buying and selling in post-war Essex. In their words, the "Charter Market, founded by King John at Braintree, not only put Braintree on the map in the business sense, but has also provided a source of almost continuous controversy."[2] Fueling this press coverage was the Braintree and Bocking Chamber of Commerce, who hounded Braintree Council to crack down on those street market traders selling goods either above their maximum prices or without asking for the necessary ration coupons.[3] All too common were the sights of "older women making their way to those stalls which they trust will supply them with towels, aprons, and sheets free of

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[1] AM Silcox, "Americans enjoyed the market stalls," *The Newsman Herald* 24 June 1949, 3.
[2] "'Black market' Trading Report Will Be Ignored," *The Newsman Herald* 22 August 1947, 2.
[3] Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO) D/UBb M1/3. Minutes of the Braintree and Bocking Urban District Council, 6 May 1947 and 12 August 1947, 362 & 392.

coupons," or the younger residents of the district gravitating towards the stallholders who would "dress them like princesses" without the forfeit of coupons.[4]

The salesmen who promised these Essex girls a touch of luxury in the late 1940s were men like Harry Hersham, resident of Southgate Road, Islington; Hersham was fined £15 in October 1948 for supplying a lady's dress without coupons at Braintree Market in July of that year. Or, perhaps the Chamber of Commerce was worried about Samuel Lee from Benedict Road, Brixton, whose similar offense warranted a £20 fine.[5] The provenance of these traders mattered: they came from the London street trading heartlands where the fast-talking "spiv" dominated retail and consumption culture. In the eyes of Braintree and Bocking Chamber of Commerce, these traders' external relationship to Braintree was part and parcel of their danger. Traders came to the town to "cheat people as much as they can," and it was the Council's duty to protect both local ratepayers (as consumers), and local shopkeepers (as competitors). Ultimately, the Chamber of Commerce dealt with these "spivs and drones" through the mechanisms of the market economy: they urged the Council set up two-tiers of stall rental rates, with the rent for non-residents so prohibitively high that it would force interlopers out of Braintree. The Council acquiesced, and in April 1949, the stall charges for a non-resident of Braintree were raised by 50%, while the rate for locals remained unchanged.[6]

The danger of the "spiv" in Britain's wartime and post-war economy is a familiar trope for mid-century historians.[7] The spiv's sartorial, linguistic, and commercial distinction has attracted research ranging from gender and consumption history, film studies, and, perhaps most

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[4] "No Coupon Racket in Braintree Market," *Chelmsford Chronicle,* 7 May 1948, 1.
[5] "Dresses Without Coupons," *Chelmsford Chronicle,* 8 October 1948, 1.
[6] "Non-Braintree man? Then your market stall will cost 50% more," *Chelsmford Chronicle* 8 April 1949, 5.
[7] David Hughes, "The Spivs", in *Age of Austerity,* eds. Michael Sissons and Philip French (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963); Richard Hornsey, *The Spiv and the Architect: Unruly Life in Postwar London* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 17-22; Donald Thomas, *The Enemy Within: Hucksters, Racketeers, Deserters, and Civilians During the Second World War* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 355-357.

commonly, crime history, since "for many people, the spiv was the black market."[8] The spiv allowed Britons to externalize illegal dealings under ration conditions, compartmentalizing them in one figure visibly "outside" the norms of society. While contemporary Britons used spiv to project and contain individual "others" in the wartime and post-war economy, social historians have reconsidered exactly how external the black market was to Britons' everyday lives. David Knayston and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska have argued that the circumvention of rationing legislation (coupon books, maximum prices, distinctions between utility and non-utility goods, etc.) was not solely the domain of the spiv, but was endemic to British society during the war and post-war years.[9] Knayston's and Zweiniger-Bargielowska's dissections of opinion polls, Mass Observation studies, the popular press, and administrative records dovetail with the work of Angus Calder and Sonya Rose, each of whom disrupts the homogenous narrative of British solidarity and resolve in the face of wartime crisis.[10] Calder and Rose argue that the Second World War was not a moment of "collective" identity, but rather a period when national belonging was drawn along lines of class, gender, race and ethnicity, and region. For historians of the Second World War, the black market was one set of relationships—both interpersonal and economic—in which individuals assessed their particular "needs" and "suffering" irrespective of collective desperation, making it a rich nexus of subjective citizenship formation.

Mark Roodhouse's scholarship on the British black market has pushed the field in new directions in recent years.[11] Roodhouse's research complements recent scholarship on the bounds

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[8] Thomas, *The Enemy Within,* 356.
[9] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 201-202; David Knayston, *Austerity Britain: 1945-1951* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 111.
[10] Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: J. Cape, 1991); Sonya Rose, *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[11] See Mark Roodhouse, "Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain" in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars,* eds. Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 243-265; Mark Roodhouse, "In Racket Town: Gangster Chic in Austerity Britain, 1939-1953," *Historical Journal of*

of illegal trade in wartime and post-war continental Europe, where German black markets—in Berlin, in particular—serve as complex loci for debates around trauma, urban rebuilding, and periods of economic exceptionalism.[12] By engaging with the moral, quotidian valences of the German scholarship while incorporating British research on wartime citizenship and subjectivity, Roodhouse makes the case that the rhetorical appeal of "fairness" helps historians understand how the black market operated *outside* its administrative and legal framework. The black market was an imagined ledger wherein citizens measured their capacity for deprivation and negotiated decisions about who "deserved" goods and resources under ration conditions. As the wartime consumption motto of "fair shares for all" dovetailed with older ideas about the British national habit of "fair play," retailers and consumers alike were expected to put aside private avarice in pursuit of the public good, a tenet of retail market culture that was explored in the previous chapter.[13]

This chapter spatializes the relationships and stakes of this wartime desperation and uneven sacrifice, asking what physical form the black market took across British towns and cities, and how a focus on *place* opens up new vantage points from which to explore the limits of fairness, trust, and civicness in retail markets before and after the war. The memory of the Blitz and the metropolitan connotations of spiv culture have largely focused illegality in London, but as the events in Braintree suggest, the danger of the black market extended far beyond the capital. In these spaces, where there was often only one market and it was cast as antithetical to

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Film, Radio and Television 31, no. 4 (2011): 541-559; Mark Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[12] Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Laura J. Hilton, "The Black Market in History and Memory: German Perceptions of Victimhood from 1945-1948," *German History* 28, 4 (2010), 479-497; Malte Zierenberg, *Berlin's Black Market: 1939-1950* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Rolf Schroeder, "The Tausch-centers of the 1940s: closed markets as an alternative to the black economy," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 7, no. 3 (2015), 330-355.

[13] On "fair shares" and "fair play," see Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain,* 126-127; Peter Mandler, *The English National Character* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 174.

the civic values upheld by the local Chamber of Commerce or the Chamber of Trade, the externality of traders threatened the very basis of local economic belonging. As I argued in the previous chapter, the publicly owned retail market was a vital space for forging a sense of civicness in opposition to the interests of large firms, the Co-operative movement, and exclusionary shopkeepers. The flipside of this "belonging," however, were initiatives like those of Braintree and Bocking Chamber of Commerce, who petitioned their local council to institute a two-tier rental system for "Braintree" and "non-Braintree" traders; their concern rooted in the belief that the open-air market was dangerously public, and that civic bodies should take a role in reasserting the boundary between economic "local" and economic "outsider."

The ubiquity of the retail market as a local economic hub prompts the second goal of this chapter: to stretch the anxieties and stereotypes of the "black market" back to the interwar period, linking the anti-free trade movement of the 1920s with the highly regulated retailing and distribution of the war and postwar years. Frank Trentmann has already championed this approach in service of trans-1945 histories of consumerism and consumer politics, and this chapter uses a similar framework for the politics of retailers.[14] By taking the "black market" out of its wartime parlance and thinking of it as a physical space across the second quarter of the twentieth century, we can see how the war aggravated, rather than created, the specter of the trading "outsider," anathema to local economic culture.

Again, historical scholarship on continental Europe provides some models for thinking through retail markets' central visibility in urban space as a feature that simultaneously incorporated and delineated economic strangers. In their recent studies of 1920s and 1930s Berlin and Paris, Claire Zalc and Molly Loberg both foreground what Zalc labels "urban

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[14] Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 229.

representations of alterity," from Parisian ethnic shop signage to Berlin neighborhoods where itinerant hawkers were labeled "foreigners" or "Jews immigrants from the East."[15] Using methods of visual culture and urban geography, both Zalc and Loberg see the struggle over urban retail "belonging" as not only constituent of the interwar capitalist cityscape in crisis, but also intricately woven into local and national claims to citizenship in the European city.

In Braintree, "spivs and drones" were the enemy of this Essex town not merely because they flouted national rationing regulations; they came from beyond the boundaries of the local community to establish "immoral" retailer-consumer relations and thus undercut what Braintree's retail leaders saw as the "legitimate" actions of local traders. As London-based traders abused the *ad hoc,* peripatetic nature of the open-air market, their presence posed questions about who was "local" and who was "foreign" in town and urban economic culture. This chapter argues that these debates were not unique to the rationing of the war and postwar years; rather, the mechanisms for tracking and politicizing economic "outsiders" merely peaked between 1940 and the early 1950s. In fact, by looking back to the interwar years, we see how ideas of belonging to an economic locality, such as the right to trade at the retail market, were laden with questions of national identity and citizenship rights well before the war.

The first section of this chapter will explore how the interwar retail market's peripatetic structure and cheap prices provoked a specific set of xenophobic attitudes around migrant and ethnic minority vendors. More specifically, the protectionist attitudes of the late 1920s and early 1930s, compounded with retail markets' reputation as "informal," rendered these institutions as sites of instability and opportunism, the home of commercial "outsiders." The outbreak of the

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[15] Claire Zalc, "Trading on Origins: Signs and Windows of Foreign Shopkeepers in Interwar Paris," *History Workshop Journal* 70, no. 1 (2010), 134; Molly Loberg, "The Streetscape of Economic Crisis: Commerce, Politics, and Urban Space in Interwar Berlin," *The Journal of Modern History* 85 (2013), 382.

Second World War scaled these fears up to the national level: as rationing orders came into effect, the transient goods and actors at local retail markets became objects of state scrutiny. The ripple effects of this war and postwar anxiety—especially the larger questions raised around trust, belonging, and legality within local economic cultures—will form the second part of the chapter. Both sections will integrate viewpoints from market trade journals with critiques from competing retailers' periodicals and the local and national press. In addition, records from the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Food, and Local Price Regulation Committee—those government bodies and committees tasked with enforcing that motto of "fair shares for all"[16]—elucidate why the "cheapness" of the market was ultimately incompatible with the "fairness" prioritized in the war and post-war retail economy. These regulatory archives—contextualized with a selection of black market court cases—suggest how access to the community world of "informal" market trading explored in chapter one was fueled by preconceptions of local and national belonging based on ethnicity and race.

Interwar Developments

The cultural politics of protectionism, ethical consumption, and "Buying British" dominated the rhetorical landscape of buying and selling in 1920s and 1930s Britain.[17] At every turn, political parties and advertising campaigns reminded shoppers that their consumption choices defined the economic and physical health of their community and nation. Retail markets—carrying not only the legacy of the local regulatory state, but also the desperation of casual trading—were often

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[16] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain,* 59 & 79.
[17] Peter Gurney, *The Making of Consumer Culture in Modern Britain* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 133-34.

caught in the crosshairs of these debates. In an era that Frank Trentmann has heralded as the birth of the "sovereign consumer,"[18] the obtuse, mobile retailer was a figure to be feared.

This fear started at the physical level of the street: how could Councils make informal trading along corners, alleys, and open squares safe for resident-consumers? Pressured by the shopkeeping lobby and facilitated by local bylaw powers, many cities took action to formalize previously "informal" aspects of urban buying and selling. For example, Glasgow shopkeepers called for more regulation on street trading to combat the "unreliability of the vendors," with their unknown identities.[19] Likewise, Leeds authorities focused on prosecuting street traders who loitered around the city's markets, seeing their methods as "unscrupulous" and deceitful to the public.[20] As a response to these criticisms from shopkeepers and more established market traders, Leeds, Glasgow, and Bradford Corporations all considered formalizing casual street trading by making it a council project more in line with public market halls—the previous chapter's discussion of Glasgow's Cattle Market proposal was one form these civic proposals took.[21] Leeds and Bradford followed through, establishing a version of a "peddler's market" in the late 1920s and early 1930s, where tolls were extracted to make itinerant trading more "official."[22] While peripatetic market traders saw the periodic, open market as the ideal forum for

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[18] Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation,* 229.
[19] Glasgow City Archives (hereafter GCA) A3/1/324. Scottish Distributive Trades Federation, Petition against the draft provisional order (1929), Glasgow Corporations Act 1929, 5.
[20] "Leeds Street Traders. Suggested Ban on Area Near the Markets," *Yorkshire Evening Post,* 1 May 1923, 9; "Deceiving of customers at Kirkgate, Leeds," *World's Fair,* 23 January 1926, 15; "'Topping' in Market Complaint," *World's Fair,* 16 January 1932, 22.
[21] "Ban on Street Trading by Hawkers in Leeds," *World's Fair,* 15 April 1933, 26; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford (hereafter WYAS Bradford). Bradford Markets and Fairs Committee, 8 April 1929 and 3 July 1930; "Corporation Rejects 'Barrows' Scheme," *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 6 December 1930, 2.
[22] WYAS Bradford. Bradford Markets and Fairs Committee Minutes, 3 July 1930; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds (hereafter WYAS Leeds), LC/MKTS Acc 2777/1. Annual Reports of Markets Committee to the Council, 31 March 1933.

retail sovereignty, local shopkeepers and Councils battled both to formalize and monetize this practice in service of the consuming public.

Introduced in the previous chapter, the memoirs of both Faizur Rasul (as trader) and Keith Waterhouse (as shopper) detailed how hierarchies of trading formality and legitimacy shaped the shopping landscape. In Leeds, for example, Waterhouse remembered not just "the indoor" and "outdoor" market sites, but a third space at "the periphery of this peripheral open market" whose tattooists, fortune tellers, and pea and pie stalls "had an unsettlingly transient air that made [him] itch to join this gaudy, gimcrack caravan and see where its rag-tag-and-bobtail band of itinerants led [him]."[23] Rasul, while he was in the fortune telling business, was moved to one of these outdoor spaces in Leeds by a market supervisor after violating the indoor bylaws. Once away from "respectable" stallholders, Rasul was able to gather huge crowds of outlying villagers who came to the city center for entertainment.[24] The itinerancy of both trader and consumer alike, then, defined the alterity of street trading around Leeds's covered market. As Waterhouse and Rasul suggested, this existence on the fringes of legality could enhance the appeal of market trading's liminality, especially for those consumers who came from more remote, country locations.

For those traders who worked within covered halls or who consistently rented a stall at the outdoor market, however, this transience was often synonymous with unfair competition. Stable traders denigrated the mobility of casual trading as "spare time" stallholding, using the busy Saturday to supplement a standard five-day weekly salary.[25] One *World's Fair* columnist accused itinerant vendors who monopolized Saturday as "never spending a penny in the town.

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[23] Keith Waterhouse, *City Lights: A Street Life* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994), 48.
[24] Faizur Rasul, *From Bengal to Birmingham* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1967), 183-4.
[25] Alex Douglas, "Spare Time Stallholders," *World's Fair,* 26 February 1927, 15.

They bring their thermos flask and sandwiches and they go back again without spending anything. On the other hand, stallholders in the covered market employ on an average about three people, sons and daughters of ratepayers."[26] Similarly, other columnists toyed with the meaning of "fair" in "fair trade," accusing outsiders of "taking away the cash" that should go to locals.[27] Just as shopkeepers feared that market traders undercut "legitimate" businesses with their lower rates and high turnover, dissenting voices in the *World's Fair* worried that the fundamental "fairness" of market trading was being undercut by hyper-mobile and unattached traders. There was a correlation between the traders in the market who were "local" and those who were understood to be legitimate economic citizens.

One of the most egregious customs of these itinerants, touted by critics as antithetical to this idea of "fairness," was the mock auction. A close relative to the aforementioned "Dutch" auction, used to unload perishable goods during a market's closing hours, the mock auction was "mock" insofar as there was no bidding up for customers to overpay for a luxury item, but rather an auctioneer would get a crowd to bid *down* to purchase an item of poor quality. The way the auctioneer did this was through planting a fake customer in the crowd, who would pretend to be pleased with the quality of the good for auction, conning the real customers to bid on an item was that worth far less than the auction practiced suggested. Mock auctions were characteristic of the commercial transience that worried local traders and authorities alike; auctioneers would set up shop at seaside resorts during the summer, and head inland to market towns when the weather turned.[28] In order to protect consumers, "genuine" tradesmen, and their markets'

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[26] "St Helens Council and the Outside Market," *World's Fair,* 12 March 1932, 24.
[27] "Ross Market Let to Foreigners," *World's Fair,* 10 September 1932, 25.
[28] "Trick Auctions," *The Times,* 9 February 1926, 5.

reputations from this dangerously transgressive custom, authorities like Doncaster, Burnley, Gloucester, and Cardiff barred mock auctioneers from public premises.[29]

Mock auctions were not new to the legal fringes of the retail economy, but their prevalence spoke to increasing anxieties around transparency and trust in interwar culture.[30] As Matt Houlbrook has recently argued, the 1920s and 1930s saw the rise of technologies like the wireless and the telephone, modes of communication that impinged on "who or what could be properly known."[31] Mock auctioneers, in the eyes of their critics, had "both consciously and sub-consciously" acquired a profound grasp on human psychology in their travels, using the crowd pressure and distraction of fair and open-air trading to dupe a captive audience.[32] The mock auction was, in essence, a dangerously mediated configuration of buying and selling, in which a mock auctioneer (at times called a "run out" trader or worker) initiated a confidence trick, "promising bargains or creating an atmosphere in which bargains are expected. When a crowd has gathered he knocks down a lot of trash for which he collects a ten-shilling or pound note from each of his dupes."[33] Introduced in the previous chapter, J.B. Priestley's characterization of Hassock in *Let the People Sing* was one "mock auctioneer" type in interwar popular culture, although he is never outright labeled as one. Hassock's itinerant lifestyle, his particular mix of "tradesmanship and showmanship," and his ability to "[conjure] half-crowns" out of his

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[29] "Industrial Fatigue," *Sheffield Independent,* 8 February 1923, 4; "Town Council Impressions. The Cattle Market Ban, " *The Burnley News,* 10 January 1931, 9; "Mock Auctions to End. New Regulations for Eastgate Market," *The Gloucester Citizen,* 30 April 1936, 1.
[30] John Stevenson, "Mock Auctions and Rigged Sales," *The Police Journal* (1929), 596; Colin Clark and Trevor Pinch, "The Anatomy of a Deception: Fraud and Finesse in the Mock Auction Sales 'Con,'" *Qualitative Sociology,* 15, no. 2 (1992), 153.
[31] Matt Houlbrook, *Prince of Tricksters: The Incredible True Story of Netley Lucas, Gentleman Crook* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 4.
[32] "Ways of the Mock Auctioneer: Profound Knowledge of Psychology," *The Manchester Guardian,* 15 June 1926, 5.
[33] "Trick Auctions," *The Times,* 9 February 1926, 5.

entranced audience all point towards a type of retailing that depended on style and artifice as much as quality and affordability.

In the mid to late 1920s, the House of Commons[34] and the Incorporated Society of Auctioneers[35] joined local councils in a crackdown on those unlicensed auctioneers who abused the working-class economies of trust and frugality. The National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) supported any and all efforts to expel these rogue traders from their ranks, for in their words, "Good honest trading makes markets... every cheap man in a market is an asset to it; run-out men are the opposite."[36] Dichotomies like this—which juxtaposed the affordability customers expected from the traders they saw on a daily or weekly basis against the swindle of the itinerant—drew the boundary of trust on the market along the lines of localism. In other condemnations of mock auctions, the language used to denigrate the practice was explicitly xenophobic and anti-Semitic: the Incorporated Society of Auctioneers called these traders "lower-class alien, foreign born or otherwise" who stored their specially German-manufactured "trash" in British warehouses for sale on the domestic market; a characterization of continental consumer goods that fused the anti-Germanism of the war years with the protectionist rhetoric of the interwar period. Yet like much anti-German politics of the first half of the twentieth century, fears about opportunistic traders became increasingly couched in anti-Semitic language.[37] Labeled by the Incorporated Society of Auctioneers as "illiterate," mock auctioneers nevertheless "had their own code and its own language, chiefly made up of Yiddish phrases and terms used by the crook."[38] In her study of interwar London's Berwick Street Market, Judith Walkowitz argues

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[34] Walter Womersley (C, Grimsby), a shop manager, introduced a Mock Auctions Bill in 1927 to "protect the honest buyer from the fraudulent seller." *Hansard,* House of Commons Debate (HC Deb) 2 March 1927, vol. 203, col. 390.
[35] "Trick Auctions," *The Times,* 9 February 1926, 5.
[36] Major Mix, "The Attraction of the Market," *World's Fair,* 19 September 1925, 17.
[37] Colin Holmes, *John Bull's Island* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988), 185; Panikos Panayi, *Immigration, Ethnicity and Racism in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 121.
[38] Stevenson, "Mock Auctions," 597.

that the Jewish traders in Soho were stigmatized as a menace because of the physical space they occupied in the street, turning an urban thoroughfare from a traversable city street into a honeypot for fashion-mad female shoppers.[39] In the provinces, on the "mock auction" circuit, it was the untraceable goods and the perennial "otherness" of Jewish traders that threatened the consuming public.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the "foreign" presence in British retail markets—groups ranging from travelling communities, assimilated Jews, recent arrivals from Eastern Europe, or imperial subjects—predated post-Second World War mass migration. In the port cities of Glasgow, Liverpool, Newcastle, South Shields, and Cardiff, the market was a popular stop for Indian lascars or Chinese migrants buying inexpensive goods while they were ashore.[40] After the passage of the Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order of 1925, Indian seaman often became vendors themselves. Obtaining a peddling license gave these men a modicum of legality during an era of tightening border regulation.[41] As the peddling profession became saturated in these port cities, itinerant traders moved in-land and further afield to find new markets for their goods.[42] Historians have only recently begun to consider how non-white, working-class immigrants in interwar provincial Britain were not merely "sojourners," but "settlers" in the labor markets of numerous towns and cities.[43] Therefore, as more newcomers

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[39] Judith Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 166-67.
[40] "A History of 'Paddy's Market,' Liverpool," *World's Fair* 2 November 1929, 19; City of Liverpool, "Report of the Manager of the City Markets (A.D. Harper) 1934-1935," 33-4; Edward Gaitens, *Growing Up* (London: J Cape, 1942), 14-5; George Rountree, *A Govan Childhood: The 1930s* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1993), 58; "Calton Woman and Lascar Money Dispute Ends in Court," *Glasgow Eastern Standard* 16 August 1930, 4; Thomas Callaghan, *A Lang Way to the Pawnshop* (Newcastle: Zymurgy, 1978), 106-107; "Can South Shields Market Survive?" *World's Fair,* 23 January 1932, 22; "Chinese in the Markets," *World's Fair* 20 April 1929, 24.
[41] Jonathan Hyslop, "'Ghostlike' seafarers and sailing ship nostalgia: the figure of the steamship lascar in the British imagination, c. 1880-1960," *Journal for Maritime Research* 16, no. 2 (2014), 219-220.
[42] Bashir Maan, *The New Scots: The Story of Asians in Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992), 121-122.
[43] David Holland, "The Social Networks of South Asian Migrants in the Sheffield Area During the Early Twentieth Century," *Past & Present* 237, no. 1 (2017), 243-279; Laura Tabili, *Global Migrants, Local Culture: Natives and Newcomers in Provincial England, 1841-1939* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

joined the peripatetic world of market trading, their presence in market towns and industrial cities was increasingly seen not as a singular novelty, but as a dangerous group threat. In Dudley, West Midlands, market traders spoke of "quite another element" in their town in the mid-1920s: a foreign element, with some stallholders who "could scarcely speak English."[44] In early 1920s Leicester, half of the non-resident tenants on the market were of foreign nationality.[45] A decade later, Leicester shopkeepers pointed to the "un-local" aspects of the market place—the fact that sellers came from across the country, the fact that goods were imported—to claim that "the original idea of the market exists no longer."[46]

Leicester shopkeepers' twin worries about "foreignness"—coded as either external to the local or external to the nation—speaks to a climate in which retailers, distributors, and their political allies were questioning the limits of "free" trade in the years following the First World War. More specifically, the turn to educating and empowering the consumer was becoming the preferred mode of tying economic nationalism to citizenship.[47] For example, legislation like the Merchandise Marks Act 1926—requiring goods to be labeled as either "Empire" or "foreign"—and the "Buy British" Campaign of 1931-1932 were legal safeguards and advertising campaigns that sought to make domestic and imperial goods more visible and appealing to the informed British consumer.[48]

The language and scope of this legislation has compelled historians to think about this era on large scales—how Britain saw its trade and production in relation to imperial and non-

[44] "Effort to remove Dudley Market fails," *World's Fair* 14 February 1925, 16.
[45] Leicestershire Record Office (hereafter LRO), CM 25/8, Meeting Minutes of the General Markets Sub-Committee, 19 February 1921, 33.
[46] "Market Slogan Irritates Shopkeepers," *World's Fair,* 13 January 1934, 25.
[47] Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 223-224.
[48] Stephen Constantine, "The Buy British Campaign of 1931," *European Journal of Marketing* 21, no. 4 (1987), 44-45.

imperial worlds—yet more attention should be paid to the way in which these global imaginaries manifested themselves in local relations. For example, the paradox of the quintessentially "British" street market becoming a breeding ground for illegally imported cheap foreign goods was not lost on the popular press. In 1929, the trade skeptical *Daily Express* pin-pointed the street market as the enemy of not only the British shopkeeper, but also the British public: the presence of foreign "dumped" goods meant local shopkeepers were deprived of business, and local law enforcement was deployed in high numbers to keep up with labeling violations.[49] In their exposé of Houndsditch market in London, the *Express* reporter found razors from Germany, shaving brushes from France, and tooth paste from Chicago, all sold by "Poles, French, Belgian and even Magyar" dealers. What this popular press article and similar pieces in the trade press demonstrate is how critics of the market turned the institution's cosmopolitanism and cheapness against itself: "cheapness" was a quality to be protected for those who paid rates and were clear claimants to economic citizenship.[50]

The epistemological leap from "itinerant" to "foreigner" was grounded both in the political economic debates of interwar Britain and in ongoing disagreements around who the local market could and should accommodate. Right-wing newspapers like the *Daily Express* were not the only press outlet guilty of drumming up anti-immigrant economic panic: *World's Fair* columnists ethnicized transience as a form of outsider opportunism, turning the control of retail markets into an issue of policing "Englishness." This yoking of localism to a bounded commercial community was most clearly articulated in 1925 during a heated exchange between a

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[49] "London's Foreign Market. Where the British market is Missing. Dumped Goods," *The Daily Express,* 11 November 1929, 11. For more on the ring-wing popular press and free trade debates, see Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015), 76-77.

[50] *World's Fair,* 27 September 1930, 21.

regular, eponymous columnist ("Scribe") and a host of letter writers who debated the limits of trade competition. In Scribe's opening column, he depicted a business landscape wherein "undesirable" aliens, through the help of certain market authorities, were getting the best market stall positions and leaving the Englishman and his family out in the cold.[51] Scribe saw this trend as a wider commercial conspiracy in which people with names like "Neivsky or Mosewich," not "Smith or Brown," sold cut-price goods from bankrupt firms, undercutting the honest English trader and his family.

Unsurprisingly, Scribe was heralded and condemned in equal measure. "Fair-Minded Englishman" referred to Scribe's "bigoted" attitudes towards Eastern European refugees, wondering if he would use the same language if the subjects were American or Western European.[52] Opposing these views of a "Fair-Minded Englishman" was "Full-Blooded Englishman" and letter writers like A. Thrope, who agreed with Scribe: each argued that the NMTF would do well to shift focus from customary political economic concerns to the immediate threat of the surreptitious alien trader.[53] The overtly anti-Semitic tone of the debate actually galvanized the Jewish contingent of the NMTF: communists urged Jewish traders to attend more NMTF meetings and to contribute a regular column to the *World's Fair*. The reputation of a sizeable market trading community was under threat, such columns argued, and it would be "their own fault" if attacks accelerated and honest traders did not take it upon themselves to differentiate the older, assimilated community from more recent arrivals.[54] To prove your investment in the market community, then, was not just about distancing yourself

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[51] Scribe, "Aliens in British Markets," *World's Fair,* 21 February 1925, 15.
[52] Fair-Minded Englishman, "Letters to the Editor" *World's Fair,* 28 February 1925, 18.
[53] "Letters to the Editor" *World's Fair*, 7 March 1925, 16.
[54] Radio, "Scotchmen and the Jews," *World's Fair,* 4 April 1925, 16; Porridge, "Letters to the editor," *World's Fair,* 7 March 1925, 16; See "Letter to the Editor," *Derbyshire Times,* 23 June 1928, 14 for more inter-market trader ethno-religious smearing.

from your unassimilated ethno-religious brethren, but also required coupling this disavowal with active investment in "your" commercial community.

Parsing the language used about retail "outsiders," "itinerants," and "foreigners" in the interwar period is fraught with pitfalls, since these words had many different definitions depending on personal perspective and economic position. From the position of a brick and mortar trader, all market traders might be considered "outsiders," since they did not pay business rates. For market traders with stable stalls, itinerant market or street traders might appear to be "outsiders," since they came market only on the busiest days to turn an easy profit. For British traders, Indian peddlers might appear "foreign" because of racial and linguistic differences. And for nationalist traders, Continental competitors might appear "foreign" because of their lack of investment in English products and English values (however vaguely defined). The "fairness" that underpinned the ethos of markets—elaborated in the second section—primed them to be particularly contentious sites in debates over the limits of economic belonging in interwar Britain.

Wartime Markets

With the outbreak of the Second World War, regulating the retail market became a national issue. From the outset, markets were affected by black out orders that changed shopping and market hours.[55] In 1941, however, licensing legislation took a more pointed attack at "informal" trading. The 1941 Location of Retail Businesses Order held that to receive a license for a new business, any applicant had to prove that they had traded in their respective line of goods

[55] "Local Activities in War Time. Items of Interest From All Parts of the Country. Public Markets," *Municipal Review,* November 1939, 377; "Central Market Traders. Pressing for a black-out," *Nottingham Evening Post,* 25 October 1939, 5; "Hours of Opening. Case of the Leeds Market Tenants," *Yorkshire Evening Post,* 27 October 1939, 11; "Leeds Market Relief to Rates," *World's Fair,* 29 June 1940, 11.

between December 1940 and October 1941. In addition, there needed to be clear evidence that there was a "public demand" for the specified goods in the proposed shop locale. The Order's two-pronged purpose was, first, to protect those shopkeepers whose livelihoods were thrown into disarray by service or constrained distribution networks and, second, to cut down on inefficiencies in ration-era retailing.[56]

This wartime legislation targeted itinerant or casual market trading, which thrived on geographic mobility and the freedom to change lines of goods quickly with shifts in supply and demand. Two months after the Order came into effect, the Northern Market Authorities and the NMTF petitioned the Board of Trade to amend the unit of analysis in the legislation. They argued that the Location of Retail Business Order should apply to the market, rather than the individual stall, allowing market managers, superintendents, and committees to interface with the Board of Trade in licensing matters.[57] Local price regulation committees—on the front line of the battle to regulate and prosecute rogue market traders—opposed this move, arguing that their authority would be weakened by working through the market committees, leading to a surge in black market trading.[58] By the end of 1942, the Board of Trade, the local price regulation committees, and market authorities agreed to limit the number of market stalls let to "casual" tenants and to require all market traders to apply directly to their market authority for a license.[59] These agreements protected the traditional rights of market authorities, but at a cost to their reputation as arbiters of commercial belonging: the argument could now be made that market traders benefited from a two-tiered system, where access to stalls was not strenuously enforced

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[56] *Hansard,* HC Deb, 5 November 1945, vol. 415, cols. 1028-1029.
[57] LRO CM 25/15. Leicester Market Committee Minutes, 2 March 1942, 262.
[58] The National Archives (hereafter TNA) BT 94/541. Board of Trade Central Price Regulation Committee (CPRC), 97th Meeting of the Leeds Price Regulation Committee, 15 April 1942, 1-2.
[59] TNA BT 94/539. Annotations of Agenda. Meeting of the Full Committee held on Wed 9 September 1942, 1-2.

through the Board of Trade, and that itinerant traders could still circumvent many of the wartime licensing laws.

Indeed, wartime bombed out retailers, struggling shopkeepers, and local price regulation committees continued to criticize market stallholders for evading local ratepaying and undercutting prices.[60] The physical nodes and networks of this opportunism matched on to anxieties about a pervasive "black market": each market day, dozens of itinerant traders could swoop into a town or city, only to move on to a different district the next day, making their routes and supply lines largely untraceable.[61] In the Midlands Region, for example, price regulation committees counted seventy markets within their jurisdiction, some of which traded three days a week. Even if they trusted market authorities to put in a good faith effort at stall licensing, the extent of the geographic opportunities for the mobile trader made him or her "the one most needing supervision, and the one most difficult to catch."[62] In the interwar period, shopkeepers and some market traders had coded commercial mobility as a form of non-belonging or shirking civic responsibility; during wartime, this form of opportunism became a jurisdictional nightmare for price regulation enforcement.

The exigencies of the wartime economy turned market traders' mobility and unknowability into threats to the collective political economic good. When traders did not display their prices or did not affix their name to their stall, it was no longer a mark of the market's atmospheric, informal buying and selling; critics saw this anonymity as a cover for nefarious ends. When clothing was sold without coupons in the markets of London, Romford, Chesterfield, Birkenhead, and Leeds, shopkeepers bemoaned the thriving informal economy that

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[60] "Black Markets - and Sheep," *World's Fair* 27 December 1941, 7.
[61] TNA BT 94/539. Annotation of Agenda, 185th meeting of the Local Price Regulation Committee, 15 September 1943, 3.
[62] TNA BT 94/539. 335th meeting of full Committee, 12 April 1945, 5.

threatened to destroy the illusion of "fairness" in wartime retailing.[63] The speed with which lines of goods and traders shifted in the retail market world outpaced the machinery of rationing enforcement; those accused of over-charging could continue to trade before they were arraigned or fined, meaning their illegal profits far outstripped the nominal £5 fine for a first offence.[64]

That said, retail markets were not universally condemned as ground zero of the "immoral" wartime economy. Indeed, marketplaces and market halls continued to play a vital role in provisioning the public and grounding a physical sense of the "public good" under ration conditions. After aerial bombings, for example, retail markets offered a shared, stopgap commercial space where shopkeepers could keep their businesses running if their brick and mortar establishments had been destroyed.[65] For residents, the bombing of a market—the symbol of trade continuity and stability in a town or city—shook the foundation of the local community. When Mass Observation visited one town after a raid, the observer reflected, "It is hard to attach adjectives to atmospheres, but the one surrounding the remains of the [Market] Hall was definitely one of sorrow. One felt that the Market Hall had played a very definite part in these people's lives, and that its destruction was the end of an epoch for them..."[66] As physical spaces, markets at once triggered existential fears about aerial destruction, while continuing to serve a pragmatic role in local retailing.

Some provincial towns and cities used the basic format of the open or covered market to mitigate against these wartime retail ruptures, performing functions similar to British Restaurants

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[63] "Clothes Sold Coupon-Free," *The Daily Telegraph,* 9 June 1941, 5; "Last Week I Bought Dress Fabric Without Coupons at Romford," *Draper's Record* 29 November 1941, 1; "Clothing coupon offenses," *Derbyshire Times,* 12 October 1945, 1; Material Sold Without Coupons in Market," *World's Fair,* 31 October 1942, 9; *Daily Northern Mail,* 6 July 1944.
[64] TNA BT 94/539. 327th meeting of the full Committee, 7 March 1945, 5.
[65] Mass Observation Archive (hereafter MO) Topic Collection, TC 17-11-E (Films 1937-48): Rush Hours Markets and Purchase Tax. Interview with man, aged 45, Jew(?) in Edgware Road, 8 November 1940.
[66] MO File Report: Seventh Weekly Morale Report, 9-A.

or public air-raid shelters.[67] Starting in Bristol, but spreading to damaged markets in Swansea, Coventry, Exeter, and Plymouth, "emergency" shopping centers were established: in pre-existing market halls (if standing) or camouflaged marquees, stall space was allocated to bombed traders depending on the goods they sold and the number of registered customers they had.[68] The exceptional circumstances of wartime retailing and consumption made strange bedfellows: shopkeepers might criticize the mobility of market trading one day, only to find themselves desperate for the flexibility of this commercial practice the next. Additionally, local authorities, while wary of the licensing and tracking challenges inherent in market trading, recognized that this open retail format was both a symbol and a conduit of local resiliency under wartime conditions.

In debates about licensing, mobility, and emergency shopping solutions, the wartime retail market was embroiled in issues of what I would term "knowability." Shoppers and sellers craved the ability to "know" the economic actors who moved through the market as a space, and local market and Board of Trade authorities used the heightened powers of the state as a mediator in this shopper-seller relationship. While the shadowy itinerant trader was perhaps the antithesis of local networks of mutual interest and trust, the stable, rooted marketplace or market hall retained a potential to ground norms of trade in a period of civic upheaval. In the fine line they walked between informal and formal regulation, markets could simultaneously uphold and undermine "trust" in a socially embedded retail economy.[69]

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[67] Susan Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012); Peter J. Atkins, "Communal Feeding in War Time: British Restaurants, 1940-1947" in *Food and War in Twentieth Century Europe,* eds. Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska et al (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 139-153.

[68] J. Hunt Crowley, "Marquee markets for the blitz towns," *Daily Herald* 24 June 1941, 3; "Food Stalls Plan - Marquee Market at Plymouth?" *The Western Morning News,* 28 April 1941, 1; "Big Firms Take Stalls in Market," *World's Fair* 20 December 1941, 9.

[69] For more on embeddedness, trust, and malfeasance in economic life, see Mark Granovetter, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness," *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (1985), 487-493.

Thus far, this chapter has argued that the wartime retail market was not merely embedded in the morality of rationing and scarcity; its ability to mark economic "insiders" and "outsiders" stretched beyond coupons and price controls and touched upon more expansive ideas about community boundedness and belonging. In the interwar period, critics of market trading drew attention to the relative weakness of this profession's ties to the local economy, in some cases extending these criticisms to market traders' ethnic or national allegiances. During the Second World War, the microscope of the Board of Trade and the public scrutiny of "spiv" culture meant that this alterity became more visible and more dangerous. Wartime was, in Sonya Rose's words, "an especially prime historical moment not only for demarcating the national self from that of the enemy, but also for identifying and excluding those who did not exemplify particular national virtues."[70] Markets, as touchstones of economic fair practice and civic belonging, focused these debates in place and space.

The specter of the retail market as a porous, "unknowable" space of opportunism was visible in a series of high profile black market cases both during and after the Second World War. The first was a case of illegal goods, meant for export from the North of England but rerouted onto the domestic market. The investigation began at Hull Market in the summer of 1943, where police had found Morris and Barnett Harris, two stallholders, selling clothing and other accessories without the forfeit of coupons. Through a complex web of agents and distributors, the chain of supply was eventually traced back to Taissir Kahale of Manchester, a Syrian shipper who had used his coupon-exempt status to illegally route goods back to the home market. In this widely publicized case that ranged across the North of the country, the Harris brothers and other market stallholders were the "dupes" of Kahale's surreptitious activities.[71]

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[70] Rose, *Which People's War?,* 72.

[71] The case was covered in over twenty provincial newspapers from Gloucestershire to Aberdeen.

Barnett Harris was a former chairman of the Hull branch of the Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association—physical proof of his sacrifice and service to the nation—while Kahale's correspondence in Arabic and his activity with both fellow Syrian-born middlemen in Britain and relatives in Lagos was used as evidence of his suspicious business practices.[72] The differing loyalties of Harris and Kahale were proffered as marks of their character and investment in local civil society. These defendants' danger to the "fairness" of wartime retail and distribution reached into the House of Commons, where Robin Turton (Con., Thirsk and Malton) demanded to know how many of the ten individuals ultimately charged were "British subjects by birth."[73] When Ellen Wilkinson (Lab., Jarrow) responded that one had been included in his father's certification of naturalization in 1910 (Goldshlager, born in Romania), one was Syrian (Kahale), and one was of Argentinian nationality, Turton promptly asked Wilkinson to "take steps to secure that those who are abusing the hospitality of this country when they are guests are sent out of the country."[74]

The Kahale case pegged the market trader—in this case the Harris brothers—as unwitting victims in a transnational web of illegal goods trading. Yet, the ethnic stereotyping of both market traders and their activities in relation to a larger "black market" was fluid. For example, when Ali Mohammed was tried in 1945 for selling combs above the asking price at Scarborough Market, his defense was that he had bought the alleged goods from a "unknown Jew" in Hull. Prosecutors in this case reverted to the image of the calculating Jewish middleman, who in their words, "completely [took] in" the unsuspecting market stall trader.[75] It may appear surprising to

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[72] "Coupon Case - Goldshlager's Alleged £28,000 Deals," *The Manchester Guardian* 5 November 1943, 3; "Black-Marketing Charges. Letters in Arabic," *The Manchester Guardian* 27 October 1943, 3.
[73] *Hansard,* HC Deb, 14 December 1943, vol. 395, col. 1402.
[74] Newspaper coverage and naturalization records reveal that both Kahale and Cattan were Syrian-born, while there is no mention in the press of the identity of the Argentinian born individual.
[75] "Sold Combs Beyond Control Price," *Driffield Times,* 17 March 1945, 4.

hear prosecution use the language of Jewish opportunism to discuss this case, reaching the courts immediately after Auschwitz was liberated. In fact, in January of 1945, the Central Price Regulation Committee and the Leeds Local Price Regulation Committee jointly considered the "delicate matter" of liaising with Jewish trade interests over market stallholder prosecutions.[76] Yet, as Tony Kushner has argued, even after British forces liberated Belsen in April 1945, the "Jewishness" of continental European victims was consistently downplayed in order universalize Nazi atrocities and valorize the British as liberators.[77] Historians of Anglo-Jewry have argued that the elision of "German" "Jewish" and "refugee" during the war, combined with entrenched views about Jewish trading and opportunism, sustained anti-Semitism in retailing circles.[78] For the duration of rationing, British Jews had to contend with the popular belief that they were "found in exactly those trades which are bound to incur unpopularity with the civilian public in war-time," a perception which might only be combated by "exterminating" Jewish black market offenders with public shame and lifelong boycotting.[79] Jewish traders were not only three times more likely to be prosecuted for black market offences than non-Jews; crime reporters were more likely to amplify their "otherness" in the press.[80] The popular opinions around alterity and opportunism, then, amplified pre-existing fears about the "unknowable" goods and traders on retail markets, a network in which Jewish traders had been unfairly aligned since before the war began.

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[76] TNA BT 94/539. Annotation of Agenda. 315th Meeting of the full Committee held on Wed 24 January 1945, 2.
[77] Tony Kushner, "From 'This Belsen Business' to 'Shoah Business': History, Memory and Heritage, 1945-2005," *Holocaust Studies* 12, no. 1-2, 192-193.
[78] See Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); Holmes, *John Bull's Island*, 185.
[79] George Orwell, "Antisemitism in Britain," *Contemporary Jewish Record,* April 1945; Michael Polyani, "Anti-Semitism," *The New Statesman and Nation,* 27 June 1942, 421.
[80] Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain,* 233.

The supplier, dealer, and middleman stereotype in the market trading business was by no means restricted to ethnic Jews; the Kahale case demonstrated that "foreignness" was broadly applicable to a host of traders, practices, and goods considered external to the British market. Furor over the ease with which these subjects and goods infiltrated the lanes, streets, and squares of provincial Britain peaked in the early 1950s "nylon racket." Although clothes rationing had ceased in 1949, price controls stayed in effect, and there were still shortages in many lines of goods.[81] The resulting "black market" for nylons was supported through a variety of illegal supply methods, namely brokers diverting goods meant for export, suppliers charging over the invoiced prices or imposing conditions of sale, theft, illicit import, or traders purchasing goods from legitimate retailers and then selling these goods on.[82] In order to obfuscate these transactions, the supplier and the buyer often used no invoice, meaning those market traders brought before price control committees or the courts—like Ali Mohammed or Barnett Harris—could claim to have been "duped" or coned by an untraceable line.[83] Nylons' "foreignness" on the local retail market was manifested in two ways. The first was their provenance outside Britain. Imported nylons flooded the British market as unlicensed imports from Gibraltar and Malta or from America as "gifts," frequently finding their way to British street or open-air markets.[84] The second mark of "foreignness" was the dealers who worked in the nylon racket itself. For example, between 1950-51, the Leeds Price Regulation Committee (whose jurisdiction

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[81] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain,* 180.
[82] TNA BT 94/437 – Nylons. D.W. Marwick, "The Black Market in Nylons - Action Against Suppliers," 9 October 1950.
[83] TNA BT 94/11. Minutes of the 470th Meeting of the CPRC, 7 Feb 1950, 7; "Excessive price of nylons: Market sale to inspector," *Derbyshire Times* 6 Oct 1950, 5; "PT on Nylons," *Draper's Record,* 16 June 1951.
[84] TNA BT 94/437/51. Nylon Stockings (Note by the CPRC). 15 February 1950; "Stop this nylon nonsense" *Draper's Record* 22 July 1950, 24. For example, Julian Spira of Oxford Market was sent 500 pairs of nylons from his brother in New York, concealed in food parcels. "Nylons in food parcels" *Draper's Record,* 3 November 1951, 17.

covered Yorkshire and parts of North Lincolnshire) saw ninety-one cases of nylon black market trading at retail markets, over half of which were carried out by traders with Indian names.[85]

Indian traders were a numerical minority compared to Jewish traders, but their recent in-roads in retailing made them a community of suspicion for the state (in the form of price regulation committees) and the press. Whether they carried the peripatetic connotations of their interwar lascar-turned-hawker predecessors or the stigma of "desertion" from essential work or the Mercantile Marine, the Board of Trade feared that postwar itinerant traders showed no commitment to retail probity and a collective ethos of fairness.[86] A 1951 *Guardian* column titled "Turbanned Men Who Trudge the English Lanes" tried to make sense of the professional networks and patterns of Indian traders, most of whom peddled door to door through the North of England, but a fair number of whom set up stalls in provincial street markets. The *Guardian* column spoke of these immigrants as "neither Nawab nor Maharajah," but rather men without the "spiel" of native market traders who chose to stand stoically on the market.[87] Whether it was their distinctive attire, "Indian Blarney," or mysterious home lives, these traders were both physically and affectively distance from the stereotypical English market trader in the eyes of the press.

The sense that there was an alien and "un-English" quality to Indian traders could also take on a harder edge, marking the retail market as a site of exclusionary belonging. The Board of Trade and the shopkeeper's periodical *Draper's Record*, for example, proposed requiring foreign stallholders' National Registration cards upon suspicion of black market dealing, a call that was later echoed by columnists in the *Draper's Record* and by Harold Wilson (as President

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[85] Compiled by the author from TNA BT 94/540. Agenda (annotations) for meetings.
[86] TNA BT 94/539. Agenda (annotations) for meetings. 311th Meeting of the Full Committee held Wed 10 Jan 1945, 3.
[87] "Turbanned men who trudge the English lanes," *The Manchester Guardian,* 2 November 1951, 5.

of the Board of Trade) in the House of Commons.[88] Although calls for more stringent identification did not always target the Indian community explicitly, the Board of Trade recognized that these demands disproportionately affected this ethnic community: the Board of Trade's comment that "so many of them have the same name," such as "Ali Mohammed," underscores the tendency of trade authorities to see sojourning Indian traders as an undifferentiated threat. This homogenous group was seen as impenetrable either by the arm of the law or by business competitors, so long as Indians remained "clannish, alien and inassimilable."[89]

In December 1950, at the height of the nylon racket, the Old Bailey saw the trial of a case deeply marked by these stereotypes around otherness, foreign networks, and ethnic group opportunism. "Four Indians" were charged with evading purchase tax on over 16,000 pairs of nylons, which were eventually sold in provincial markets across the Midlands and the North of England.[90] The figure behind this scheme was Framroze Patel, a man whose opportunistic and checkered past made him a hallmark of spiv Britain. He was a disbarred barrister who had trained at Gray's Inn and practiced law in East Africa. After falling afoul with the law through financial misdealing, Patel taught Indian students at the London School of Economics before working his way into the import and export business.

Patel's associates—and ultimately his victims—were Somer Ali, Ilam Dean, and Ghulam Shamas, all market peddlers, the first two working in Birmingham and the last in Bradford. Akin to the language used in the Kahale case or the Ali Mohammed trial, the defense focused on the

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[88] TNA BT 94/540, Vol. 1. "The Goods and Services (Price Control) Acts 1939-1945; "Plan to check nylon spivs" *Draper's Record,* 15 April 1950, 77; Scottish Retail Drapers Association, *Scottish Retail Drapery Journal*, August 1950.
[89] TNA BT 94/540, Vol. 1. "The Goods and Services (Price Control) Acts 1939-1945"; Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Middleman Minorities," *American Sociological Review* 38, no. 5 (1973), 591.
[90] "Ex-Barrister gets 3 years," *The Daily Telegraph* 19 December 1950, 5.

"ignorant" Indian market traders who "fell under the spell" of the educated and enigmatic Patel.[91] In these trials, the retail market and the retail market trader appear relatively passive, receiving or mindlessly reselling goods that should never have been on the British market in the first place. The distinction between the "mastermind" importer-exporter and the "duped" provincial trader speaks to a number of presumptions about the role of the physical "retail market" within the imagined "black market." Provincial markets, like those in Birmingham or Bradford, were the final retail link in a complex international web of supply. From the viewpoint of trade authorities, Patel's aloofness and shadowy cosmopolitanism kept him a level above the face-to-face buying and selling of the retail market.

Highly publicized black market cases like that of Patel in 1950 or Kahale in 1943 underscore why and from whom retail markets were threatened by shadowy "outsiders" in wartime and postwar Britain. The Board of Trade, the police, and retail competitors perceived the clustering in itinerant hawking of foreign traders, mostly Indian, as an imminent threat to the tenets of economic citizenship. When sentencing Patel, Judge Commissioner Sir Harold Morris chose his words carefully: "The public must be protected from you and your depredations. When I use the word 'public' I am thinking of traders and merchants who carry on their business honestly in this country, who shoulder the burden of paying heavy taxes, and to whom you do an injury."[92] Morris's formulation repeated the argument made against retail markets for decades: informal market trading's "blackness" derived from traders' choice to not "buy in" to the normal markers of economic citizenship, primarily through paying business rates. With the upsurge in foreign goods rackets during the war, the Board of Trade and the press worried that the market

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[91] "Now the 'Nylon King' is Sent to Gaol for Three Years," *Daily Mirror,* 19 December 1950, 1; "Ex-Barrister gets 3 Years" *The Daily Telegraph* 19 December 1950, 5.
[92] "Ex-Barrister gets 3 Years."

was the key node in a web of foreign rackets that aggrandized individual outsiders rather than the collective nation. In turn, the market trading community's response to these incursions and critiques would ultimately clarify the limits of belonging to their fraternity during a period of contested citizenship.

Mark Roodhouse and Laura Hilton have argued that imagined communities—be they residential, commercial, or national—insulated themselves from the immoral labels of the war and postwar "black market" through notions of mutual support and stigmatizing "others."[93] The internal logic of the retail market—self-consciously local in its membership—likewise thrived on this notion of an imagined commercial community. English market traders met the publicity around Indian peddlers with trepidation, both over the damage these competitors were doing to their supply lines, and over the potential that *all* market traders might be tarred with the same brush.[94]

In reality, local price regulation committees, prosecutors, and the press characterized the Indian community as an undifferentiated mass threat to the individual English trader; fueling racist ideas about legality and legitimacy in austerity conditions. When Thaided Khay of Carlisle was charged with selling nylons over maximum controlled prices in Cumberland markets, prosecutors bemoaned the fact that Khay and "others of his race" were able to obtain stocks while "private traders" went without.[95] The idea that "only coloured folk" get nylons was propagated in the market trading press as well, where columnists labeled Indian traders as a

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[93] Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain,* 224; Hilton, "The Black Market," 480-481.
[94] Harold Adams, "Ashton-Under-Lyne," *World's Fair,* 2 July 1949, 7; "No Nylon Flood," *Derby Evening Telegraph,* 30 March 1950, 7.
[95] "Story of black market in nylons," *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury,* 9 November 1950, 1.

foreign "menace," juxtaposing their itinerant and shadowy activities to "established" and "genuine" traders.[96]

As the first section of this chapter argued, the right to call oneself an "established" or "genuine" trader was a debate in pre-1939 market circles. These anxieties dovetailed with broader questions about the boundedness of provincial communities and who local markets should ultimately serve. As the war drew to a close and post-war occupational opportunities became a matter of political importance,[97] questions about the correlation between ethno-national belonging and economic citizenship preoccupied the retail market community. As the representative trade organization, the NMTF needed to protect existing traders while welcoming new blood into the industry. The NMTF petitioned local councils to guarantee stallholders a position on the market when they returned from combat or essential service. At the same time, the organization recognized that newcomers, those "men and women to whom the freedom of life found in the markets has made an irresistible appeal," might replenish the ranks of market traders hampered not only by the constrained budgets of their customers, but also the social upheaval that had tested their professional networks.[98]

Ex-servicemen saw stall obtainment as a zero-sums game, a referendum on who had selflessly sacrificed and who had selfishly profited during the war. As in the debate over occupational opportunity after the First World War, the editorial exchanges in the *World's Fair* provide a micro-level snapshot into the terms and viewpoints of this debate. In 1944, Leo Huntridge, a self-proclaimed "young, disabled, ex-serviceman," wrote to the trade journal

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[96] *World's Fair,* 25 March, 1 April, 26 August 1950; "Another Nylon Mystery," *Draper's Record,* 13 October 1951, 73.

[97] Alan Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home After the Second World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 136-137.

[98] WYAS Leeds. Markets Committee Minutes, Leeds City Council Minutes, 23 July 1945, 101; LRO CM 25/15 Market Committee Minutes, Leicester City Council Minutes, 1939-1945, 3 June 1940, 72; Editor's Preface, *Markets Year Book - Fifth Edition,* 3.

bemoaning the lack of business opportunities at his local Yorkshire markets. He drew a line between his own modest ambitions to make a living at the market and the extortionate activity of the "foreign" element. In one market, Huntridge proclaimed "twenty-two foreigners" were charging outrageous prices for goods in short supply. To stave off accusations of racism or xenophobia, Huntridge pointed to his record of overseas service when he was "in charge of natives during the war" as proof that he was not "colour prejudiced." Rather, he held contempt for those non-white migrants "coming on to markets in shoals, forcing decent white traders off"[99] and lowering the respectability of the retail market in the eyes of the public. In his final letter, Huntridge even accused market superintendents of aiding non-white traders, turning a blind eye to the "various colors and mixed breeds" who jumped the queue ahead of white ex-servicemen with families who were trying to restart their market careers after the war.[100]

While Huntridge was undoubtedly motivated by individual interests, his eyewitness accounts and personal tribulations were echoed at the level of policy. Board of Trade inspector reports from late 1944 indicated that Indians who had been released from essential work or "deserters" from the Mercantile Marine were cornering the provincial market in small haberdashery and perfume, and that market superintendents needed to maintain tighter controls over the traders and goods that passed through their establishments.[101] In the market press, traders from Plymouth to the North East echoed Huntridge's Yorkshire story, claiming that ex-servicemen and, indeed, any traders who had worked the markets in the prewar period should get priority over "newcomers, coloured and otherwise."[102] The retail market, seen as a nexus of state

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[99] Leo Huntridge, "'Undesirables' on Markets," *World's Fair,* 4 November 1944, 10.
[100] "'Foreigners on markets," *World's Fair,* 23 December 1944, 11.
[101] TNA BT 94/539. Annotation of Agenda. 191st Meeting of the Local Price Regulation Committee held Wednesday 6 October 1943, 3; TNA BT 94/539. Annotation of Agenda. 311th Meeting of the Full Committee held Wednesday 10 January 1945, 3.
[102] "30 Years a Grafter," *World's Fair,* 15 June 1946, 12; J.J. Smith, "Markets in the North East," *World's Fair,* 13 January 1945, 10.

intervention in local commercial opportunity, bore a particularly heavy burden as a highly charged forum for this debate about whose needs should be met first in the postwar period.

It is important to note, however, that Huntridge and his supporters did not completely dominate this debate on exclusionary economic citizenship. One letter writer, “Sammie Goldstein,” asked Huntridge to clarify his use of the word “foreigner,” taking into account that traders who were born in India, Cyprus, Burma, Bermuda, Ceylon, South Africa, or other parts of the Empire were British subjects. Goldstein likewise drew attention to the history of anti-Semitism within the NMTF, reminding Huntridge and the imagined larger *World’s Fair* readership that to label all Jews as “foreigners” would undoubtedly tar a number of British-born subjects.[103] Huntridge and Goldstein’s exchange sparked a nuanced, at times humorous, debate about the bounds of “foreignness” in the British local economy: to be “alien” might be a legal category or simply a way “not belonging” to norms of local business. And while some market traders saw “furrier” as someone from beyond the British Isles, others extended this category of alterity to those from outside the village, city, or region.[104]

In the postwar period, markets and their constituent traders walked a thin line between opportunity and opportunism. Which side of the line a subject fell on was based on older debates about locality and which “public” these retail institutions should serve, but also depended on concerns specific to the constrained economic and employment opportunities of austerity Britain. In the hands of the “right” traders (overwhelmingly coded as native-born ex-servicemen), a stall on the local market was the small business reward for a period of national service. In the hands of the wrong traders (most often those from beyond British shores, working through monopolistic practices), a stall was ground zero for profiteering. As local retail markets became

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[103] “Sammie Goldstein,” *World’s Fair,* 14 October 1944, 7.
[104] Natmart, “Market Medley” *World’s Fair,* 21 October 1944, 8.

embroiled in ubiquitous wartime debates about national sacrifice and citizenship, they fueled stereotypes of economic alterity and reinforced the belief that “trust” and “fairness” needed to be preserved above the “free” market.

Conclusion/Interlude:

In 1949, the debate over open-air markets as dangerously “free” trade zones made its big screen debut. The Ealing comedy *Passport to Pimlico*, which premiered in the spring of that year, followed a tale of postwar rationing gone awry: when an unexploded bomb detonates to reveal a charter that ceded a specific district of London—Pimlico—to Burgundy in the fifteenth century, it sets off a comedic series of events whereby the district’s residents throw off the rationing shackles of post-war British citizenship. As argued in the previous section, one of the most heated debates around citizenship duties and rights in the late 1940s and early 1950s was around complicity in the black market: evasion of ration controls was an act that marked one as “outside” the nation. *Passport to Pimlico* takes this idea of the black market as “un-British” and spins it to its most ridiculous ends: the seventeen families of Pimlico cut themselves off from the British nation, precipitating a trading free-for-all at the heart of the district: a literal marketplace springs up on a bombed site, with spivs from “Britain” crossing the improvised border to sell fruits and vegetables, nylons, and other restricted goods beyond the eye of those hated bureaucratic bodies of rationing, the British Board of Trade and Ministry of Food. British and Burgundians alike struggle to agree upon the parameters of the “public” at this new market: should British subjects be allowed to shop, and how would their potential exclusion affect Burgundian traders? Ultimately, Burgundy reinstates its ration restrictions, a decision that is first

resisted by and then ultimately overturned through the combined efforts of Britons and Burgundians working together across the makeshift border.

Film scholars have frequently investigated the carnivalesque lens that *Passport to Pimlico* focuses on Austerity Britain: humorous references to Stafford Cripps and a pillorying of bureaucratic red tape refracted the seething frustration of British retailers over rationing and price controls in the postwar years.[105] With the end of clothes rationing coinciding with the release of the film in May 1949— briefly alluded to in a funeral wreath over a ration book in the opening shot of the film—the thematic bond between national austerity politics and the film's message appears only stronger.[106] *Passport to Pimlico*'s populist longing for the end of unnecessary restrictions and a return to "normalcy" resonated with a British public, some three-quarters of whom stated that even if consumer goods were plentiful in shops, they would not be able to purchase them at present price levels and household incomes.[107] Viewers and critics of the film commented on *Passport to Pimlico* as a "true kaleidoscope of British life" which "[brought] power politics within the comprehension of the family and masses,"[108] thus balancing the fantastic with the material in 1940s London.

There is another political battle at the heart of *Passport to Pimlico,* a battle that parallels the scarcity of rationing and austerity. In the narrative plot of *Passport to Pimlico*, even before the discovery of the fifteenth-century charter and the topsy-turvy world of Burgundy, the film reads as a struggle for the everyday built environment of postwar Britain. The original tension in the community is not over the influx of traders and the creation of a "spiv's paradise," but rather

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[105] Tony Williams, "The Repressed Fantastic in *Passport to Pimlico," Film Criticism* 16, no. 1/2 (1991), 53-54; Jill Nelmes (ed.), *An Introduction to Film Studies - 3rd Edition* (London: Routledge, 1996), 342; Tom Sobchack, "Bakhtin's Carnivalesque" in 1950s British Comedy," *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 23, no. 4 (1996), 182.
[106] Chris Ritchie, "Only Mugs Work: The Spiv in British Comedy," *Comedy Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011), 16.
[107] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, 85.
[108] "Letter Spread. 'The British Way,'" *Picturegoer Weekly,* 16 July 1949, 21; "Passport to Pimlico," *Kinematograph Weekly,* 28 April 1949, 22.

over what to do with the bombed landscape of the district. Shopkeeper Arthur Pemberton wants to turn the space into a playground for local children, but the Council opposes his "financial daydreams" in favor of selling the land for development. Cultural studies scholar Charlotte Brunsdon has argued that bombsites in postwar British films were distinct from their European counterparts as "spaces of possibility…providing the imagery for disruptions in the social fabric which is both material and metaphoric."[109] In *Passport to Pimlico*, the bombed site holds in tension both the idealized and opportunistic potentials of a truly "populist" space: while Pemberton imagines a world remade for the good of future generations, the lack of bureaucratic oversight in Burgundy eventually turns the space into a breeding ground for individual traders with no ties to the Pimlico "community."

The conflicts in *Passport to Pimlico* over the control of local commerce and, in turn, the control of local commercial *space* were grounded in the physical realities of rebuilding British retail and shopping for the postwar era. Bombed sites like the one depicted in the film littered Britain's towns and cities, visual reminders of a New Jerusalem not yet made. With local authorities and private businesses lacking the capital to clear and rebuild, bombed sites were taken over by a host of individuals who claimed a "right to the city" through the vehicle of informal retail. In 1949, the *World's Fair* reported that the issue of trading on bombed sites was a national issue, and some 28 metropolitan boroughs were investigating a solution to these mushrooming street markets.[110] On the local level, shopkeepers and "official" market traders in Swansea opposed Dutch auctioneers and barrowmen who congregated on the blitzed site opposite the Market Hall, as these opportunistic traders diverted custom and paid almost no

[109] Charlotte Brundson, "Towards a History of Empty Spaces," in *The City and the Moving Image: Urban Projections*, eds. Richard Koeck and Les Roberts (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 96.
[110] "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 16 July 1949, 8.

overhead.[111] This chapter has explored how market or street trading "newcomers" were particularly villainized characters between the end of the war and the end of rationing; their physical presence on the ruins of the towns, with no clear claim to ownership, only exacerbated tensions over rights and "fairness" in the postwar commercial order. The ungovernability of a bombed site may have been a narrative effect in the world of *Passport to Pimlico*, but it mirrored real legal and moral issues at stake in British communities: who owned and who could lay claim to these in-between spaces of wreckage and rebuilding?

Take late 1940s Sunderland as a case study, where the congregation of unlicensed traders in these bombed spaces focused a number of unresolved town planning issues, one of which was the suitability of informal retail in the postwar city. In the summer of 1947, barrow traders in this North East England city raised questions about retail form and power: did the congregation of these individual stallholders on the bombed sites in the High Street and Union Street constitute an open-air market for the city?[112] The consumer demand for this type of shopping was evident: housewives and those on reduced incomes were flocking to these sites for quick-selling produce at low prices and minimal queues, but these stop-gap solutions posed long-term threats to the macro-goals of land use and development in the city. For example, plans for an open-air municipal market in Park Lane were well under-way by the summer of 1948, aimed at "bona fide" traders and not "unchecked itinerants."[113] Yet when the market, built at the cost of £310, opened in the spring of 1949, there was lackluster attendance by traders and consumers alike. Poor trade was blamed on inconsistent timing, shortages of wood to build stalls, and "bad siting," but the local branch of the Retail Fruit Trade Federation pointed a finger in the direction of the

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[111] "Trading Opposite Market Annoys Tenants," *World's Fair,* 19 November 1949, 7.
[112] "Bombed Site as 'Market,'" *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette,* 1 July 1947, 3.
[113] "Wearside Echoes," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 28 July 1948, 2.

bombed site barrows: opportunistic traders were taking income away from a venture that would contribute to the Corporation's finances.[114]

This head-to-head battle between grassroots markets as parasitic and Corporation markets as civic-minded spurred on a second debate: could itinerant traders claim any right to economic belonging in Sunderland's postwar retail order? These informal businesses were keeping the cost-of-living relatively low for Sunderland's housewives, while neighboring, market-less communities were struggling through inflated prices for fruits and vegetables.[115] Like the market stallholders who returned from war service, itinerant barrow traders claimed duty to nation as proof of their commercial worthiness. The representative of the Sunderland contingent, JP Carroll, was an ex-parachutist Sergeant Major, a fact he used against Sunderland Council. In one "Letter to the Editor," Carroll argues that when the Council chose to refuse barrow sellers the license to trade in the new Park Lane market, they were purposefully ignoring the bravery and sacrifice that these citizens had shown during the war. And when the Council continued to disregard calls for bombed site trading to become legitimate commercial space that paid business rates, these local authorities were not heeding the community's calls for affordable shopping outlets.[116]

In late 1949, Sunderland Council took steps to change local bylaws and deter street trading from bombed sites. Citing the "definite menace" that open-air trading posed to public health, the local government announced in the summer of 1950 that it would exercise its authority to buy bombed sites for five years, turning the High Street location into a garden and

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[114] "Putting market on Map," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 26 May 1949, 6.
[115] "Market Day for Sunderland?" *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 17 August 1949, 2.
[116] "What Our Readers Say - Bomb Site Trading," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 13 June 1949, 3; "Letters to the Editor," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 4 December 1950, 3.

car park for the Festival of Britain during the summer of 1951.[117] The short—yet contentious—saga of the Sunderland bombed site barrow boys drew to a close in October of that year, when the last trading cohort in Union Street officially became "displaced persons," uprooted for a new temporary bus station.[118]

The fate of the grassroots markets of Sunderland between 1947 and 1951 sheds light on the street-level battles for ownership and belonging that were part of the everyday fabric of the postwar build landscape. Both ex-servicemen and career hawkers made the case that open-air trading sustained retail and distribution during a period of crisis, but local government was focused on the innovations that would see Sunderland *past* austerity and into an era of rebuilding. The persistent popularity of buying and selling on this North East city's blitzed sites—a wartime necessity, but a residual stain on the postwar landscape—focuses key questions of space, design, and capital in Britain's New Jerusalem. What was the relationship between embedded commercial practices and the potential for increased prosperity via coordinated retail planning? How interventionist should local authorities and practitioners be in altering the former for the sake of the latter?

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[117] "Editorial - Bombed Sites," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 5 June 1950, 2; "Beautifying Bombed Sites: Private Enterprise Acts," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 19 October 1950, 7.

[118] "There was Trouble Behind Barrows," *Sunderland Daily Echo,* 13 October 1951, 7.

Chapter 3: The Kind of Problem a Market Is: British Retail Markets and the Logics of Urban Space

Introduction

In the summer of 1951, the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* [CIAM] convened at the High Leigh country estate in the village of Hoddesdon, twenty miles north of London. The conference venue was incongruous with the modern architecture organization's ethos:[1] a Victorian pile set in bucolic grounds conjured up images of England's past rather than its future. However, the surrounding Hertfordshire countryside was an unlikely hub of planning innovation. Recently chartered new towns—planned developments meant to alleviate housing shortages and *ad hoc* sprawl in London—were scattered across the green belt to the north of the capital, in close proximity to Hoddesdon village. With these fledgling communities nearby and the Festival of Britain design exhibition underway in London, urbanism and urban planning suffused CIAM 8, entitled "The Heart of the City."[2]

The Modern Architecture Research Group [MARS] (the British branch of CIAM) chose the 1951 urban heart or "core" theme as an addition to the four functions that had shaped CIAM's approach to urbanism since the mid-1930s: work, residence, transportation, and leisure.[3] MARS members wanted to understand what made "a community a community" beyond these four physical and functional divisions. At CIAM 8, Ian McCallum's paper, "Spontaneity at the

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[1] CIAM was a professional architects' organization founded in 1928 and active through 1959. They were committed to promulgating the Modern Movement in Europe and around the world.

[2] The "8" title refers to the eighth meeting of the *Congrès* since 1928. The Festival of Britain was held on the hundredth anniversary of the 1851 Great Exhibition as a celebration of the nation's resurgence and pride in the aftermath of the Second World War. See Becky Conekin, *The Autobiography of a Nation: The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

[3] Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 203.

Core," criticized the "deadness" of the contemporary city center. He feared for the casual commerce which would be shut out of the functional city center, the "surreptitious little men selling black market nylons out of battered suitcases"; the flower girl who proffers gossip, cheap goods, and flexible hours; or the carved and painted barrows who are constantly hounded by policemen.[4] Over-planning ran the risk of divorcing the urban built environment from its teeming humanity.

One of the most vocal advocates of this core-sensitive approach was the British architect-planner Jacqueline Tyrwhitt. Tyrwhitt's CIAM 8 paper, "Cores within the Urban Constellation," explored the heart as a gathering place of people—planned or unplanned—that always functioned as the "physical setting for the expression of collective emotion."[5] This physical setting might be any number of recognizable urban meeting points: a cathedral square, a city hall, a common, a crossroads, or a market place. Yet when Tyrwhitt tested out her "constellation" argument on other CIAM members, the ideological divisions between functional modernism and the "human scale" of planning became pronounced. Tyrwhitt posed the question, "should the market be in the Core of today?", only to receive a blunt response from the godfather of CIAM—Le Corbusier. He replied, "Theoretically, this should disappear. The people of Marseilles, where the sun is hot, prefer to sell their potatoes under cover. Even though tourists find the open market picturesque, it is best to provide shade and cover."[6] As opposed to Tyrwhitt's argument that collective emotion sustained urban mixing points, Le Corbusier

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[4] Ian McCallum, "Spontaneity at the Core," in *The Heart of the City: towards the humanization of urban life* (New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1952), 65-6.
[5] Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, "Cores within the Urban Constellation," in *The Heart*, 103. These are similar to the "centers of activity" Jane Jacobs describes in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Vintage: New York, 1992), 386-387.
[6] "Conversation at CIAM 8," in *The Heart,* 37.

focused on the economic realities that should be served by rationally designed urban space. The open marketplace, it seemed, was a non-starter in the functionalist city.

This chapter explores the ripple effects of this rift between planners in the Tyrwhitt "collective emotion" faction and planners in the Corbusian "functional design" faction. How did modernist-inflected British postwar planning embrace the functional zoning of Le Corbusier, while concurrently preserving the spontaneity and humanity celebrated by Tyrwhitt? James Scott has argued that modernist planners could most sympathetically be described as "streamliners" who sought to shape social life in a way that would "minimize the friction of progress."[7] The retail marketplace—a built yet *unbuilt* hub of urban congregation and exchange—is an ideal lens for assessing the significant impediments to this top-down approach to improving the human condition. The face-to-face encounter of buying and selling at the market stall personified McCallum's and Tyrwhitt's attention to the "human scale" of cities, which fit awkwardly with the CIAM "master planner" framework. The market's integrity in the historic core of towns and cities (in the market square, market street, or market hall) was a holdover of pre- or early modern economic activity whose intransigence in urban space and in popular memory confronted modernizing planners.[8] The market's inherently transformable, mobile, and sporadic nature sat uneasily with the goals of postwar planners to rationally zone the commercial city center, focusing on separation and single uses. In appearance, the market was an anachronistic site of commerce within functional modernism, an ideology that believed an irrevocable break with the "historic" city was the only way to improve the condition of urban citizens.

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[7] James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 93.
[8] Many market charters dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century—that is why I am using the term "pre" and "early" modern in this context.

Working through three geographic case studies in the late 1940s through the early 1960s—the bombed city of Swansea, the New Town of Harlow, and the historic core of Leicester—I will examine why the affective capacities of the retail market, a site of sociability and informal commerce, redirected planners' attempts to make the city "legible" for rationalization and redevelopment.[9] This chapter argues that marketplaces are vital—if understudied—components of what Jane Jacobs has called "organized complexity," so often misidentified and misunderstood by planners.[10] On the surface, the market's mass of undifferentiated buyers and sellers in a large, public space was a negative form of "congestion" that impeded the circulatory patterns of urban life.[11] Yet, for a set of planners and technocrats, this very congestion fostered and sustained the city as an organism of commercial and human life. Marketplaces, I argue, were metonymies for "the kind of problem a city is" for functionalist planners – at once encouraging density and sociability, but through anachronistic economic activity.[12]

Part one will examine the national postwar planning guidelines for shopping area layout and traffic, guidelines that were often drawn up in consultation with shopkeepers, but not market traders. After considering how this tension played out in select cities, I will delve into the case city of Swansea in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the rebuilding of the blitzed retail market prompted debate about whether economic or spatial management interests should dictate the landscape of post-war cities. For the Borough Estate Agent, Ivor Saunders, these two modes

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[9] Scott, *Seeing Like a State,* 80.

[10] Jacobs argued that urban planners approach cities as sites of either "simplicity" or "disorganized complexity" (i.e. developing quick fixes or attributing urban problems to chaos). She argues that, on the contrary, cities display a large degree of "organized complexity" that can be understood by thinking about process, using inductive reasoning, and looking for "unaverage" clues. Jacobs, *The Death and Life,* 434-435, 440.

[11] For more on the need for more studies of circulation and congestion from below, see Carlos López Galvis and Dhan Zunino Singh, "The dialectics of circulation and congestion in history" *The Journal of Transport History* 33, no. 2 (2012): 253-259.

[12] "The kind of problem a city is" is the final chapter in Jacobs, *The Death and Life,* 428-448.

of planning were not compatible: the rational vision of engineers and architects failed to take into account the commercial value that the retail market brought to the city at a transitional moment in Swansea's development. The case of Swansea, therefore, demonstrates how early post-war debates about functional development often disregarded the commercial realities of shoppers and small sellers in provincial Britain.

Moving from Wales to Essex, my second case study is the planning of the commercial core of Harlow New Town in the early to mid-1950s. Harlow, as one of the first generation of British new towns, was built with the purpose of decongesting London.[13] Harlow's connection to the rebuilding of London was not only practical, but also ideological: Harlow's master planner, Frederick Gibberd, had designed the East London Lansbury Estate and Chrisp Street Market as part of the aforementioned Festival of Britain's "Live Architecture" feature. The Lansbury and Harlow markets underlined Gibberd's attention to continuity in the organization of space and in the legibility of the built environment, espoused by a broadly "Townscape" cohort of planners. Townscape was a form of urban "design" rather than "planning" that took inspiration from the city forms and circulation patterns that were rooted in the humane, historic built fabric. In recent years, historical geographers and planning scholars have diverted attention away from the orthodoxy of functional modernism and towards the idealism and successes of Britain's "Townscape" movement.[14] I argue that the "core" market place, as defined by Tyrwhitt and put into action by Gibberd and his contemporaries, is an overlooked lynchpin in Townscape's sense

[13] New towns Stevenage and Hemel Hampstead also had designated market places, although they never took on the ideological and physical importance of Harlow's. *The Architects' Journal*, 19 July 1956, 184; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair*, 11 December 1954, 11 and "Desert Island Market," *World's Fair,* 8 February 1958, 23.
[14] John Pendlebury et al (eds.), *Alternative Visions of Post-war Reconstruction: Creating the Modern Townscape* (London: Rutledge, 2015), 7; Pendlebury, "The urbanism of Thomas Sharp," *Planning Perspectives* 24 (2009), 3-27; Peter J. Larkham, "The place of urban conservation in the UK reconstruction plans of 1942-1952," *Planning Perspectives* 18 (2003), 295-324; Gillian Darnley and David McKie, *Ian Nairn: Words in Place* (London: Five Leaves, 2013); Mira Engler, *Cut and Paste Landscape: the Work of Gordon Cullen* (London: Rutledge, 2016).

of scale and sociability. The market is a key element in any discussion of the continuities between prewar and postwar economic space and the reactions against functionalist modernism.

Part three will examine how Townscape was translated to a larger urban setting: Leicester. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act required all 145 planning authorities in Britain to draw up a development plan for the future land use in their jurisdiction. The key cog in this planning regime—the Comprehensive Development Area [CDA]—was both a rationale and a unit of study: the CDA would facilitate the compulsory purchase of land deemed "blitzed" or "blighted" in the inner city, providing a way of combatting the haphazard and antiquated built environment of the nineteenth century. In the 1950s, Leicester surveyors and planners targeted the city's central market place as a site in need of "modernization." However, in 1962, Leicester's newly appointed Chief Planning Officer, Konrad Smigielski, reworked the city's development plan to retain the open market. Like Gibberd in Harlow, Smigielski personifies an understudied yet critical connection between modernist planners and Townscape thought. More specifically, his valorization of the market's economic life was an early example of a planner who used the built-in infrastructure of the market to order urban life from the bottom up, rather than imposing renewal frameworks from the top down.

This chapter, then, uses one ubiquitous feature of the British urban and town landscape to tease apart the ambiguities and paradoxes of British modernism and the manner in which urban histories have assimilated its top-down power dynamics at the cost of the materialism of everyday life. In Swansea, Saunders petitioned for an economically grounded mode of town planning, in which entrenched commercial activity was not disregarded simply because it appeared "irrational" or "congested." In Harlow, Gibberd championed an accessible market square that would ground a nascent community in a legible civic landscape. This approach was

quintessentially "Townscape" in the way it attached sentimentality to past ways of life, while using the modernist tools of parking structures, pedestrian precincts, and zoning to organize space. In Leicester, Smigielski and his colleagues followed in this vein of market protection rather than redevelopment, merging an appreciation of the "old" with the decongesting drive of the present. In each geographic case, the market was a manifestation of the power of the informal and the "unbuilt" in a planning world that prioritized the formality of "the plan." To their detractors, markets were a product of congestion, while their defenders celebrated this characteristic as essential to town and city life. For the immediate postwar period through the early 1960s, therefore, the marketplace provides a lens through which historians can reassess the buckling of top-down planning ideals under the intransigence of small-scale and informal shopping practices, as well as reframe urban space as a contingent and participatory site of everyday life, rather than the product of technocratic study.

Postwar Rebuilding & Swansea Market

Following the Second World War, a series of planning guidelines, acts, and conventions circumscribed the "haphazard" nature of city center markets. In 1945, the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) pleaded with planners to resist the temptation to replace blitzed city centers with "utilitarian" markets meant solely for the distribution of goods, and the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) warned the Ministry of Food that relocating markets away from civic centers would hurt the economic health of market towns in particular.[15] Thomas Sharp, postwar planner and affiliate of the Townscape group, wrote on the

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[15] . "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 17 March 1945, 7; The National Archives [hereafter TNA] MAF/194/15/4. The National Association of British Market Authorities: Market of local authorities. "Markets of Local Authorities - Post War Policy," 13 December 1945.

planning future of King's Lynn in 1948. Although a town of only 24,570, Sharp argued that the "weekly" and "occasional" market was the focal point of a wider shopping, entertainment, industrial, and agricultural center serving 63,000 people. The "bustle and activity" of market day was the social manifestation of this catchment draw—the volume of people who flooded the city attested to the diversity and volume of customers and traders served by its market.[16]

Sharp's conservationist concerns about King's Lynn were echoed in more general planning guidelines. Jacqueline Tyrwhitt's planning textbook urged a historicist approach to town planning, basing the structure of a plan on five universal "needs" that shaped urban form.[17] A town or city's communication and infrastructure networks needed to accommodate this market role, and Tyrwhitt called for markets to be retained near points of human movement and congregation: shopping centers, railway stations, and bus stations. In a similar vein, Roger Kelsall's *Citizen's Guide to the New Town and Country Planning* (1949) lamented that planners tended to think in "rather simple terms" of market towns as once-a-week shopping destinations.[18] Because the influx of peoples and goods might only peak two times a week—which planner-developers read as valuable city center land not being used to its full potential—a core built around the rhythms of market life might give the impression that a town was "undershopped." Sharp, Tyrwhitt, and Kelsall each defended the retention of markets in town and city development schemes, as they played important roles in the cohesion of space and time in the civic core.

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[16] Thomas Sharp, "King's Lynn: A Redevelopment Plan and some notes on the planning of the Borough," *The Architects' Journal*, 30 December 1948, 597-598.
[17] Association of Planning and Regional Reconstruction, *Town and Country Planning Textbook* (London: Architectural Press, 1950), 142-143.
[18] Roger Kelsall, *Citizens' Guide to the New Town and Country Planning* (Oxford, 1949), 33.

These pro-market planners feared the functionalist alternative: a single-use shopping area that would not support the economic and spatial unpredictability of an occasional market.[19] This model of zoned functionality was backed by brick and mortar shopkeepers who believed that their business rates, real estate, and staff set them a cut above the transient market trader. The small shopkeeping community had long been wary and resentful of any preferential treatment that the city market received.[20] The confluence of questions about the layout, function, and commercialization of the city center in the wake of the Second World War presented a planning opening where shopkeepers could use their trade influence to convert this resentment into competitive advantage. In 1944, representatives from Chambers of Trade, Retailers' Associations, and Cooperative Societies produced guidelines in *The Planning of Shopping Areas*. This document recommended that shopping areas should be concentrated as hubs rather than spread into residential streets, should be easily accessible to the pedestrian, and should be conveniently located while maintaining a lively atmosphere.[21] Markets, if they were necessary, should be in enclosed buildings. In return, the NMTF believed it was "decidedly unfair" of the central government to canvas only a section of the retail business and express their views on markets without the input of those who administered or worked on these sites.[22]

In Swansea, the future of the post-war city proved to be a long-running debate. During the Swansea blitz, twenty-five acres of the shopping district had been destroyed over a three-day period. As an emergency measure, the market had continued to operate in the roofless hall, serving the small traders and consumers of the city. In the city's postwar development plan—

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[19] Kelsall, *Citizens' Guide,* 28-29. For interwar precedents, see A Trystan Edwards, "A 'Model' Town Designed for Traffic," *Town Planning Review* (May 1930), 35-39.
[20] See chapter one.
[21] Retailers' Advisory Committee on Town Planning, *The Planning of Shopping Areas* (London, 1944), 3.
[22] "Market Medley," *World's Fair*, 10 August 1946, 10.

drawn up with input from engineering, architectural, and chartered surveying interests—the damaged, roof-less market would be removed from its central position to a perimeter position along the southern edge of the core, flanked by the new inner ring road.[23] Proponents of this plan—the Chambers of Commerce and Trade, the Borough Architect, and the Chief Constable—believed this would solve two of the market's inefficient features: traffic congestion and an over-concentration of retail trade in one sub-unit of the central area.[24] The Swansea Retailers Advisory Committee supported this move, believing that Swansea's Oxford Street had the possibility of becoming a "fine central street," a vision of the rebuilt city that market traders labeled as wishful thinking for a Welsh "glorified Piccadilly."[25] The Committee believed that a centrally sited market would hinder the growth of small shopkeepers, reduce the Borough's rent intake, and ultimately prove to be a short-sighted scheme "not visualizing the future beyond a comparatively few years." While the marketplace had served the immediate needs of the shopping and retailing communities during wartime, for engineers, Chambers of Trade, and Retailers Advisory Committees, the congested and antiquated market was antithetical to the postwar rationalization of shopping districts.

Opposing this consensus, however, was Ivor Saunders, Swansea's Borough Estate Agent, the overseer of all the Council's property investments. Saunders's view of the market as an essential feature in the reestablishment of property values gives insight into the function that markets performed in the rebuilt economic culture of post-war Britain. Saunders admitted that he

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[23] A similar plan was proposed in the blitzed city of Plymouth. "The Plymouth Plan," *The New Statesman,* 17 June 1944, 402; "Proposed Removal of Plymouth Markets," *World's Fair*, 23 September 1944, 10; "Plymouth Market: Mass Petition Suggested," *World's Fair*, 21 June 1947, 10.
[24] West Glamorgan Archive Service (hereafter WGAS) BE 52/71 R3/19. Reconstruction of Central Town Area. Supplementary Report by Borough Engineer and Planning Office, to Re-Construction Sub-Committee, 10 October 1947. On the location of retail market in the plan of central area.
[25] TNA BD 28/341. Letter from Swansea Retailers Advisory Committee to the Minister of Town and Country Planning, 8 August 1949. Central area redevelopment: siting of retail market in new shopping centres; "Market Briefs from Wales and Border Counties," *World's Fair,* 13 November 1943, 10.

was “not concerned with the Market as a market,” but rather in the way in which its rebuilding in the same position along Oxford Street would mitigate financial uncertainty and reassure property developers who might have been debating whether or not to invest in the rebuilding of the Welsh industrial town.[26] For Saunders, therefore, the market was not an anachronistic feature that needed to be reformed to correspond with a futuristic image of Swansea: rather, the market was a proven commercial success that needed to be nurtured if Swansea was to survive as the shopping hub of South Wales.

Saunders was primarily interested in the commercial viability of development plans, a civic concern he believed was all too often overshadowed by the interests of civil engineers and architects. In a 1951 speech before the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Saunders bemoaned the fact that the redevelopment proposals put forward by local authorities in line with the 1947 Town Planning Act unfortunately fell into the camps of a “network of roads” or a “series of fine architectural vistas,” when what would really guarantee success was a balanced plan that was economic in its basis.[27] Expanding on this argument, Saunders chastised local authorities for privileging the anticipated journeys of consumers to a set of focal points formed by large stores like Marks and Spencer or Woolworths, when they should be paying attention to existing shopping patterns grounded in “popular street features” like retail markets.

Saunders voiced a commercially conservative argument, reassuring shoppers and potential investors of the economic viability of post-war Swansea, rather than taking the blitz as an opportunity for radical redevelopment. And although Saunders seldom made explicit reference to shopping surveys—his expertise stemmed more from his experience as the manager

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[26] WGAS BE 52/71 R3/18. Ivor Saunders, To the Chairman and Members of the Parliamentary Committee, 6 October 1947.
[27] WGAS D/D Z 371/9. “The Reconstruction of ‘Blitzed’ Areas, D. Ivor Saunders’ talk to Members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors,” Thursday, 18 January 1951, 3.

of municipal properties—studies were carried out in South Wales during these years that reflect this desire for traditional shopping outlets. In one mid-1940s survey, roughly two-thirds of housewives responded that if they lived on a housing estate, they would want a market of some kind in the shopping precinct; over half preferred a market to shops, and of those who preferred a market to shops, nearly three-quarters cited "greater variety," a little under a quarter cited "cheapness," and the rest cited "freshness."[28] Saunders, therefore, questioned the development plan's proposal to put the market "furthest away from the direction of the residential and suburban districts, from which will come by far the greatest part of the shopping public," a shopping public that had demonstrated their support for market shopping.[29] The case of rebuilding Swansea—where planning and large retail interests were pitted against property and small retail activism—demonstrates the importance of seeing the market as political economic feature as much as a built feature of the post-war environment.

Frederick Gibberd and Harlow New Town

In the late 1940s and the 1950s, the most coherent "neophilic" vision of urban planning was the New Towns Movement. Unlike the debates in King's Lynn, Swansea, and Plymouth, disagreements over new towns were over how to design a community—including its shopping provisions—from scratch. The initial 1940s New Towns merged CIAM's urban modernism with the English Garden City legacy that saw satellite, overspill, low-density communities as the solution to the depressed and congested residential districts of industrial towns and cities.[30] The

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[28] WGAS BE 52/75. Bundle of papers relating to the redevelopment of the shopping area in central Swansea. Originally titled S2Shopping (1st scheme), 1942-1946.
[29] TNA HLG 79/749. Report of the Borough Estate Agent (Ivor Saunders), December 1943. Redevelopment of City Centres - Advisory Panel (Swansea Papers).
[30] John Gold, *The Experience of Modernism: Modern Architects and the Future City, 1928-1953* (London: E & FN Spon, 1997), 195. Jane Jacobs saw the marriage of Howard and Le Corbusier as well, in the far more negative "Radiant Garden City." Jacobs, *The Death and Life,* 22.

New Towns Act (1946) took this idealism and applied it to the pressing issue of rehousing those Londoners most disrupted by the destruction of the Second World War: eight of the twenty developments stemming from the Act would be around Greater London. Historical scholarship on this first generation of new towns has typically focused on their housing provision, while the later generation towns are often discussed in terms of town center retail and consumption amenities.[31] This dichotomy is misleading, however, and elides the interest in commerce and shopping that early architect-planners, like Frederick Gibberd, applied as they designed town "systems" in the immediate postwar period.

Gibberd, as an architect-planner as well as a landscape design enthusiast, was highly influenced by the aforementioned Townscape movement. In the words of its practitioners, "architecture was one building, while Townscape was two."[32] *The Architectural Review* art editor Gordon Cullen first coined the term, and editorials in the architectural press, national broadsheets, and planning textbooks coopted Townscape principles as a way of resisting functionalist and international modernism in the 1950s and 1960s. Following from the English Garden City tradition that privileged the picturesque and the human-scale, Cullen's idea of "serial vision" demanded that town planners and designers recalibrate their aerial and grid preoccupations to account for how individuals moved through town or urban environments.[33] Townscape is key to postwar built Britain both in its intellectual and affective capacities: as an

[31] See Mark Clapson, *Invincible Green Suburbs, Brave New Towns: Social Change and Urban Dispersal in Post-War England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-war World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2002); John Gold, "The making of a megastructure: architectural modernism, town planning and Cumbernauld's Central Area, 1955-75," *Planning Perspectives* 21, no. 2 (2006), 109-131; Janina Gosseye, "Milton Keynes' Centre: the apotheosis of the British post-war consensus or the apostle of neo-liberalism?" *History of Retailing and Consumption* 1, no. 3 (2016), 209-229.
[32] Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London: The Architectural Press, 1961), 21.
[33] Cullen, *Townscape*, 17-20.

editorial mode, it resisted dogmatic modernism, and as a personal lens, it privileged "seeing" and "feeling" the British town or city.

The congregation, humanity, and spontaneity of the retail market drew the attention of Townscape enthusiasts in their initial jottings, in their consultations on development plans, and finally in their criticisms of city center redevelopment projects.[34] At Harlow, Gibberd put this enthusiasm into practical design. The master planner feared that the city was becoming a mass of buildings divided up by a linear pattern of roads rather than an "urban scene" which merged architecture, landscape, and road design into aesthetic harmony.[35] To achieve this harmonious balance, Gibberd conceived of the town as "a honeycomb of spaces formed for light, air, and access to buildings"; each space would create a sense of "enclosure" with distinct precincts for the new town resident.[36] One of these honeycomb cells was the "brash and lively" market: his ultimate vision was a market situated on a square, free of vehicular traffic, reached by alleys and pedestrian walkways, easily traversed by browsing shoppers, and maintaining a feeling of compactness.[37] Gibberd used the "serial vision" of the pedestrian to structure the scale and routes of his market-centric town. This vision—explored in the more theoretical work of both Cullen and Jacobs—became Gibberd's rationale for the layout of Harlow and its central market square.

Gibberd later explained that he made the market square the focus of Harlow's Town Centre because of his love for "the oldest form of English shopping." He had fond memories of Nuneaton Market's paraffin lamps, crowds, and bustling atmosphere from trips to his

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[34] See Eric de Maré, "Buttoning Up," *The Architectural Review* (April 1952), 233-239; Gordon Cullen, "Midland Experiment: Shrewsbury," *The Architectural Review* (May 1954), 323-328; "Leicester Market," *The Architectural Review* (August 1963), 109-112; Ian Nairn, "Lancashire Mill Towns," *The Architectural Review* (July 1962), 47-50.
[35] Frederick Gibberd, *Town Design* (London: The Architectural Press, 1953), 5.
[36] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 15-16. Interestingly, Jacobs actually used the "honeycomb" metaphor as an unhelpful way of modeling the city. Jacobs, *The Death and Life,* 376.
[37] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 99-100.

grandparents'.[38] At the market, the lack of separation between the shopper and merchandise created "a lively jostling crowd of people that is the essence of the market scene."[39] Gibberd and Tyrwhitt shared this affection for historic and personal forms of shopping congregation, celebrating markets' abilities to attract rather than deriding their informal and antiquated nature. Each believed to some extent that the planner should merely create conditions for congregation and let the sociability of retailers and shoppers produce commercial space. In this respect, Gibberd carried on some of Patrick Geddes's turn-of-the-century principles around town planning as a science dependent on rigorous survey and hybrid built forms: any plan for a city or region must first take into account geography, economic life, and social institutions, fusing the historic with the modern.[40] Like Tyrwhitt's recommendations to CIAM or Saunders's case for a central site in Swansea, Gibberd's belief in market life was rooted in a socio-economic and design ethos of entrenched patterns of congregation.

Gibberd and his allies in the Harlow Development Corporation translated these broad principles into reality from the early stages of New Town development. There is evidence that it was perhaps not Gibberd, but the Chief Estates Officer (the same position that Saunders held in Swansea) who first recommended "a market hall (as at Oxford) to contain a wide variety of shops," although they were also aware that a market hall was not customary in that region of the country.[41] Working against worries of regional anomaly, civil servants like D.H. Bingham believed that a commercial hub of this kind was vital "because of the business and interest it

[38] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 142.
[39] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 98-99.
[40] There is evidence that Gibberd was reading Geddes in the mid-1950s, based on the clippings he included in his diaries. The Gibberd Library and Archive FG1/34, 1954 Diaries.
[41] Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO) A10417 Box 18. Records of Harlow Development Corporation consisting of Social Development Office correspondence files. Extract from Meeting of the Corporation on Shops Policy held on 19 October 1948.

brought to the town,"[42] echoing the visual and socio-economic "focal points" language of Gibberd the architect-planner and Saunders the Swansea Estates Agent. Again, this speaks to the market's ability—as both spatial and economic institution—to materialize Geddesian and Townscape principles about designing for social activity.

Gibberd was enthusiastic about the prospect of designing an open-air market in the first stages of Harlow's design, especially after his successes at Lansbury with the Chrisp Street Market.[43] As his plan came into focus, Harlow's architect-planner saw material benefit for the individual traders and shoppers who would congregate in the square. A flexible market place would fill a gap before brick and mortar shops filled the town, as the market's low rents would attract small traders excluded from high shop rents.[44] Gibberd celebrated the market as a crucial component in the wider shopping landscape of the town center: it interlocked with the luxury or high-end goods of the specialty shops and the wide choice of the multiples to serve townspeople of all stripes.[45] The "rooms" in Gibberd's town hub were not merely aesthetically distinct; he saw the market serving the demand for "cheaper articles" that would not be found in the wide shopping avenues, precincts, or arcades selling luxury goods.[46]

Other members of the Harlow Development Corporation, however, were ambivalent about an open-air market's suitability in a planned shopping environment. As Harlow's General

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[42] ERO A6306 Box 330. Town Shops General. D.H. Bingham note for Mr. Harvey. Town Centre Development – Market Square Area. 10 March 1954, 3; "Shops and stalls," *Harlow Citizen,* 21 January 1955, 8; Bruce Benson, "Satellite Town to Have an Open-air Market," *World's Fair,* 29 May 1954, 16; ERO A8791 Box 4/046 E 26 Vol 1. Town Centre. A Report on the establishment, administration, and management of the Open Market (nd). A8791 Box 4/046 EC 26. Basildon Town Centre. Open Market. Notes Supplied by Chief Estates Officer (June H West), 25 July 1958.

[43] ERO A10417 Box 18; ERO A6306. Harlow Development Corporation Minutes. Corporation Meeting Book IX, 16 October 1951, 369.

[44] Gibberd et al, *Harlow: The Story of a New Town* (Stevenage: Publication for Companies, 1980), 142.

[45] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 47 & 61.

[46] Gibberd, *Master Plan: Harlow New Town: a plan prepared for the Harlow Development Corporation* (London: HMSO, 1947), 20.

Manager, Eric Adams asked Gibberd to remove the words "Market Square" from the initial plans, while others on the Board feared the market would attract an inappropriate vulgarity reminiscent of the London street markets that Harlow's residents were supposedly leaving behind.[47] Harlow Development Corporation's anxiety over the town center becoming an "Upper Street" or "High Road Tottenham," rather than a "well-planned Cambridge or Exeter," speaks to their anxiety that the street market-centric informality of London districts would spill into the orderly shopping hierarchy of the planned city center.[48] In Harlow and in nearby Basildon New Town, the Development Corporations were divided as to the state's role in reforming these pre-war shopping habits. Some officers and observers wanted to nourish shoppers' attachment to the market shopping of their earlier lives in London; they therefore supported a network of retail markets alongside shops in a steady build-up of "two types of shopping…so different in essence," yet "actually interdependent."[49] Others worried that if market trading took a foothold too early and too assertively in the New Towns, town center shops would lose the necessary custom to attract new development.[50]

These exchanges between the planners and property interests underscore the point that retail markets were not merely a hypothetical design feature. Their operation and economic activity raised larger questions about the state's role in ameliorating the material circumstances

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[47] Gibberd et al, *Harlow,* 142-3; This same preconception felled a market plan in Bracknell New Town, where the Development Corporation believed population dispersal and embourgeoisement would make market shopping obsolete. "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 28 July 1956, 16.
[48] ERO A6306 Box 330, Harlow Development Corporation, 25 March 1955.
[49] "Shops and stalls," *Harlow Citizen,* 21 January 1955, 8; Bruce Benson, "Satellite Town to Have an Open-air Market," *World's Fair,* 29 May 1954, 16; ERO A8791 Box 4/046 E 26 Vol 1. Town Centre. Records of Basildon Development Corporation Administration Department, files relating to Town Centre development. Town Centre. A Report on the establishment, administration and management of the Open Market (nd, late 1957); ERO A8791 Box 4/046 EC 26. Basildon Town Centre. Open Market. Notes Supplied by Chief Estates Officer (June H West), 25 July 1958.
[50] "No Market for Stow," *Harlow Citizen,* 19 November 1954, 11; "18 months' wait for Town Centre Market," *Harlow Citizen,* 21 January 1955, 1; ERO A6306, Harlow Development Corporation Minutes, Corporation Meeting Book XIII, 15 December 1953.

of Britain's post-war population. Despite the work of Gibberd or the calls of Estate Agents in Harlow and Basildon to introduce markets during the early stages of New Town development, the unmet need for this type of shopping was often a point of contention between citizens and their civic leaders. In the early 1950s, enterprising Women's Institute members actually set up a market for housewives in Harlow, the "first WI market to recognize the needs and difficulties of housewives moved from their own environment to form a new community."[51] Not long after this voluntary sector market, tenant associations in Harlow, Stevenage, and Bracknell were demanding a public open-air market for their communities.[52] Housewives argued that their budgets were being stretched by the high prices in the shops, especially in market staples like green grocery and drapery. In Harlow, the issue of affordable shopping and a missing market "culture" became so dire that the Corporation was forced to run a bus service into Romford, the nearest shopping hub, so that women could shop in their street market.[53] James Greenhalgh's recent work on neighborhood units has shed light on the uneven success of post-war planners to anticipate the power of retail capitalism and consumer desires in shopping habits;[54] I would argue that cases like the petitions for more market trading in towns like Harlow reflect a shopping public driven not by proto-consumerist ideology, but by shoppers' bargain browsing desires that went unmet in the early stages of New Town development.

Despite tensions between different interests on the Development Corporation and between town leaders and newly arrived citizens, the opening of Harlow's Open-Air Market in

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[51] *Home and Country,* January 1953, 9.

[52] House of Commons Parliamentary Papers. New Towns Act, 1946. Report of the development corporations for the period ended 31 March 1955, 530-531; "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 28 July 1956, 16; D. Buck, "Letter to the Editor – It's the High Cost of Building," *Harlow Citizen,* 28 August 1953, 3; "Labour women want market," *Harlow Citizen*, 12 March 1954, 7.

[53] "Letters to the Editor - Buses to Romford," *Harlow Citizen,* 4 December 1953, 3; "Residents want shopping trips to Romford," *Harlow Citizen,* 20 August 1954, 1.

[54] James Greenhalgh, "Consuming communities: the neighborhood unit and the role of retail spaces on British housing estates, 1944-1958," *Urban History* 43, no. 1 (2016), 158-174.

May 1956 was an occasion for civic celebration. The *Harlow Citizen* recalled four trumpeters wearing the uniform of the Essex Yeomanry greeting those "bright-eyed housewives bubbling over with the prospect of being able to find a bargain."[55] Harlow's mixture of retail pasts and consumption needs became a model of success as more new towns moved away from building residential areas to expanding their shopping and civic cores in the late 1950s. On Harlow market's ten-year anniversary, pieces in *The Architects' Journal* and *The Times* commended the community's transcendence of its immediate housing purpose and its adoption of a dense town center "like all true towns should have."[56] The success and retention of the market was critical to this congregation: it grew from a single event of 46 stalls in 1956 to a thronging three-day-a-week market in 1964. The Development Corporation contrasted its positive bustle to the "usual traffic-choked market square" that historic towns faced on market day.[57] The appeal of "traditional shopping" drew in visitors from the surrounding rural area, whereas once the region's shoppers had to travel into London for a bustling market.[58] In 1959, one observer called Harlow's problem of how to develop as a regional center "solved" by the hundreds of people pouring in by bus, coach, and private car to shop at the open market and the larger multiple shops in the town center.[59] In the face of rising ambivalence about the new town project, Harlow remained an outlying example of true urbanity—with the market a welcome antidote to the perceived dreariness of "subfusc Britain."[60] The planned design of Gibberd and the property

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[55] "The Market," *Harlow Citizen,* 25 May 1956, 8.
[56] "Harlow New Town: Thriving 10-year-old Community," *The Architects' Journal*, 23 May 1957, 766-767; Our Architectural Correspondent, "Impressive Progress in Harlow's Centre," *The Times,* 29 October 1957, 13.
[57] East Anglican Film Archive. "An Experiment in Towns," Harlow Development Corporation, 1958.
[58] Gibberd, "Harlow New Town: Ten Years After," *Sunday Times* 19 May 1957, 19.
[59] ERO A/TB 1/8/2/75. Basildon Development Corporation, General Manager's correspondence. "New Towns Exhibition" (1959), 21.
[60] Robert Harling, "The New Towns Lose Their Chill," *Sunday Times,* 27 September 1959, 34; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair*, 9 November 1957, 19.

aspirations of Estates officers met in this retailing success: the hub function of the market had turned Harlow from an inward-looking, self-sufficient town to a regional draw in the district.

In 1958, *The Architectural Review* published the most sustained and in-depth study of Harlow's market-led shopping area, "Hubs Without Wheels." Presumably a reference to the value of prioritizing the completing of the core before outlying residential and industrial districts, the Gibberd-penned article analyzed Harlow's distinction and success not only in relation to its new town contemporaries, but also as an exemplar of new overspill communities across northern Europe. Vällingby in Sweden was seen as the "yard stick" of new planned centers, but while Vällingby ascribed to the "vertical city," high-density model in vogue among continental functional modernist planners, Harlow seemed to balance the picturesque and the modern in more human terms. The pedestrian was able to explore the enclosed and sheltered market square, with its live shopping area of stalls and booths. Gibberd's choice to design the market square "at all times alive and busy" drew as many different activities as possible into its orbit.[61] The lack of motor traffic at the core of the town did not hinder its economic prospects: the long-distance shopper appreciated the ringed car parks that filled up on market days, and they learned to transition from motorized to pedestrianized modes of shopping (Figure 3.1).

[61] "Hubs Without Wheels," *The Architectural Review* (June 1958), 381.

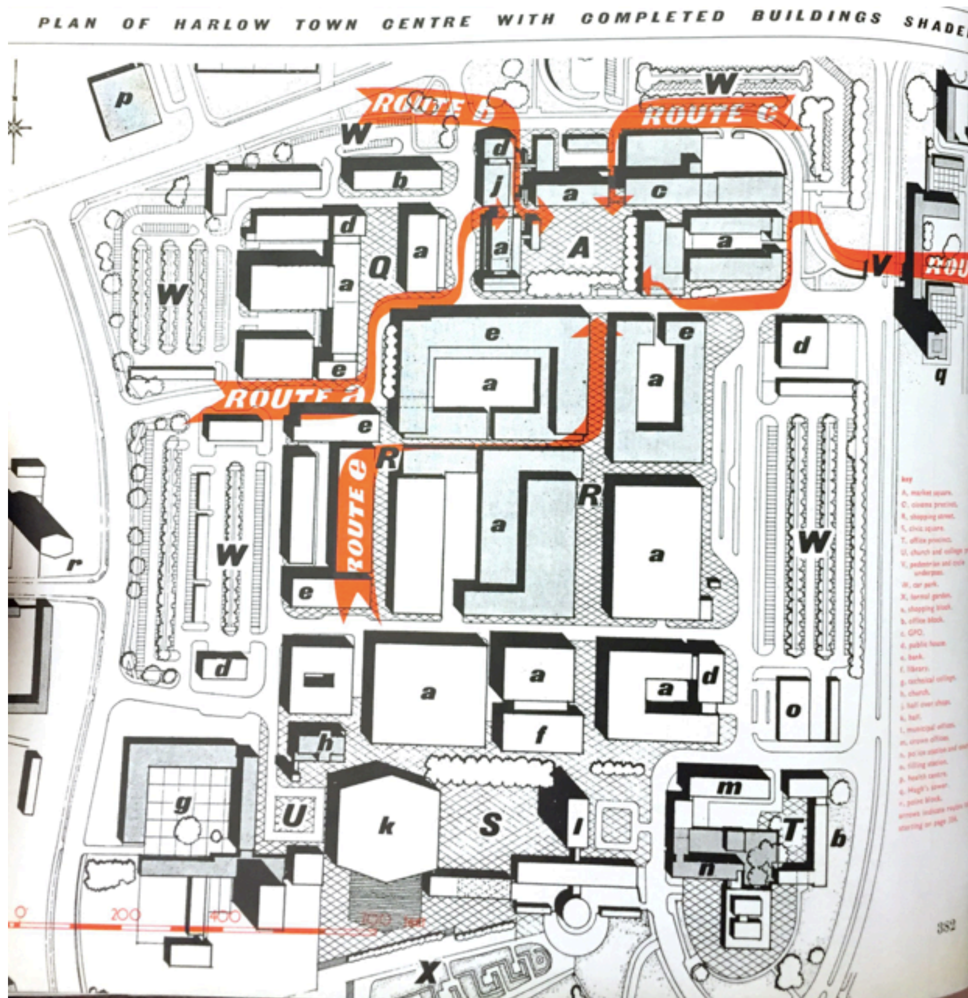

Figure 3.1. Pedestrian "routes" to the Market Square (A) from various car parks. "Hubs Without Wheels," *The Architectural Review* (June 1958), 382.

"Hubs Without Wheels" included not only diagrams, but also photographs that revealed how Harlow's residents were using the square on a busy market day.[62]

[62] These photography surveys were divided between H.L. Wainwright, Reginald Hugo de Burgh Galwey, and John McCann. Paulo Citric, "Subtopic: Photography, Architecture and the New Towns Programme" (PhD dissertation, University of Westminster, 2012), 160-162.

Figure 3.2. "Hubs Without Wheels," *The Architectural Review* (June 1958), 383 & 390.

In *Town Design,* Gibberd had critiqued the sterile staging of "urban scene" photography: the perspective from one idealized point, often devoid of human activity, was a misrepresentation of how townscape thinkers conceptualized the vital city.[63] The photographs in "Hubs Without Wheels" and their corresponding captions gave commercial life to Gibberd's series of "rooms." The temporary canvas stalls that litter the square are juxtaposed against the modernist low-rise blocks that enclose the shopping space. One caption compares the "confusion and bustle of the market" to the mixed retail-office block that provides a "background of order." The modernity of Harlow's market is fully captured, however, in one particular shot.

[63] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 5.

Figure 3.3. Close up of photograph in “Hubs Without Wheels, 390.

The entire expanse of the modernist Market House overwhelms the background, while the foreground is flanked by the rows of traditional stalls where two Teddy Boys stroll. The genre of the photographs—at once architectural and ethnographic—captured the market place at a crosscurrent of two currents of historical time. On the one hand, there is the haphazard bustle of the weekly market—shoppers and traders were attracted to the allure of “traditional” commerce, the one-on-one interaction with the vendor, the proximity of the merchandise. On the other hand, the signs of “modernity Britain” were inscribed in both the market’s form and in its participants: the abundance of consumer goods, the clean lines of modernist architecture, and the playful fashion of a new generation. Five years earlier, Gibberd had claimed that one of his town design goals was to “think of his raw materials in terms of time... their place in historical time, their effect on past time or tradition, their immediate effect as contemporary objects, and their effect on future time.”[64] Harlow Market, as the crossroads of a series of shopping practices, urban

[64] Gibberd, *Town Design*, 19.

forms, and generations of buyers and sellers, was an apt symbol of these spatial and temporal concerns.

The retail market was threatened from two flanks in the immediate postwar period. On one side, there were often informal alliances between planners and shopkeepers—like the case of Swansea) that denigrated the open market as an anachronistic, under-used site on valuable city center land. This conflict largely played out in blitzed city centers, where the potential for comprehensive redevelopment compelled civil servants, retailers, and planners to take sides over the present and future profitability of central area land uses. On the other side, there were overspill communities whose planners grappled with building an urban hub from scratch. In Harlow, the traditional open-air market aided the endeavor of building a new community that had the emotional resonance and economic opportunities of an old one. Frederick Gibberd's ethos and plans celebrated the market as a feature of England's past that could bridge the commercial practices of the past with the consumerist hopes of the future. Reading the retail market across schools of planning thought and planning spaces in the mid-century—the retail renewal of blitzed city centers and the quest for community in inorganic new towns—suggests how the break between tradition and modernist planning was not clean or consistent across urban forms. The fundamental question of how to organize commercial and social place in a town or city made the central retail market a fraught site for competing visions of communication, commerce, and congestion.

Comprehensive Development and Leicester Market

New Towns and blitzed communities were the first order of town planning after the Second World War; the question of what to do about strangled and "down at heel" city centers was taken

up slightly later and was more fraught. If the New Towns Act (1946) structured the development stages of fledgling new towns, then the Town and Country Planning Act (1947) did the same for Britain's established towns and cities. Within development plans, there were Comprehensive Development Areas [CDAs] where local authorities (i.e. the state) wielded "compulsory purchase powers" to obtain large tracts of land for systematic redevelopment.[65] In essence, CDAs were the pragmatic units of purchase and development whereby planners could put their ideas on paper into action in the city. Although originally legislators and observers vested them with a positive role in alleviating blight, they have since garnered a negative connotation as the epitome of postwar Britain's turn from human-centric idealist planning to land pricing and technocratic zoning.[66] In addition, historians often look at the CDA framework in the context of "slum clearance" and the way in which modernist renewal ultimately miscarried the welfare state principles of new-build public housing. A combination of purchasing powers, cheap building techniques, and Brutalist fads combined to destroy urban neighborhoods and relegate the British working class to new tower block slums.[67] However, to use housing as a stand-in for *all* modernist renewal is to privilege the domestic scale and its debasement under the planner's gaze. Diverting attention to retail markets, alternative but ubiquitous features of the town and city

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[65] T. Hart, *The Comprehensive Development Area* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd), 12.

[66] Association of Planning and Regional Reconstruction. *Town and Country Planning Textbook* (London: Architectural Press, 1950), xiii; Gordon Cherry, *Town Planning in Britain since 1900: The Rise and Fall of the Planning Ideal* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 133; Peter Larkham and Keith Lilley, "Exhibiting the city: planning ideas and public involvement in wartime and early post-war Britain," *Town Planning Review* 83, no. 6 (2012), 665; Allison Ravetz, *Remaking Cities* (London, Croom Helm, 1980), 77.

[67] Ravetz, *Remaking Cities,* 144; Patrick Dunleavy, *The Politics of Mass Housing in Britain, 1945-75: Study of Corporate Power and Professional Influence in the Welfare State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Miles Glendinning and S. Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* (London: Abacus, 2007), 627-628.

center fabric, elucidates where and how traditional forms of sociability found a place within postwar planning projects.[68]

The 1947 Act gave local authorities the power to redevelop their city centers, but it took over a decade for an economic upturn to free up the capital for these projects. As outlined in the previous two sections, the first development grants went towards bombed residential areas and New Towns, leaving many central areas in un-damaged cities languishing through the 1950s. Recent historians have focused on the early 1960s as a key turning point for city center redevelopment: Labour's reentry in 1964 was not a radical policy shift, for the period between 1959-1966 witnessed a cross-party effort to hasten and ease redevelopment in town and city centers.[69] By 1963, the government had agreed on seventy-five comprehensive development schemes in the country. Those in city centers—where markets occupied central and valuable land—remained skeletal until developers approached the council with the funds and the rebuilding vision.[70] In both market trading circles and in the Townscape editorial pages, fears grew that the open, "underdeveloped" market squares would fall to the hammer of modernist renewal.[71]

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[68] Florian Urban, *Tower and Slab: Histories of Global Mass Housing* (London: Routledge, 2011); Jim Yelling, "The development of residential urban renewal policies in England: planning for modernization in the 1960s," *Planning Perspectives* 14 (1999), 1-18; Key texts in the post-war retail and consumption led rebuilding and renewal including Peter Mandler, "New towns for old: the fate of the town centre" in *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1945-1964,* eds. Becky Conekin et al. (London: Rivers Oram Press,
1999), 208-227; Otto Saumarez Smith, "Central government and town-centre redevelopment in Britain, 1959-1966," *The Historical Journal* 58, no. 1 (2015), 217-244; James Greenhalgh, "Consuming communities: the neighborhood unit and the role of retail spaces on British housing estates, 1944-1958," *Urban History* 43, no. 1 (2016): 158-174.
[69] Saumarez Smith, "Central government," 220. See Ministry of Housing and Local Government and Ministry of Transport, *Town Centres: Approach to Renewal* (London: HMSO, 1962).
[70] Peter Shapeley, "The Entrepreneurial City: The Role of Local Government and City-Centre Redevelopment in Post-War Industrial English Cities," *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 4 (2011), 508-509.
[71] Arthur Lindsay, "Some Thoughts on Open Markets," *World's Fair* 27 February 1960, 27; Arthur Lindsay, "Market Square is now just a Memory," *World's Fair*, 24 June 1961, 28; "Market Medley," *World's Fair* 13 January 1962, 23; "Birmingham's Bull Ring Centre," *The Architects' Journal,* 4 February 1960, 73; Ian Nairn, "Lancashire Mill Towns," *The Architectural Review* (July 1962), 47-50.

In Leicester, the market became the central feature of the city's earliest redevelopment debate. Although Leicester was a fairly prosperous manufacturing city of over 200,000, the city's core was still considered "listless" and targeted for comprehensive renewal in 1961.[72] The city surveyor and planning officer proposed a complete reconstruction of Leicester Market Place, a lucrative project that attracted eight separate development groups.[73] News of the plan fueled a minor revolt on the Letters to the Editor page of the *Leicester Mercury:* fears ranged from Leicester losing its reputation as a good value shopping destination for housewives in the region, to factory workers anxious of losing the outdoor market where the working class could "breath in God's fresh air."[74] In other words, the market provided the best of both worlds for the shopping public: its outdoor atmosphere filled a need for those who came from the industrial workforce, and its competitive deals filled a need for those housewives who flocked from the surrounding towns. The survival of the outdoor market, for one letter writer, was proof that the market symbolized "Leicester's individuality as a market town for true city it will never be."[75]

The voices of concerned shopper-citizens were amplified by the Market Area Traders' Association, the Leicester Auctioneers' Estate Agents' Association, the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Leicester Credit Traders' Association. As professional organizations, these groups opposed any plan that would disrupt the interconnected network of businesses in the market area and "sacrifice the last remaining vestige of the town's character."[76] Particularly egregious in the eyes of these protesters was Leicester planning department's proposal to use Stevenage New Town as a model for their rebuilt shopping precinct. One

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[72] Peter Preston, "Open Market," *The Guardian,* 6 November 1963, 7.
[73] T.M.P. Bendixson, "Soundly based plan for new market," *The Architects' Journal* 24 April 1963, 863-864.
[74] "Working Class," "Readers Letters – Market suits my pocket," *Leicester Mercury,* 22 December 1961, 4.
[75] John Moore, "Readers Letters – Losing our unique market for concrete hotchpotch," *Leicester Mercury,* 6 December 1961, 4.
[76] Ernest A. Robinson, "Readers Letters – Leicester's last vestige of character," *Leicester Mercury,* 16 December 1961, 4.

"disgusted ratepayer" asked if "Stevenage [had] a market that is part of the history of England?", while another article wryly noted that even the "advanced design" in the new town didn't prevent Stevenage from holding a 60-stall market two days a week.[77] The cost-benefit of redesigning Leicester without its traditional commercial core seemed farcical if the sites of new urban architecture in the 1960s—the New Towns—were trying to replicate the very heart of English market town life.

After this protest in the press and the petitioning of market traders, the council hired new personnel to reassess their original recommendations. The formation of the team of Konrad Smigielski (Chief Planning Officer), J.D. Trustram Eve (new economic surveyor), and Kenneth Browne (*The Architectural Review*'s Townscape editor) signaled not only a shift for the ethos of Leicester's redevelopment, but also a new collaborative direction for modernist planning. Working under Smigielski's eye, Eve and Browne surveyed the quantitative and qualitative value of Leicester Market.[78] Eve reworked Leicester's catchment projection with a new market area rents survey, which found that unchecked expansion of retail floorspace would ultimately prove uneconomical for the city's finances.[79] Like Saunders in Swansea and Gibberd in Harlow, Eve cautioned against speculating on consumer spending growth and rent values; instead, he argued that the duty of the council was to protect the shopping relationship already in place. Steeped in Townscape's belief in the pleasure of mixing old and new structures, Browne urged Leicester planners to preserve the market's surrounding alleys and arcades. The only sustaining redevelopment would be to the market's interwar shed roof, which should be removed and

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[77] "Disgusted ratepayer," "Readers Letters – Market is Leicester's Heritage," *Leicester Mercury,* 13 December 1961, 4; "Shopping without noise or danger – Leicester may copy Stevenage Precinct," *Leicester Mercury,* 29 December 1961, 14.
[78] Eve's appointment actually predated Smigielski's (May rather than September 1962), suggesting that Leicester Council were more concerned with the financial rather than the planning/aesthetic costs of the market proposal.
[79] Bendixson, "Soundly based plan."

replaced with colorful umbrellas. This would open up a view over the open piazza to the facade of the Victorian Corn Exchange.

Illustrations from Browne's report were published *in The Architectural Review* in August 1963,[80] which conveyed the movement and vibrancy of the market (Figures 3.4 and 3.5). Sketchy, serial perspective views on alleys and arcades, complete with recommendations about how light, curves, and visual surprise could all be cultivated at the market area, are an entry point into Townscape's guiding principles of feeling, surprises, and excitement for the individual.

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[80] Browne's report (with some Ian Nairn commentary) are now lost, much to the chagrin of historians who have taken a new interest in Townscape aesthetics and influences. http://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/Missing-1960s-report-revealed-city-planners-8217/story-26922804-detail/story.html

LEICESTER MARKET

TOWNSCAPE

1. *Leicester Market as proposed.*

Leicester Market is one of the biggest and wealthiest in the country. It operates under a set of crude sheds, 2, which now need replacing, and some of the property around the market-place has run down also. The scheme for its redevelopment, prepared by the city planning officer, Konrad Smigielski and shown in the model, 1, above, has rehabilitated instead of sweeping away—a conclusion reached independently for different reasons by the economic consultant, J. D. Trustram Eve. It was Smigielski's first big job in Leicester but he resisted the temptation to plan a monument to himself, and resisted also the seductive package deals of developers who would have built all over the only part of central Leicester with any character.

The designers, led by Henryk Blachniki, kept the shape of the market-place. The old roofs are replaced by an extensible pattern of interlocking hexagons which provide an open space in front of the steps of the old Corn Exchange, previously invisible. Kenneth Browne was retained as townscape consultant to advise on the existing character and suggest how it could be enhanced in the new buildings. The remainder of this feature is based on his report and the sketches that formed part of it. It represents a break-through for the use of an independent but experienced eye, unconcerned with political expedients or aesthetic theories, seeing the place simply as an organism or personality.

I.N.

2, *the existing market.*

— a townscape notebook
by Kenneth Browne

① entry

The present system of alleyways & arcades should be extended – –

Figure 3.4. "Townscape: Leicester Market," *The Architectural Review* (August 1963), 109.

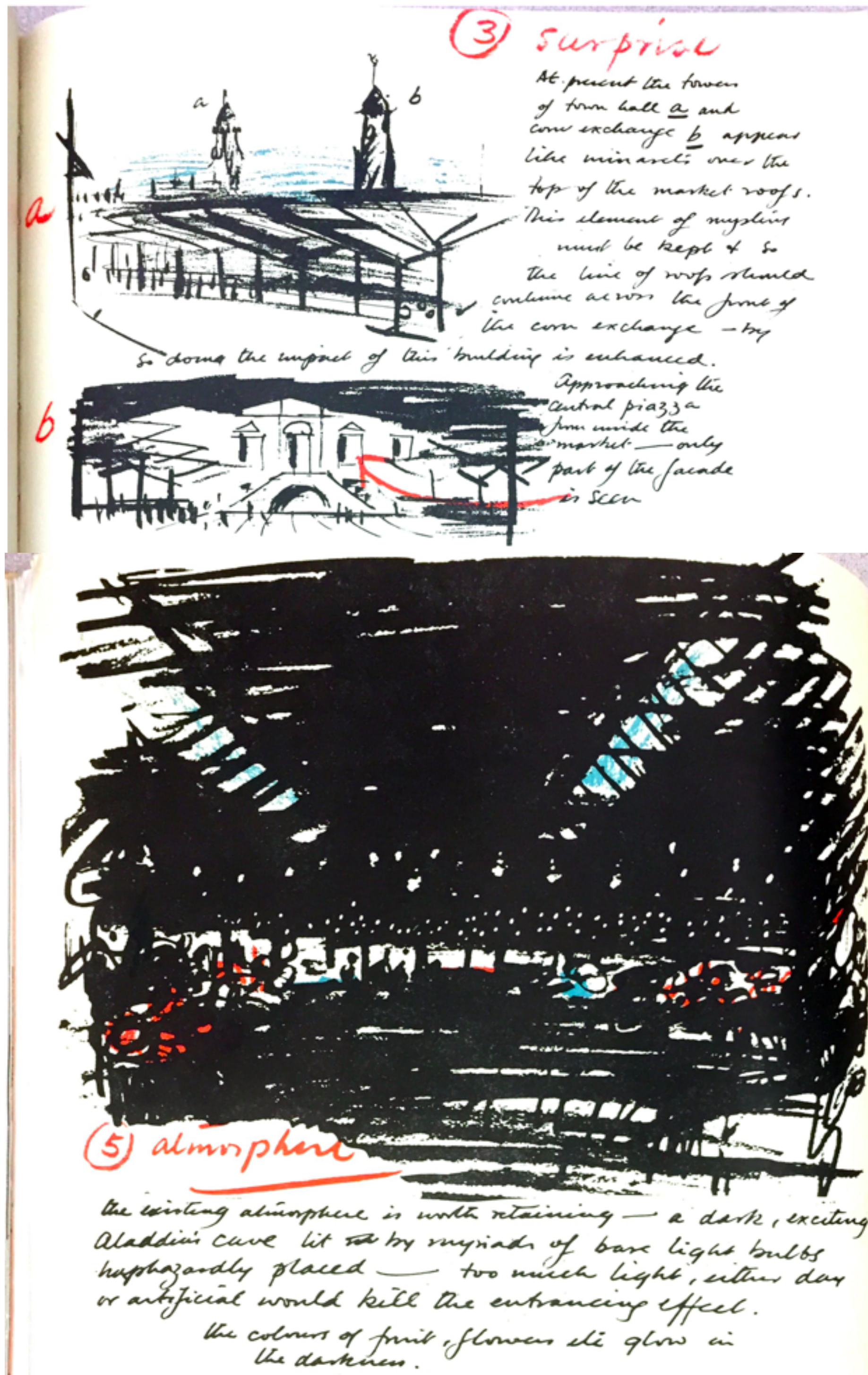

Figure 3.5. "Townscape: Leicester Market," *The Architectural Review* (August 1963), 112.

Ian Nairn celebrated Browne's viewpoint as a "break-through for the use of an independent but experienced eye, unconcerned with political expedients or aesthetic theories, seeing the place

simply as an organism or personality."[81] Browne's authority, in Nairn's view, came not only from his dissociation from council politics and development proposals, but also from his place-sensitive treatment of the marketplace. Via marketplace renewal, Browne bridged the divide between editorial celebration of town life and the concrete planning proposals of city center redevelopment. *The Architects' Journal* heralded this collaboration as the reconciliation of "economic, traffic engineering and urban design factors."[82]

Ultimately, Smigielski had to package these financial and aesthetic recommendations for a public audience. Smigielski, a Polish émigré, had been working as a lecturer in architecture and town planning at Leeds University in the 1950s. He could be categorized as one of the generation of postwar planners who, like Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, moved between the academic/training and professional/practical realms. And, like Tyrwhitt in CIAM or Gibberd in Harlow, Smigielski often found himself working against the logics of modernist urbanism and the wishes of developers and councilors. For example, Smigielski saw Leicester facing fundamentally different challenges than bombed out centers like Coventry or new developments like Stevenage: since the historic market "core" of Leicester was still intact, the challenge was redeveloping its circulation and layout to modern commercial standards.[83] In Smigielski's view, Leicester market's draw for city and county folk alike saw no signs of decline, a value of the market that planners could not disturb. The layout of medieval streets around the market was "organic," "orderly," and "attractive," and with minimal through traffic moving via the market square, the area could be easily pedestrianized. Smigielski, therefore, took his initial cues from the market's historic form rather than circulating modernist logic.

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[81] Ian Nairn, "Townscape: Leicester Market," *The Architectural Review* (August 1963), 109.
[82] Bendixson, "Soundly based plan."
[83] Konrad Smigielski, *Redevelopment of Market Area Leicester Report* (Leicester, 1963), 1-2.

Smigielski rooted these choices both in the empirical eye of the urban planner and in the affective connections of an urban enthusiast. For example, Smigielski challenged Leicester Council's application of comprehensive development powers to the whole market area, arguing that the site fulfilled neither the "war damage," "bad layout," or "obsolete development" that justified compulsory purchase and rebuilding.[84] Considering that Smigielski came to Leicester carrying the reputation of a "first flatten then soar" apostle, this ideological shift appeared sudden.[85] Smigielski, in his proposals and in the press, spoke as an "avowed market addict" who grew to love his adopted East Midlands city through its "oldest form of shopping." Speaking as a planning ally of the Townscape school, Smigielski believed nothing was more "English" than market atmosphere, and this informality and "chaos" returned humanity to the urban core.[86] He loved to wander through the stalls at lunch, eavesdropping on the haggling and enjoying the spiel of the traders.

Smigielski thus emerged as an unexpected champion of the traditional open market. Invited to speak at the fifteenth AGM of National Association of British Market Authorities in 1963, the Leicester planning official spoke openly about his fears of a technological age where "goods are displayed like corpses in tins and the general atmosphere is of an orderly standardization and perfect anonymity."[87] Preaching to those civil servants charged with managing public markets across the country, Smigielski celebrated open markets as complex, rich, and varied facets of urban life that should not be side-lined as "anachronisms." Even the most "modern" of shopping developments—from the New Towns to Stockholm—had

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[84] Smigielski, *Redevelopment*, 4.
[85] Preston, "Open Market."
[86] Preston, "Open Market."
[87] TNA MAF 303/85/10. Consultations with National Association of Market Authorities. Smigielski, "The Problems of Open Markets." Report of the Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual General Meeting and Conference (1963), 63.

reintegrated open markets into their city centers. Although open markets may contradict the "efficiency" of modernist renewal, sweeping them away would ultimately destroy the very characteristic that made cities livable: their humanity.[88]

Historians have largely studied Smigielski as the first city planning officer who wholeheartedly adopted the recommendations of the Buchanan Report in 1964, carrying out a scientific traffic survey in order to prepare and transform Leicester for the age of the motorcar.[89] However, shifting focus to Smigielski's recommendations for his *first* Leicester project—the marketplace—reveals how modernist streamlining of the city fabric was deeply embedded in the practices and emotional ties of the past. Like Gibberd, Smigielski saw the market as a material and immaterial hub in the commercial network of the city. While Gibberd saw Harlow Market as a catalyst in the city's nascent retail provision, Smigielski saw the market as the lynchpin in Leicester city and country shopping catchment. Gibberd, as Harlow New Town master-architect, and Smigielski, as Leicester's first Chief Planning Officer, grounded their arguments not only in the economic and site surveys at their disposal, but also in the structure of human feeling they experienced at the marketplace. The "personality," "vitality," and "jostle" reflected not only a healthy commercial landscape, but also the critical mixing and congregation that defined town and city living. In its congestion and its economic function, therefore, Gibberd and Smigielski saw the market as a scalable and transferable tool for ordering modern urban life while connecting its humanity to a civic past.

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[88] TNA MAF 303/85/10. Smigielski, "The Problems of Open Markets," 64.
[89] Simon Gunn, "The Buchanan Report, Environment and the Problem of Traffic in 1960s Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 4 (2011), 521-542. Richard Harrison, "Traffic and urban environment in 1960s Britain: the cases of Leicester and Milton Keynes" (PhD dissertation, University of Leicester, 2015); Guy Ortolano, "Planning the Urban Future in 1960s Britain," *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 2 (2011), 477-507. For a new publication that appears to focus on different aspects of Smigielski's career (more in line with his market interest), see Simon Gunn, "Between Modernism and Conservation: Konrad Smigielski and the Planning of Postwar Leicester" in *Leicester: A Modern History,* eds. R Rodger and RM Madgin (Lancaster: Carnegie Press, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter started with a peek into how the market was discussed in the highest echelon of architectural modernism in the postwar period. Recent histories on postwar planning have argued—much like the Le Corbusier-Tyrwhitt exchange—that functionalist modernism and modernist renewal were never as orthodox or hegemonic as we have been led to expect.[90] However, this perspective on the intellectual dissent and complexities of modernism largely remains at the level of intellectual biography,[91] professional and ideological debates,[92] transnational networking,[93] and political history.[94] While these approaches illuminate how modernism and its discontents traveled transnationally or became embedded in national histories, they do so while eliding one of the constant refrains from those individuals who protested functionalist thinking in the first place: human behavior, irrational institutions, and everyday life all matter. By foregrounding the *site* of the market rather than the *principles* of its rationalization, we are better equipped to understand where and why the ideals of modernist renewal fell to the reality of lived experience.

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[90] Christopher Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Rosemary Wakeman, "Rethinking postwar planning history," *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 2 (2014), 153-163; Ortolano, "Planning the Urban Future in 1960s Britain"; Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (ed.), *Alternative Modernities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).
[91] Pendlebury, "The urbanism of Thomas Sharp"; Ellen Shoshkes, *Jacqueline Tyrwhitt: A Transnational Life in Urban Planning and Design* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013); Darley and McKie, *Ian Nairn*; Otto Saumarez Smith, "Graeme Shankland: A sixties architect-planner and left-wing political culture," *Architectural History* 57 (2014), 393-422; Engler, *Cut and Past Urban Landscape;* Peter Laurence, *Becoming Jane Jacobs* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).
[92] Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse*; John Gold, *The Practice of Modernism: Modern Architects and Urban transformation, 1954-1972* (London: Routledge, 2007); Samuel Zipp and Michael Carriere, "Introduction: Thinking through Urban Renewal," *Journal of Urban History* 39, no. 3 (2012), 359-365.
[93] See articles by Carola Hein, Andreas Joch, Phillip Wagner and Clément Orillard in *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 2 (2014).
[94] Erika Hanna, *Modern Dublin: Urban Change and the Irish Past, 1957-1973* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Saumarez Smith, "Central Government."

From purpose-built New Towns to the first stages of historically sensitive urban renewal, the collective and sociable features of the traditional retail market left their mark on planning proposals in postwar Britain. Markets' permeable boundaries, sporadic activities, and raucous atmospheres recalled a retail economy of the past, not the enclosed and zoned shopping landscape of the future. On the level of knowledge production, then, this chapter has argued for placing informality and tradition at the heart of what architect-planners and local bureaucrats believed about the structure and power of urban living. Markets, as sites of congestion and mixing, shaped the lived experience and mobilities of their users, but also shaped the rationale and vantage point of their planners. James Scott has argued that "formal schemes of order are untenable without some of the practical knowledge that they tend to dismiss."[95] Extending Scott's formulation to the economic arguments of Saunders, to the tone of Gibberd's plans, or to the proposals and publicity of Smigielski suggests where the technocracy of planning could methodologically overlap with the affective register of place-making. The retail market was the spatial nexus where these two regimes of "knowing" British towns and cities converged.

This chapter has concentrated on cases where postwar comprehensive planning *failed* to dislodge sites that were associated with the "irrational" and "antiquated" congested city. Ultimately Swansea's Market was rebuilt on its central site, Harlow's Market Place flourished, and Leicester's Market remained. However, for every Swansea, Harlow, or Leicester there was a Cumbernauld, Nottingham, or Sheffield, where councilors enshrined modern precincts and enclosed centers as the focal point of the British shopping city, often at the expense of older market buildings and open-air market squares. And for every Gibberd or Smigielski, there were property developers like Arndale or Town Centre Securities, whose interest in the urban core

[95] Scott, *Seeing Like a State,* 7.

was based in financial investment rather than in fostering urbanism. The following chapter will ask "whither the traditional market?" in schemes of this kind, and what these markets' changing roles reveal about the relationship between "sustenance" and "affluence" in 1960s and 1970s Britain.

Chapter 4: Shopping as Development:
The Limits of Market Modernization in 1960s Britain

Introduction

As Konrad Smigielski drew up his plans to sympathetically preserve the character of Leicester's open market, roughly sixty miles north along the future route of the M1, Sheffield's market authorities were engaged in an altogether different project. In the summer of 1963, a photo spread in *The Architects' Journal* heralded Sheffield as the "Counterdrift City." The "drift" was the economic might of London and the South, the "counter" was the comprehensive development plan being carried out by the city's architects and planners.[1] The photographs and corresponding text in *The Architects' Journal* depicted this revolution in the retail environment: the city's anachronistic, open-air Sheaf Market sat side-by-side with modernist developments like Park Hill, Parkway, and the city's new Castle Market.

Castle Market would be part of the larger Castle Hill development, a ten-story mix of offices, entertainment facilities, and the rebuilt municipal market hall. The facility was based on vertical separation design: goods, people, and vehicles would circulate through the building along different tracks, producing maximum efficiency, comfort, and safety for traders and shoppers (Figure 4.1).[2] The monolithic concrete structure drew the attention of *The Architects' Journal, The Architectural Review,* the *Municipal Review,* and the architecture and design section of *The Guardian,* which called the comprehensive development of early 1960s Sheffield

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[1] Coined by Derrick Rigby Childs in early 1962. "Sheffield - Counterdrift City?," *The Architects' Journal,* 10 July 1963, 52.
[2] "The Urban Market," *The Architectural Review,* (August 1962), 87-91.

"of the greatest importance to us all."[3] Whether *Guardian* architectural columnist Diana Rowntree meant this "all" to refer to Brutalist architecture enthusiasts, proponents of comprehensive planning, or a general lay audience, her words captured the spirit of the early 1960s, when modernist urban design physically anchored a national public.[4]

While Smigielski saw Leicester's open-air market place as one component in a human-scaled historic townscape, Sheffield's architects imagined the vertical market as an anchoring feature in the city's undulating built and natural landscape. Castle Market, with its multi-level access points, would link the different functions of the rebuilt Sheffield core, stretching across the proposed inner ring road to connect with the Park Hill housing estate via "streets in the sky."[5] Not only did Castle Hill capitalize on the natural landscape of Sheffield's city center, but Sheffield's planning and development team also ensured that the construction of the site would accrue economic benefits to the city itself. *The Architectural Review* heralded the decision of Sheffield's planners to integrate the retail market into the city's close-knit commercial development.[6]

The goal of this "progressive reorganization" was, in part, to reorient Sheffield's economic identity away from the perceived masculine nature of industry towards the feminine connotations of retail and consumption. When he was interviewed for *The Architects' Journal,*

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[3] Diana Rowntree, "Hidden masterpiece: a study of Sheffield architecture," *The Guardian,* 17 April 1962, 20.
[4] See Peter Mandler, "New Towns for Old: The Fate of the Town Centre," in *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain 1945-1964,* eds. Becky Conekin et al (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1998), 208-227; Glen O'Hara, "Social democratic space: the politics of building in 'Golden Age' Britain, c. 1950-1973," *Architectural Research Quarterly* 10, no. 3-4 (2006), 285-290; Christopher T. Goldie, "'Radio Campanile': Sixties Modernity, the Post Office Tower and Public Space," *Journal of Design History* 24, no. 3 (2011), 207-222; Elain Harwood, *Space, Hope, and Brutalism: English Architecture, 1945-1975* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); Ben Highmore, *The Art of Brutalism: Rescuing Hope from Catastrophe in 1950s Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).
[5] Rowntree, "Hidden masterpiece," 20.
[6] "The Urban Market."

Sheffield city councilor Roy Hattersley—not yet an MP in Birmingham—discussed the need to change the civic image from

> A town doing dirty work, offering high rewards for heavy labour, but very little else, for girls, for instance…We have to redevelop our shopping area, and we are doing this. It took pioneering work to bring more shops in, but we are getting them. In the past people used to go from Sheffield to Leeds to buy their clothes. Now they're buying them here.[7]

In pursuit of these goals, planners had demolished the mid-nineteenth-century Norfolk Market Hall to clear space for a new Woolworth's building adjoining the Castle Hill site. In the view of City Architect Lewis Wormersley, the close proximity of the municipal market and private retail enterprise would make Sheffield "much more attractive and magnetic in the near future."[8] Wormersley's belief that public oversight and private business could co-exist was mirrored in the shopping route that Sheffield's architecture department designed for their consumer: the pedestrian bridges that linked the new Woolworth's building to the Market Hall were a metaphor for the commercial good achieved through "the close liaison between Local Authority and Private Developer" (see right third of the top schematic image in Figure 4.1).[9]

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[7] "Sheffield – Counterdrift City?," 64.
[8] J.L. Womersley, quoted in "Sheffield - Counterdrift City?," 83.
[9] J.L. Wormersley, "Comprehensive Replanning in Sheffield: Completion of Castle Retail Market Extensions," *Municipal Review* (November 1962), 741.

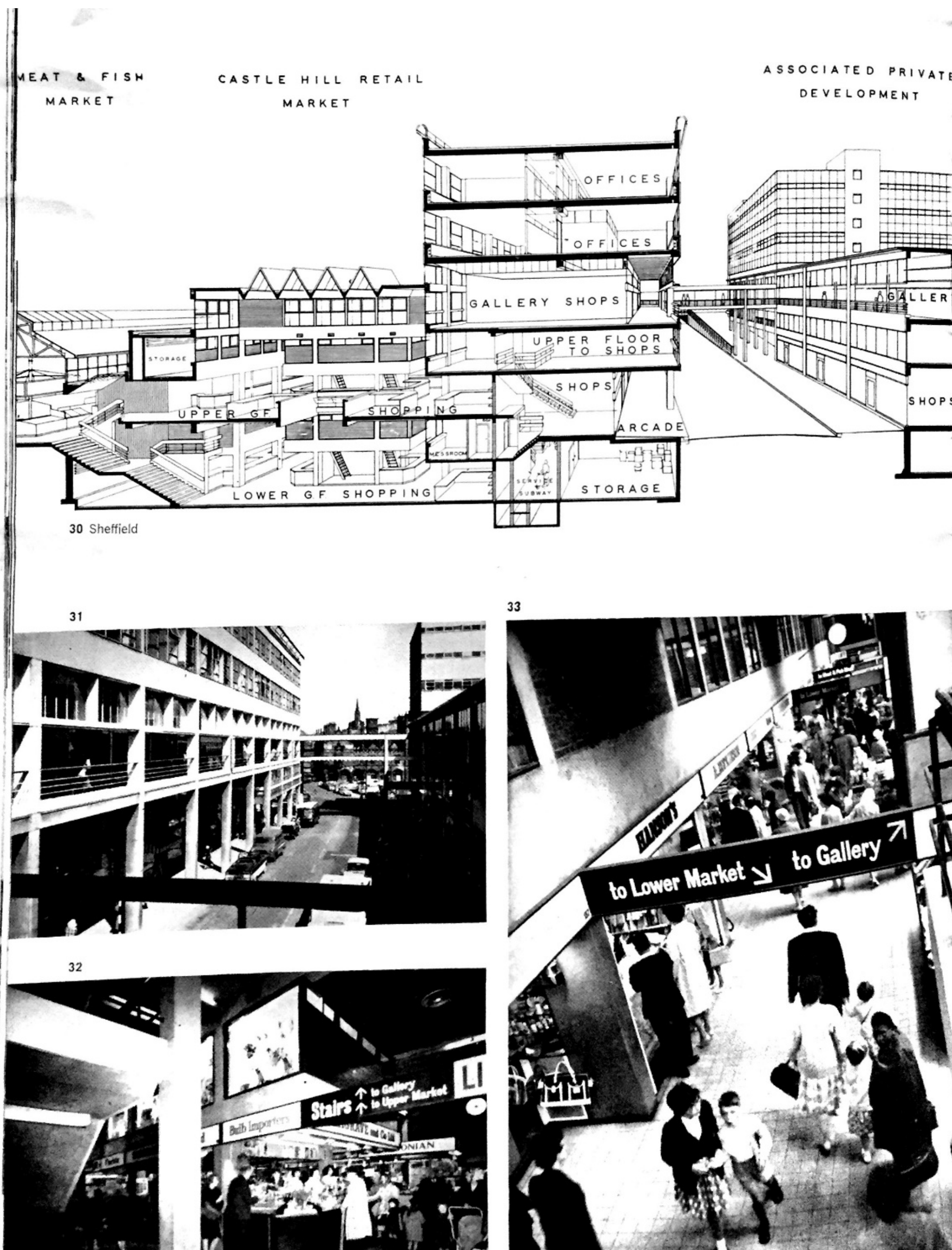

Figure 4.1. Ministry of Housing and Local Government and the Ministry of Transport, *Town Centres: Current Practice* (London: HMSO, 1963).

Hattersley's call to transform Sheffield from an industrial to a shopping city, combined with Wormersley's celebration of public-private cooperation as a means to achieving these ends, propels the driving question of this chapter: what role did retail markets play in urban redevelopment in 1960s Britain, and did the economic exigencies of comprehensive planning

alter the "public" whom markets served? Answering these questions entails building on the themes of the previous chapter—the architectural and design benefits of public, retail space at the heart of 1940s and 1950s cities—and thinking about the market as a meeting point of vested political economic interests in urban Britain. Not only did markets anchor the physical sense of "publicness" in post-war British consumer culture, but they also mediated the diverse socio-economic claims and objectives of public authorities, private interests, and the consumer-citizen in affluent Britain.

The publicly managed shopping environment of the municipal retail market fits in uneasily with the standard "five pillars" of the post-war British welfare state: social security, health care, education, housing, and personal social services.[10] As sites of food preparation and distribution, markets were tangentially related to advances in post-war public health, a topic more commonly associated with the foundation of the National Health Service or the modernization of public housing.[11] As sites of low-cost buying and selling catering to the ordinary consumer, they echoed the freedom from "want" promised by public housing and social security. Finally, as embedded features of the urban modernist architecture of post-war Britain, new-build markets, like the one in Sheffield, echoed the design ethos of purpose-built schools, hospitals, and public housing. Therefore, the "civicness" of the pre-war retail market entered a new social democratic register in the post-war period.

However, the hybrid identity of retail markets as both a home for "private" business and a "public" asset opened them to debates about the relative benefits of market forces.[12] On the one

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[10] Rodney Lowe, "The Second World War, Consensus, and the Foundation of the Welfare State," *Twentieth Century British History* 1, no. 2 (1990), 152-182.
[11] Rob Bartram and Sarah Shobrook, "Body Beautiful: Medical aesthetics and the reconstruction of urban Britain in the 1940s," *Landscape Research* 26, no. 2 (2001), 119-135.
[12] For a similar line of questioning on the tension between professional individualism and collective good in the NHS, see Andrew Seaton, "Against the 'Sacred Cow': NHS Opposition and the Fellowship for Freedom in Medicine, 1948-1972," *Twentieth Century British History* 26, no. 3 (2015), 424-449.

hand, the independent firms held within the market had a vested interest in maintaining the low-cost, high-turnover retail structure enabled by the retail market's informality and flexibility. In order to maintain this economy of scale, stallholders' associations largely sought to keep private business developers *out* of the market and maintain the local state as landlord. On the other hand, the main aims of local authorities in shopping development were to attract new tenants and grow their consumer base, two goals pursued in collaboration with property developers in the private sector.[13] The capital for comprehensive development often far exceeded the public funds that central government allotted to local authorities. After the first wave of postwar development saw the rebuilding of blitzed cities and the growth of the New Towns—like Swansea and Harlow, explored in the previous chapter—central government was largely unable to release public funds to support building projects (other than housing or schools) in non-blitzed towns and cities. In order to maintain shopping areas and attract desirable stores and consumers, therefore, local authorities had to off-load the financial risk of property development onto the private market. In a study of shopping centers built between 1963 and 1979, 56% were developed by the private sector, 8% by a local authority, and 36% were mixed.[14] And within the private sector, there was a group of development companies—Ravenseft, Arndale, Hammersons, Laing, Murrayfield, and Town & City—known as the "Big Six" who took the predominate role in these capital-intense projects.[15]

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[13] Wilfred Burns, *British Shopping Centres* (London: Leonard Hill, 1959); Ministry of Housing and Local Government and Ministry of Transport, *Town Centres: Approaches to Renewal* (London: HMSO, 1963); Ministry of Housing and Local Government and Ministry of Transport, *Town Centres: Current Practice* (London: HMSO, 1963).

[14] Ross L. Davies and David J. Bennison, *British Town Centre Shopping Schemes: A Statistical Digest* (Reading: The Unit for Retail Planning Information Limited, 1979), 197.

[15] Oliver Marriott, *The Property Boom* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1967), 121; Peter Scott, *The Property Masters: A History of the British Commercial Property Sector* (London: E & FN Spon, 1996), 177; Peter Shapely, "Governance in the Post-War City: Historical Reflections on Public-Private Partnerships in the UK," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 4 (2013), 1288-1304.

For historians of British and international urban renewal, the ascendency of the private property developer is symptomatic of the weakness or "short life" of a social democratic state at the local level of the mid-century town or city.[16] The particular role of retail development plays a major role across this strand of urban history, as the physical and ideological transformation of the Global Urban North's economic base from manufacturing and industry to retail and service. In Britain, the local case studies that are traditionally used by historians to attest to underscore this transition are Birmingham's Bull Ring Centre or London's Elephant and Castle Centre, the mid-1960s apotheoses of indoor consumerism designed by private developers for the motor age.[17] The role of the "private developer," therefore, has become a mode of narrating the decline of local authorities as managers of their built environments.[18]

This scholarship largely argues that the American model of shopping—designed for the affluent car owning consumer, built by free enterprise—was a key catalyst in the "newness" of projects like Bull Ring or Elephant and Castle. In dialogue with Victoria de Grazia's concept of the "soft power" of consumer-oriented capitalism, architectural and cultural historians of post-

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[16] See Sam Wetherell, "Pilot Zones: The New Urban Environment of Twentieth Century Britain" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2016), 94-120; Tracy Neumann, *Remaking the Rustbelt: The Postindustrial Transformation of North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Christopher Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011) for recent transnational, comparative studies.

[17] Marriott, *The Property Boom,* 214-233; Dominic Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties* (London: Little Brown, 2006), 626; David Knayston, *Modernity Britain, 1957-1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 395; Jo Lintonbon, "The Drive to Modernise: Remodelling Birmingham City Centre, 1945-65," in *Shopping Town Europe: Commercial Collectivity and the Architecture of the Shopping Centre, 1945-1975,* eds. Janina Gosseye and Tom Avermaete (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); David Adams, "Everyday experiences of the modern city: remembering the post-war reconstruction of Birmingham," *Planning Perspectives* 26, no. 2 (2011), 237-260; John Grindrod, *Concretopia: A Journey around the Rebuilding of Postwar Britain* (London: Old Street, 2013), 183-210.

[18] Lionel Esher, *A Broken Wave: The Rebuilding of England, 1940-1980* (London: Viking, 1981), 54; Steven Ward, "Public-Private Partnerships," in *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy*, ed. Barry Cullingworth (London: The Athlone Press, 1999), 248. For non-British cases, see Erika Hanna, "Dublin's North Inner City, Preservationism, and Irish Modernity in the 1960s," *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010), 1028; Tim Verlaan, "Producing space: post-war redevelopment as big business, Utrecht and Hannover 1962-1975," *Planning Perspectives* (published online 29 November 2017), 1-26; David Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation of Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B. Human Geography* 71, no. 1 (1989), 3-17.

war Britain have focused on not only how Americanization altered landscapes of buying and selling, but how the growth of self-service and advertising compelled the British public to see themselves as individual market actors.[19] For this group of scholars, shopping becomes a lens through which we can track the tangible gains of full employment and the provisions of the welfare state, alongside the more nebulous changes in cultural markers of class, gender, community, and nation.

Between the focus on public-private partnerships (by planning and urban historians) and the focus on a "soft" revolution in the practice of American-style retail and consumption (by social and cultural historians), there is little analytical space remaining from which to launch a study of continuity and the landscapes of ordinariness in post-war urban shopping life. In the last five years, however, scholarly trends in Britain and on the continent have rethought this tethering of post-war shopping landscapes to an era of affluence and Americanization. More specifically, the relationship between the promises of social democracy and the architecture and planning of the welfare state have emerged as an avenue of new retail and consumption research, closing the gap between those studies of consumerism and urbanism in Western Europe and those focusing on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Both James Greenhalgh's work on planned shopping in post-war estates and Elain Harwood's research on post-war modernist design each study retail

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[19] Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Rachel Bowlby, *Carried Away: The Invention of Modern Shopping* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000); Gareth Shaw et al, "Selling Self Service and the Supermarket: The Americanization of Business Retailing in Britain, 1945-1960," *Business History* 46, no. 4 (2004), 568-82; SR Bowlby, "Planning for Women to Shop in Postwar Britain," *Environment and Planning D* 2, no. 2 (1984), 179-199; Alexander et al, "The Co-Creation of a Retail Innovation: Shoppers and the Early Supermarket in Britain," *Enterprise and Society* 10, no. 3 (2009), 529-558; Paul du Gay, "Self-Service: Retail, Shopping and Personhood," *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 7, no. 2 (2004), 149-163; Stefan Schwarzkopf, "They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics," *Contemporary British History* 19, no. 2 (2005), 133-150.

provision as a type of social "necessity" born of the deprivations of war and the promises of the welfare state.[20]

Greenhalgh's and Harwood's recovery of the role of the state shares much with recent European transnational scholarship, in which Janina Gosseye and Tom Avermaete's collection, *Shopping Towns Europe* (2017), and Jan Logemann's *Trams or Tailfins?* (2012) rethink the dissemination and limits of Americanization in post-war consumption habits and environments. Across the fields of architectural, planning, and business historians, scholars are increasingly qualifying the narrative that social democracy was cut short by the reinforcing "isms" of consumerism and neoliberalism;[21] rather, as Logemann argues, the postwar state's promise of "public consumption"—the provision of publicly funded alternatives to private consumer goods and services, in areas ranging from housing to transportation to entertainment—worked as a contract between state and citizen to pursue a "third way" between American mass consumerism and the Soviet command economy.

This chapter, then, will argue that debates about the necessity of public retail markets in the new-build shopping centers of the 1960s put into place—literally—these questions about the "private interest" and the "public good" in postwar consumption. When local authorities and private developers decided to include a public retail market in a given shopping center or precinct, it raised questions not only about the design synergy of architectural pasts and presents, but also about the political economy of public space and who should ultimately benefit from

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[20] James Greenhalgh, "Consuming communities: the neighbourhood unit and the role of retail spaces on British housing estates, 1944-1958," *Urban History* 43, no. 1 (2016), 158-174; Harwood, *Space, Hope, and Brutalism.*
[21] Janina Gosseye and Tom Avermaete (eds.), *Shopping Towns Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); Jan Logemann, *Trams or Tailfins?: Public and Private Prosperity in Postwar West Germany and the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Roberto Parisini, "Between public consumption and private consumption: The commercial revolution and local government in Bologna 'the red' (1959-1981)," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 7, no. 1 (2015), 58-73; Frank Trentmann, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Consumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 16-17.

development. By historicizing markets not merely as pre-modern holdovers but as active players in the debate over provisioning in the postwar welfare state, we are better equipped to understand how the relationship between "private" and "public" played out not in diametric opposition, but in productive tension.[22] I will track where the market's "public" use stopped and "private" enterprise began (and *vice versa*) in the internal debates of Parliament and local authorities, the advocacy work of market traders' organizations, and the advertising and promotional ephemera produced by local authorities and property developers.

The first section examines the goals of the state in the modernization of retail markets. For the most part, national and local authorities wanted to bring markets indoors, align them with post-war health and safety regulations, and make them more trustworthy sites of buying in the eyes of the public. These developments worried the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) and local market traders' associations, who saw post-war development as a dangerous intrusion into the face-to-face, small scale, personal relationships that characterized markets as economic institutions. The second section shifts to how private-public partnerships sold the promise of a "modernized" market to the retail and consuming public, adopting the retail market's image of tradition and informality. Finally, the chapter will conclude with the case study of Seacroft Town Centre, Leeds. Developed as a "city within a city"—Leeds City Council's attempt to keep residents and businesses within their jurisdiction—Seacroft was an example of 1960s local state attempts to engineer a total built environment without the incursion of private influence, including retail outlets. The uneven fortunes of the shopping facilities at Seacroft ultimately raised pressing questions about the role of government in commercial speculation. At the center

[22] For thematically similar scholarship on post-war housing and the pre-history of "Right to Buy," see Matthew Francis, "'A Crusade to Enfranchise the Many': Thatcherism and the 'Property-Owning Democracy,'" *Twentieth Century British History* 23, no. 2 (2012), 275-297; Aled Davies, "'Right to Buy': The Development of a Conservative Housing Policy, 1945-1980," *Contemporary British History* 27, no. 4 (2013), 421-444.

of all of these controversies was Seacroft's fledgling open-air market. I argue that the trajectory of this market demonstrates the continuing value of under-development and flexibility in the post-war shopping landscape.

Reforming the Market: Demands of the State

Retail markets—particularly those still held occasionally and in the open-air—were subject to a series of new laws and regulations in the 1950s and 1960s. None of these legislative changes focused solely on markets; rather, they targeted informal and unregulated features of buying and selling deemed incompatible with modern consumer life. For example, the Mock Auctions Bill—discussed in chapter two—made progress in Parliament in the 1950s, led by the Co-op MP Norman Dodds. Dodds raised the issue of "mock auctioneer" advertisements proliferating in theatrical magazines and the alarming trend of manufacturing firms producing shoddy goods directly for sale by these traveling tricksters.[23] Like the mock auctions controversy in the 1920s and 1930s, there was no direct link between this genre of fraudulent retail and the physical space of the street or open-air market; rather, the practice and place were connected through popular culture and the popular press. Jed Stone of *Coronation Street* famously embodied the northern street trading entrepreneur, while a 1963 ATV feature and a 1964 BBC TV documentary, *The Grafters*, focused on the shadiness of goods that systematically found their way to Britain's markets.[24] As a Labour Co-operative MP, Dodds ensured that the Mock Auctions Bill enshrined the true "value" that market traders gave to customers against the "tricks" of the disreputable, mobile mock auctioneer. In the bill's amended form, Labour and Conservative MPs cautioned

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[23] *Hansard,* House of Commons Debate (HC Deb) 10 July 1953, vol. 517, col. 1671-1678.

[24] "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 30 March 1963, 41; "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 19 February 1966, 45; "Commons Debate on Mock Auctions," *World's Fair*, 7 August 1954, 17; HC Deb 29 July 1954, vol. 531, col. 838-847.

against any undue regulation of those traditional open-air markets that lowered the living expenses of the working class and attracted tourists to the market districts of Britain.[25] When the Bill was given Royal Assent in the summer of 1961, it represented over thirty years of Parliament's uneven and fitful attempt to legislate the informality of retail economies that moved through and at the fringes of Britain's towns and cities.

Alongside these mock auction regulations, there were a series of public health proposals that targeted the "atmosphere" of retail markets as rough-and-ready shopping establishments. The Food and Drugs Acts of 1954 and 1955 established a Food Hygiene Advisory Council, whose recommendations included constant hot water, adequate lighting, wash basins, and other sanitary features in food service areas.[26] Market authorities in Leeds, Gloucester, Swansea, and Bolton met these requirements by constructing separate meat and fish market premises in their 1950s and 1960s redevelopment proposals.[27] While market authorities "welcomed" hygienic trading legislation, they also recognized the immediate and subsequent costs involved in bringing antiquated market laws and buildings up to contemporary code.[28] When the *World's Fair* reported on ten traders in Norwich's open market who were fined in 1960 for placing food within eighteen inches of the ground, the trade press worried that technical fines were the beginning of a larger issue in the postwar period: an organized consumer's movement with no patience for pre-

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[25] HC Deb 24 February 1961, vol. 635, col. 1063.

[26] Anne Hardy, *Salmonella Infections, Networks of Knowledge, and Public Health in Britain, 1880-1975* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 217.

[27] "Frank 'Booster' Sims," *World's Fair,* 1 June 1957, 19; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds (hereafter WYAS Leeds), Acc 2777/1. Annual Report of Markets Committee to the Leeds City Council, 31 March 1957; Gloucestershire Archives (hereafter GA), GBR L2/9/3/1. New Estate market: [general], 19631-1966, City Architect's Department. City of Gloucester. Brief for new Eastgate Market, July 1965; The National Archives (hereafter TNA), BD11/3212. Proof of Evidence of William Cyril Rogers (Borough Estate Agent & Valuer). Swansea Market, 6 October 1960; Mass Observation (hereafter MO), Worktown Collection, 64-C: Markets and shops: County Borough of Bolton - markets undertaking, August 1959.

[28] TNA HLG 69/767. Royal Commission on Local Government in England (Redcliffe-Maud Commission): Minutes, Papers, and Maps. Evidence of Institute of Market Officers (4 November 1966), 2.

modern forms of buying and selling.[29] Traders critiqued legislation like the Consumer Protection Bill (later passed as the 1968 Trade Descriptions Act) as "preventing a lot of the good-natured exaggeration which at one time provided amusement for the crowds" and "[distorting the] image of the sly, dishonest market trader."[30] As groups including the Consumer Advisory Council, the Women's Advisory Council, and ultimately the Consumers' Association focused on educating the consumer-citizen, the obfuscated modes of buying and selling in the retail market became significant drawbacks in the modern marketplace.[31]

To meet these growing challenges from the organized consumer, market traders fell back on their collective power as a trade association. For example, during the waves of market redevelopment in the 1960s, the NMTF lobbied local authorities over individual traders' rights as tenants of the local authority. Considering that historians of British social housing count the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s as a gradual evolution in rights, welfarism, and consumerism among citizen-tenants, the NMTF's concerted action on the behalf of market businesses appears extraordinary for its national scope.[32] The Landlord and Tenant Act of 1954 was a major step forward for small, independent businesses in England and Wales: the law improved on existing legislation to shore up security of tenure for tenants of shops, offices, and factories and ensured this security by providing continuation and renewal of leases.[33] In a climate in which large scale redevelopment was rapidly replacing the imbricated landscape of small

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[29] "Fined for Offenses Against Food Act," *World's Fair,* 3 September 1960, 28; "Food Hygiene Regulations," *The Market Trader* (May 1956), 14.
[30] "Market Medley - Market atmosphere," *World's Fair,* 6 December 1969, 49; "President on 'distorted image of market trader,'" *World's Fair,* 2 March 1968, 17.
[31] For more on 1950s consumer activism, see Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167-193.
[32] Patrick Dunleavy, *The Politics of Mass Housing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Peter Shapely, "Planning, housing, and participation in Britain, 1968-1976," *Planning Perspectives* 26, no 1 (2010), 76.
[33] Michael Haley, "The statutory regulation of business tenancies: private property, public interest and political compromise," *Legal Studies* 19, no. 2 (1999), 224.

independent businesses in town and city centers, the issue of who "owned" commercial goodwill and rights to profitable retail sites was of paramount importance.

For market traders, this issue hit at the heart of their murky relationship to the local state and whether or not market stalls were "businesses" in the eyes of the law. In cities like Swansea and Gloucester, where retail markets were completely rebuilt in the late 1950s and 1960s, the new premises constituted a new "agreement" between the market tenant and the council, and therefore a host of questions about rent, upkeep, and fair business practices were raised by redevelopment. In Swansea, both the council and the traders used the 1954 Act as a last resort, preferring to negotiate in good faith about the rent at the newly opened market.[34] In Gloucester, on the other hand, the Council tried to argue that the relationship between local authorities and market traders was not one of "landlord" and "tenant," but of "licensor" and "licensee," and was therefore not bound by agreements over renewal and security of tenure. Correspondence between the Gloucester market tenants and their counsel, other local authorities, and the NMTF underscores the importance of clear language about tenancy agreements and market stalls as distinct "businesses."[35] Indeed, larger market authorities like Liverpool, Birmingham, and Derby used the language of "licensees" rather than "tenants" in their market stall applications, a precedent that worried local traders as they organized for more rights over the 1960s. Tenants in both Bradford and Bolton took their respective city councils to County Court in the early 1960s and retained their rights to assign a "successor" to their individual businesses (rather than going up for tender to the highest bidder).[36] One reason local authorities used wanted to maintain their

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[34] TNA BD 11/3212. Letter from John Coates (NMTF Secretary) to the Welsh Office, 3 May 1961.
[35] GA GBR/L6/23/B5789. Questionnaire on retail market, Further case for the opinion of counsel referring to Eastgate Market, Gloucester based upon certain aspects of case for counsel's opinion dated 29 January 1960; GA GBR/L6/23/B6293/9/137/2. Eastgate Market, Gloucester: General correspondence including correspondence with the National Market Traders Federation, 9 December 1939 to 12 July 1961.
[36] *World's Fair,* 1 June 1963, 12.

rights as licensors, rather than merely landlords, was to prevent large chain retailers from buying up valuable goodwill in the commercial heart of the city. Market tenants did not see the ultimate aims of this strategy, rather they focused on the wording as a direct affront to their identity as independent traders. What was at stake in cases like Bradford, Bolton, and Gloucester, therefore, was not merely the commercial legitimacy and longevity of market stalls as "businesses," but the very character and ownership of the town and city commercial core.

Reforming the Market: Public-Private Partnerships

Hygiene, consumer, and tenancy law helped to codify and systematize the relationship between individual firms, the state, and the shopper in post-war British retail markets. Yet, the more inchoate power of property development had, perhaps, an even greater effect on the terms of market redevelopment in the 1950s and 1960s. As town and city centers became spaces of speculation, the retail market's under-development and small-scale economic activity drew the attention of local authority development committees and private sector property professionals.

The previous chapter explored these issues in terms of bombed cities, particularly how Swansea Estate Agent Ivor Saunders saw the maintenance of the retail market on its original site as an integral infrastructural component in the long-term commercial success of the retail area. In other rebuilt and new build shopping districts—like Bristol and Basildon's central shopping areas—consultants, planners, and Estates officers defended the institution of the municipal market not only to draw shoppers in to patronize the new stores, but also to help the smallest traders who had been displaced due to bomb damage or increased rents.[37]

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[37] Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO) A8791. Box 4/046 EC 26 Vol 1. Estates Department: Town Centre Market, 1950s-1080s; Marks and Spencers, 1950s-1980s. Town Centre. A Report on the establishment, administration, and management of the Open Market; Bristol Archives (hereafter BA) 38605/ROB/1. Bristol Chamber of Commerce,

There were differing opinions across local authorities as to the ultimate value of rebuilding markets as part of "modern" shopping facilities in bombed cities and New Towns. In bombed Bristol, for example, the city's Retail Advisory Committee debated whether a market was "a satisfactory solution to a definite public need" or whether it encouraged "untidy and unhygienic" mobile trading.[38] In the New Towns, on the other hand, some officials saw the provision of a market as an essential public service to the consumer, a feature that the state should provide, regardless of small shopkeeper pressure to keep municipal trading out of newly built town and city centers.[39] For example, Basildon's Estates Department—after extensive correspondence with local authorities in Burnley, Nottingham, Norwich, Leicester, Coventry, Plymouth, Cambridge, Blackburn, and Chelsmford—was wholeheartedly in favor of a market. Although the multiple shops and open market were essentially "two types of shopping," Basildon authorities nevertheless believed they were "actually interdependent and will affect mutual support," *i.e.* a balanced retail core reminiscent of Gibberd's design ethos in Harlow or Saunders's political economic rationales in Swansea.[40] Coventry's representatives believed markets "added considerably to the value of second or third class shopping areas," connecting specialized local traders to a consistently large consumer crowd.[41] And in regional towns like Blackburn or Chesterfield, the market was a variegated commercial space, where first, second, and third class shopping areas mixed, and where local and chain stores co-existed (Figures 4.2

Minutes of a Monthly Meeting of the Bristol Retailers' Advisory Committee on Town Planning, 26 May 1952 and 23 June 1952.

[38] BA 38605/ROB1. Minutes of a Monthly Meeting of the Bristol Retailers' Advisory Committee on Town Planning, 13 November 1950.

[39] See exchanges in TNA HLG 90/400. Provision of retail markets, Fruit and Vegetables (Marketing and Distribution) Organization, The Scope for State Trading in the Distribution of Fruit and Vegetables (22 November 1948) and Second Report (28 April 1949).

[40] ERO A8791. Box 4/046 EC 26 Vol 1. Town Centre. A Report on the establishment, administration, and management of the Open Market, nd., around 1957.

[41] ERO A8791. Box 4/046 ER 26 Vol 1. Letter from Coventry City Estates Surveyor to Chief Estates Officer, 12 May 1954.

and 4.3). The value of markets for the public Estates Department was not in their future potential, but in the network of services and continuity of custom they supported in the immediate term.

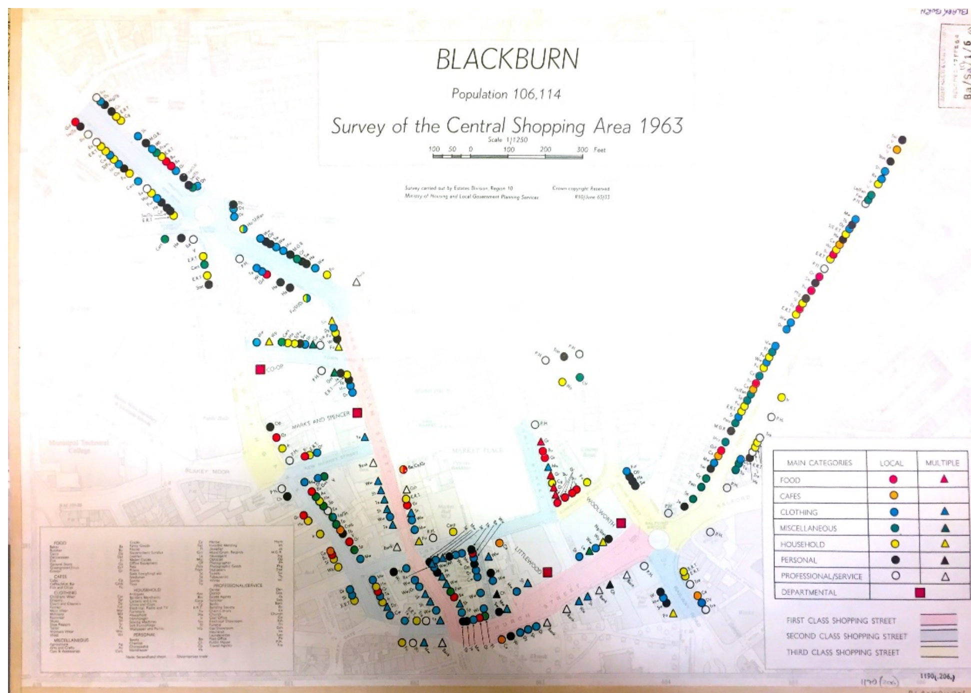

Figure 4.2. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, *Survey of Central Shopping Areas of Towns in England* (London: MHLG, 1958-1967).

Figure 4.3. Ministry of Housing and Local Government, *Survey of Central Shopping Areas of Towns in England* (London: MHLG, 1958-1967).

Despite support for markets among some city and town officials, the growing influence of the private sector and the emergence of private-public development partnerships threatened the future of markets in the urban landscape. Early postwar shopping center developments, like those in Coventry, Harlow, or Basildon, were built using the combined finances of local and central government, maintaining the illusion that decision-making and management of their open markets was retained by public authorities. Indeed, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) stressed the need for Basildon Urban District Council to manage the town's market to ensure that the public ownership of the site lasted long after the New Town

development apparatus had withered away.[42] Once this first phase of New Town and blitzed city development passed, however, the "property boom" from the mid-1950s through the mid-1960s changed the balance between power and building purpose in town and city centers. The 1950s Conservative government removed the 100% development levy and the building license requirement, two major impediments to property development under the Attlee Labour government.[43] A spike in office building marked the first phase of this property development, a stretch that ended when Harold Wilson's Labour government entered 10 Downing and the new Minister of Economic Affairs, George Brown, announced the "Brown Ban" on office building in London and much of the South East and the Midlands.

The focus of property development then turned to retail. The construction of the Bull Ring in Birmingham, a partnership between Birmingham Corporation and Laing Investment Company, remains a touchstone for historians for this moment in British urban history.[44] The Bull Ring was the traditional market area of Birmingham, and while the early nineteenth-century market hall had been destroyed by aerial bombardment, open-air trading continued on the site through the post-war period. London-based Laing drew on the model of shopping imported from America: building enclosure, the separation of vehicles and pedestrians, and ample parking facilities to attract the car-owning shopper. In Laing's design, the market hall would be brought into the larger shopping center as one floor, while the open-air stalls would be retained in a traffic island created by the city's new inner motorway. With more attention paid to the national

[42] ERO A8791. Box 4/046 EC 26 Vol 1. Letter from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to Chief Estates Officer, 10 December 1956. For more on perceived commercial oversight of the New Town Development Corporations, see Carol E. Heim, "The Treasury as Developer-Capitalist? British New Town Building in the 1950s," *Journal of Economic History* 50, no. 4 (1988), 906.
[43] Scott, *The Property Masters*, 132.
[44] For a sample of the historical scholarship that uses the Bull Ring as a case study, see Lintonbon, "The drive to modernize"; Shapely, "Governance in the Post-War City"; David Kynaston, *Modernity Britain*, 395-396; Scott, *The Property Masters,* 178.

chains to be lured to the Centre and the suburban shopper who needed easy access to shopping amenities, the retail market features appeared as an afterthought.

Yet historians' repeated study of the Bull Ring Shopping Centre has privileged the consolidated public-private power bloc of modernist urbanism, to the detriment of other ways in which traditional retail actors—like market traders—negotiated their political and economic power in this landscape. As early as the mid-1950s, market traders in Swansea opposed the influence of property development companies who only wanted "what they could get out of the town," leaving the shopping district "bereft of names" recognizable to the local shopping public.[45] The artificial import of not only American models, but also London money, was seen as anathema to the localist underpinnings of the market. The NMTF and the Wigan Traders Association worried that "out of town financiers" and the "financial wizards of London" were driven solely by profit and did not attend to the local commercial character and purpose played by markets.[46] NABMA even sought counsel over the steps they might take to ensure that market rights in redeveloped shopping areas remained in the hands of the public authority, not these detached private interests.[47]

At the height of retail property development in the mid-1960s, there were also local government voices who challenged the perceived wisdom of market land as "underdeveloped" and therefore an inefficient feature in the urban fabric. An editorial in the *Municipal Review* worried that as markets accrued benefits to the local ratepayers with "quiet efficiency" and "little publicity," the public might not even realize that the commercial foundation in many towns was

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[45] "Swansea Traders' Plan Turned Down," *World's Fair,* 23 July 1955, 19. "Traders Deplore Swansea Market Scheme," *World's Fair,* 5 November 1955, 20.
[46] "Charlie Alberge," *World's Fair,* 16 March 1963, 15; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 18 June 1960, 23.
[47] *World's Fair,* 14 September 1963; GA GBR/L6/23/B6293. Eastgate Market, Gloucester: correspondence. Minutes of a the NABMA Executive Council, 1 July 1963.

dependent on the strength and vigor of the local market.[48] This invisibility was part of the larger structural problem of influence and representation in Britain's economic development debates. When the Economic Development Committee set up a new sub-committee on shopping center redevelopment in 1966, there were no representatives of the NMTF or NABMA on the board, even as retail markets remained a central bargaining chip for local authorities' redevelopment negotiations.[49] As the consultancy trade and centralized research seminars took on a larger role in decision-making on retail geography, NMTF's and NABMA's weakness made it harder for retail markets to advocate for their national interests.[50]

By focusing solely on these power brokers and vested interests at the national level—particularly what Wilson's technocratic "White Heat" modernism tells us about the history of shopping in 1960s Britain—we neglect the role that localism played in retail markets' resiliency. Local authorities combined received wisdom about shopping modernization with entrenched retail and consumption practices on the ground to rethink what a retail market could and should be in an affluent nation. Comparing the decision-making process of two locales not often considered in 1960s urban redevelopment, Gloucester and Rochdale, adds geographic and scalar diversity to a history often told through central decision-making and high-profile cases like the Bull Ring or London's Elephant and Castle.

Gloucester in the postwar period bore the traces of multiple economic pasts: the cathedral city was both an early inland port and communications hub, an agricultural center for the west of England, and a modern manufacturing center. Yet, as a retail destination, Gloucester was losing

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[48] "Editorials," *Municipal Review* (February 1964), 72-73.
[49] TNA FG 2/528 and TNA FG 2/529. Shopping Capacity Sub-Committee, Economic Development Council for Distributive Trades (April 1966-May 1967).
[50] For more on the history of management consultancy in this period and the context of NEDO, see Matthias Kipping and Denis Saint-Martin, "Between Regulation, Promotion and Consumption: Government and Management Consultancy in Britain," *Business History* 47, no. 3 (2005), 449-465.

custom to nearby Cheltenham, just as Swansea battled with Cardiff or Sheffield battled with Leeds. Postwar planners in Gloucester felt the need to modernize and diversify their shopping landscape in order to maintain regional competitiveness. Gloucester had a well-established market, housed in the nineteenth-century Eastgate Market Hall. In 1960, Land Improvements Ltd. made their first contact with Gloucester City Council, inquiring after the contract to redevelop the city's market, bringing it up to hygiene standards and adding interior comforts reminiscent of well-known stores, such as Marks and Spencer.[51] Promising escalators like "modern London Tube Stations," while accommodating the rent scales for "local family businesses," Land Investments Ltd painted a picture of a market hall where metropolitan modernism and provincial traditions co-existed.

Land Investments Ltd did not unilaterally impose an image of "modern" shopping onto Gloucester; local authorities took up this project in relation to nearby market center competitors. In Gloucester, the city council sent representatives to new halls in Coventry (1957), Wolverhampton (1960), and Shrewsbury (1965) for fact-finding missions. Yet, even these new buildings were considered "out of date" by reforming Gloucester civic leaders, who in the end preferred to look to large department stores and supermarkets for their market redevelopment inspiration.[52] But inspiration did not mean replication. The City Architect, for example, distinguished the "first class shopping" offered by the anchor stores of Tesco, Woolworth's, and Littlewood's from the retail market by only installing an address system and piped music in the chain stores. He claimed that omitting this design feature would correspond to the "low

[51] GA GBR/L6/23/B5789. Letter from Land Improvements Ltd to the Chairman of the Town Planning Committee, Gloucester, 15 January 1960.
[52] GA GBR/L2/9/3/1. Markets Department, Suggestions for the lay-out of and features to consider in the design of, the new retail market, 20 April 1965.

overhead" atmosphere shoppers expected from a traditional market hall.[53] As historian Sam Wetherell and musicologist Jonathan Sterne have argued, ambient music was part of the shopping mall developer's program of internal order.[54] Conscious choices about where music would *not* feature—and, by extension, where human activity would create its own atmosphere—speak to deeper-entrenched ideas about the "unregulatability" of markets.

Rochdale's experiences with public-private development were similarly marked by choices about where to draw the line between commercialization of space and preservation of place. Rochdale, "an old mill town with physical and economic problems inherent in such communities," is located in the industrial conurbation stretching between Manchester and the West Riding of Yorkshire.[55] In the mid-1960s, Rochdale Council chose to partner with Laing property developers, the firm that had made its name with the Bull Ring Shopping Centre, to carry out the redevelopment of their town center Comprehensive Development Area (CDA). Because of the CDA designation, Rochdale's proposals were under the scrutiny of the MHLG, who retained the records of the town's public inquiry. This cache of planning and bureaucratic documents deepens our understanding of where the fault lines fell between traders, the council, and private development.

One of the key pressure points in the issue of Rochdale market, for example, was the relative youth of the building. Unlike Gloucester's (and many British towns' and cities') nineteenth-century market hall, Rochdale's structure only dated from the late 1930s.

[53] GA GBR/L2/9/3/1. New Estate market: [general], 1963-1966. City of Gloucester, Brief for new Eastgate Market, July 1965. Memo to Town Clerk, 12 July 1966.
[54] GA GBR/L2/9/3/1. Markets Department, Suggestions for the lay-out of and features to consider in the design of, the new retail market, 20 April 1965.
[55] TNA HLG 79/1197. Comprehensive development area: post-enquiry correspondence. County Borough of Rochdale Development Plan, Proposals for and objections to Comprehensive Development Area no. 1 (town centre) amendment no. 4. Report of public local inquiry. Letter from J.L. Wetton to Anthony Greenwood, M.P., July 1967, 3.

Representatives from the MHLG, therefore, questioned Rochdale Council and Laing's decision to pull down and redevelop a relatively modern building.[56] Not only would this undertaking divert excessive public funds, but retail planners and Westminster also worried that the North West of England was reaching a saturation point in unfettered shopping development.[57] While Rochdale's 1930s market hall might have been structurally sound, the local planners believed that retaining the building in the CDA would weaken Rochdale's competitiveness with neighboring redeveloped cores in Oldham and Bury.[58] As Rochdale's pro-redevelopment planning authority pleaded with Whitehall to release funds for market redevelopment, Laing began to get cold feet about the length and cost of the project. With the property development firm not fully committed to funding the project—and with the MHLG unwilling to give Rochdale a loan—the market redevelopment fizzled out at the end of the 1960s.[59]

Market redevelopment proposals in Gloucester and Rochdale underscore how local authorities, private developers, and the central state thought in competitive, regional units: individual councils wanted to keep up with neighbors and maintain the edge on "comfort" and "efficiency," while private developers and the central state were wary of stretching resources too thin or "over-developing" certain regions. The archives of central and local government elucidate the bottom-line economic concerns around retail development in 1960s Britain, especially as public policy expenditure was rapidly become a matter of central government concern and

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[56] See TNA HLG 79/1197. Memos from Tom Clarke and J.D. Higham (inspector), 19 December 1967, 15 March 1968 & 10 April 1968.
[57] University of Manchester and Department of Town and Country Planning, *Regional Shopping Centers in North West England* (Manchester: Manchester University, 1966), 33.
[58] TNA HLG 79/1197. Comprehensive development area: post-enquiry correspondence. County Borough of Rochdale Development Plan, Proposals for and objections to Comprehensive Development Area no. 1 (town centre) amendment no. 4. Report of public local inquiry. Statement and Case for the Planning Authority, 3.
[59] TNA HLG 79/1197. Note of a meeting in Rochdale Town Hall on Thursday 12 November 1970 to discuss the Rochdale CDA.

professional oversight.[60] Yet, in the race for regional shopping supremacy, there was also a battle over the language and image of retail modernization.

The promotional materials produced between local government and private partners is therefore another entry point into understanding the role that "tradition" played in the built environment of post-war consumerism. "Place promotion" and the visual language of redevelopment has been studied for the initial wave of post-war redevelopment, and there is a flourishing sub-field around the discontents amplified by the rise of advertising in 1950s and 1960s Britain.[61] However, the manner in which marketing and advertising mediated the relationship between 1960s property developers and local authorities is underdeveloped: how did firms such as Arndale and Hammerson simultaneously assuage the conservative fears of shoppers and sellers, while selling their visions for modern retail efficiency?

In the informational booklets, trade press advertisements, and promotional films jointly produced by developers and their local authority collaborators, the retail market emerged as the "commodified authentic," a space where the visceral excitement of face-to-face buying and selling was sympathetically integrated into a comprehensive shopping environment.[62] Consider the visual and textual language of a Laing promotional booklet for another North West central redevelopment project in Blackburn. The reader is greeted by a casually off-center "memo" from the Blackburn Town Clerk, heralding the citizen as an equal partner in the revitalization of the textile town. Together, public and private interests will "tell a story" about their plan of "vision and courage." (Figure 4.4). In the pages that follow, black and white photographs of the town

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[60] Rodney Lowe, "Modernizing Britain's Welfare State: The Influence of Affluence, 1957-1964," in *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War "Golden Age" Revisited,* eds. Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004), 37.
[61] See Peter Larkham and Keith Lilley, "Plans, planners and city images: place promotion and civic boosterism in British reconstruction planning," *Urban History* 30, no. 2 (2003), 183-205.
[62] Elizabeth Oudka, *Consuming Traditions: Modernity, Modernism, and the Commodified Authentic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

center are juxtaposed with bold, color-coded aerial maps of the "plan" (Figure 4.5). Models and renderings at times become one with the realism of photography (Figure 4.6). While the "historical link" of the market will no longer form the focal point of the shopping area (replaced by a multi-level shopping-parking complex), its new location will be "linked" to the shopping hub by a pedestrian subway.[63]

INTRODUCTION

By the Chairman of the Civil Development Committee

Frank Squires, LL.B.
Town Clerk and
Clerk of the Peace

References | Yours:
| Mine:

Town Hall,
Blackburn.

Tel. No. 4114

Like most industrial towns in Lancashire, Blackburn is a product of the industrial revolution. It grew up without any apparent sense of planning, with few buildings that can lay claim to real architectural beauty, and with a crowded shopping centre totally inadequate to meet the needs of modern traffic. Drastic change in the way of re-planning and re-building is inevitable.

This brochure tells just how the town shopping centre is going to be rebuilt. It is a plan that has vision and courage. This is not a case of knocking down a street and rebuilding. Blackburn is going to have the sense and courage to knock down its whole town centre, replan it, and build in accordance with modern needs and ideas. We propose to do that with 150 acres of our town centre in addition to clearance areas all over the town.

The pages that follow tell the story of an up to date shopping centre segregating shoppers from traffic, of roof top car parking, of underground servicing, of open spaces and the provision of all amenities essential in a modern town centre. The Town Council is unanimous in its support of this plan. We have great faith in the industrial future of this town and we believe it will become the shopping centre for a very wide area. We are certainly prepared to invest in its future prosperity. On behalf of the Town Council I congratulate all the staff of the Laing Development Company Ltd., who, in co-operation with the staff of the Blackburn Corporation, have produced this magnificent town centre plan. May it soon become a reality.

G. O. Eddie

Chairman of the Civic Development Committee
of the Blackburn Town Council.

Figure 4.4. Laing Development Company, *Blackburn: Central Development* (Blackburn, 1961).

[63] Laing Development Company, *Blackburn Central Development* (Blackburn, 1961).

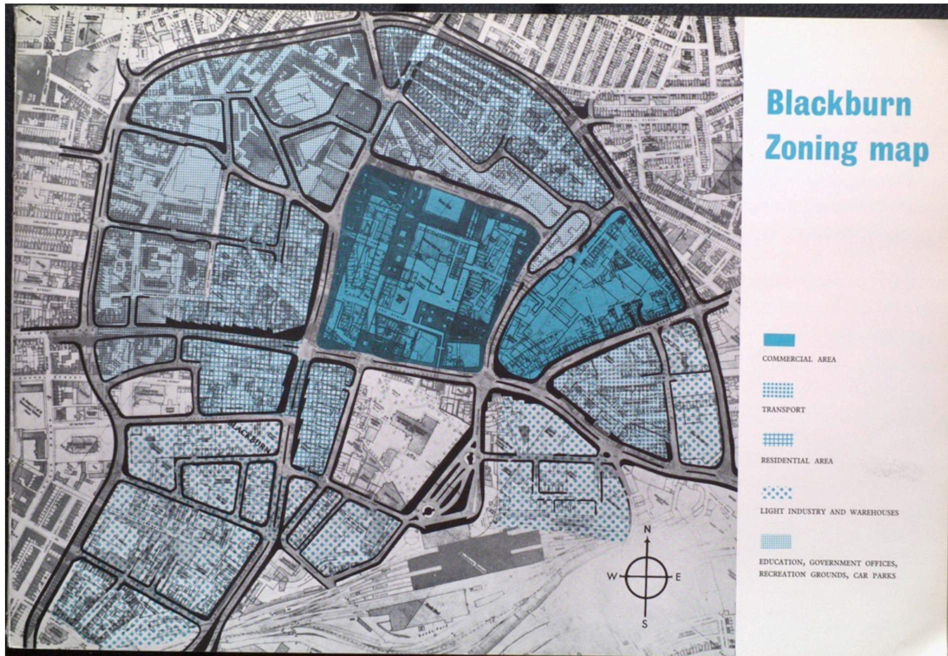

Figure 4.5. Laing Development Company, *Blackburn: Central Development* (Blackburn, 1961).

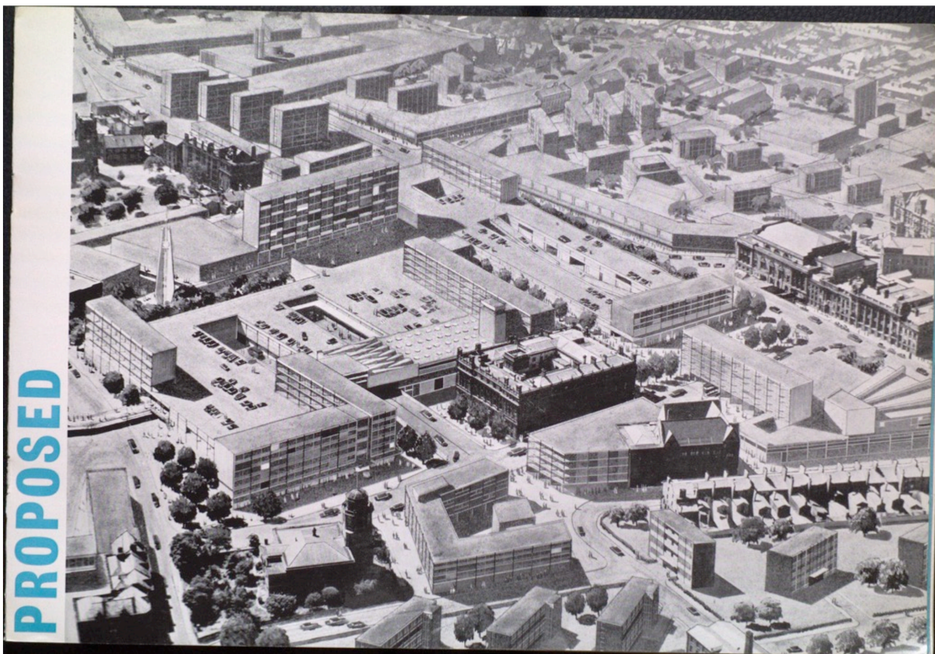

Figure 4.6. Laing Development Company, *Blackburn: Central Development* (Blackburn, 1961).

Property developers knew their audience: local authorities who wanted to attract new retail opportunities, maintain good relations with their existing shopkeepers and shoppers, and keep redevelopment as unobtrusive as possible. Arndale's promotional films, "Arndale in

Partnership" (1966) and "Tomorrow's Shopping Today" (nd, 1960s), highlighted how Arndale's business model and design vision would simultaneously elevate the built infrastructure of the local town or city, while keeping the common shopper or common trader loyal to the shopping core. In a promotional short set in Shipley, for example, the viewer follows a shopper taking advantage of two "redeveloped" markets: the subterranean hall in the new Arndale building, and the open-air version in the square, populated by those small traders "never forgotten in an Arndale development." The fact that an escalator can take the Shipley consumer from one market to the other is physical proof that Arndale caters for the consumer's needs through modernizing building design.[64]

Promotional films from Arndale or print advertising from their competitors like Hammerson (Figure 4.7) represent an under-studied axis of influence and exchange in the history of advertising and consumption: the mutual interest of private developers and their public counterparts in local government.

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[64] Yorkshire Film Archive (hereafter YFA), "Arndale in Partnership" (1966), film 4453 and "Tomorrow's Shopping Today" (nd), film 4687.

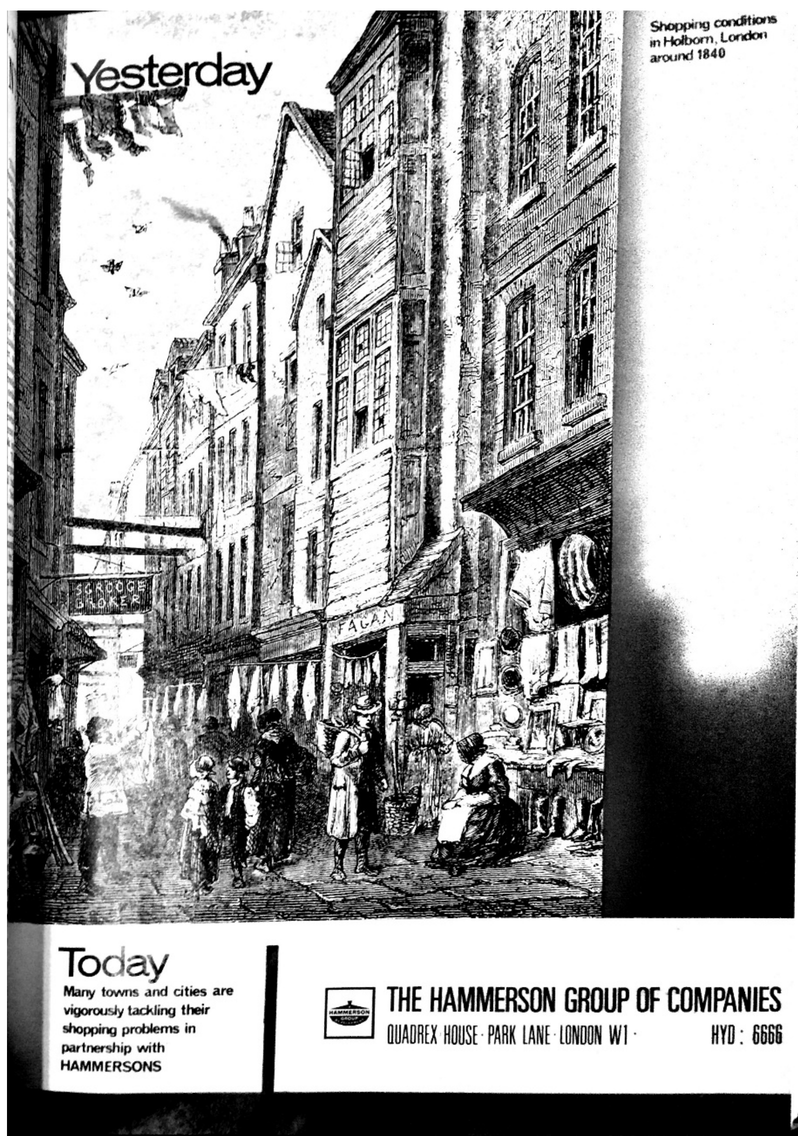

Figure 4.7. Hammerson Advertisement, *Municipal Review,* 1964

Arndale, Hammerson, and Laing needed to instill fiscal and cultural trust in local authorities, who were giving up control over a vital public asset. In publicity brochures for the opening of completed private-public partnership retail projects, it was the civic figurehead who spoke, not the developers or architects (Figures 4.8 and 4.9). The framework of local identity combined with modernist progress carried over from text to the images in this print material. In Liverpool's and Nottingham's booklets, the bustle of the old market is both a cultural anchor and a development yardstick: photographs of the peopled "old" St John's Market in Liverpool are the

literal backdrop to the stark modernist design of the un-peopled new market (Figures 4.10 and 4.11). In the manipulated visual language of this promotional material, the retail market is both cautionary tale of anachronism and vanguard of shopping futurism in the redeveloped city.[65]

Figure 4.8. WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS. Acc 3515/11 (Booklets and Reports on Markets in various Towns and Cities). *Luton Market: A Shopping Revolution.*

Figure 4.9. WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS. Acc 3515/11 (Booklets and Reports on Markets in various Towns and Cities). *Luton Market: A Shopping Revolution.*

[65] See WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS Acc 3515/11 (Booklets and Reports on Markets in various Towns and Cities).

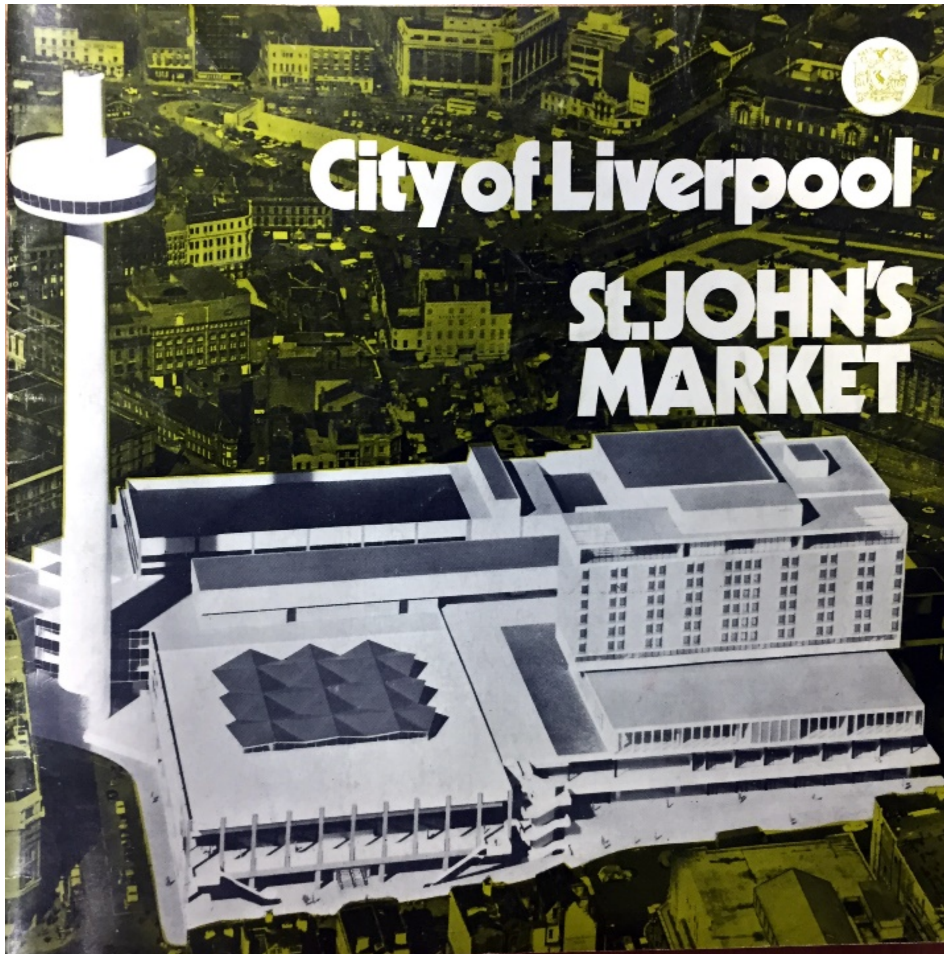

Figure 4.10. WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS. Acc 3515/11 (Booklets and Reports on markets in various Towns and Cities). City of Liverpool. St John's Market. Published on behalf of the City of Liverpool Environmental Health and Protection Committee by the City Public Relations Office. Printed by J.H. & Lehman Ltd. Designed by Brunning Advertising and Marketing (Liverpool) Ltd.

Figure 4.11. WYAS Leeds, LC/MKTS. Acc 3515/11 (Booklets and Reports on markets in various Towns and Cities). City of Liverpool. St John's Market. Published on behalf of the City of Liverpool Environmental Health and Protection Committee by the City Public Relations Office. Printed by J.H. & Lehman Ltd. Designed by Brunning Advertising and Marketing (Liverpool) Ltd.

The retail market, then, bore the dual burden of being not only an unacceptable retail anachronism, but also a vital link to the shopping traditions of the past. As a feature in the redevelopment plans in towns and cities such as Gloucester, Rochdale, Blackburn, and Liverpool, the market was expected to temper the relationship between continuity and change in 1960s Britain. In the final section of this chapter, I will turn to the case study of Seacroft in Leeds, a particularly trenchant example of the political and social tensions built into the ethos of shopping development as "progress."

Seacroft and Commercialism

The Seacroft Estate, located approximately four miles to the east of central Leeds, was established during the first wave of municipal housing projects in the interwar period. However, the majority of its growth—especially in the town center—took place during the late 1950s and 1960s (Figure 4.12). In 1959, the City Architect and the Director of Housing first proposed the idea for a small market hall in the housing estate, potentially to serve a dual function as a community hall. As an institution that would be managed under the umbrella of the Council and its Housing Committee, the Seacroft market was embroiled in larger questions about the role of retail and consumption in the ethos of the welfare state: should councils like Leeds prioritize building shops that could accrue high rents, or should they support public spaces like markets that represented a modest but stable form of commerce and that benefited the surrounding community?[66] The built environment of collective commerce, therefore, focused some of the key debates in the "age of affluence" around the mutually constitutive relationship between profit and welfare.

[66] WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/817111. Notes of Meetings held at the Civil Hall on Monday 19 June 1959 and 16 November 1959; "£1m civic centre for Seacroft estate," *Yorkshire Evening News,* 21 May 1959, 1.

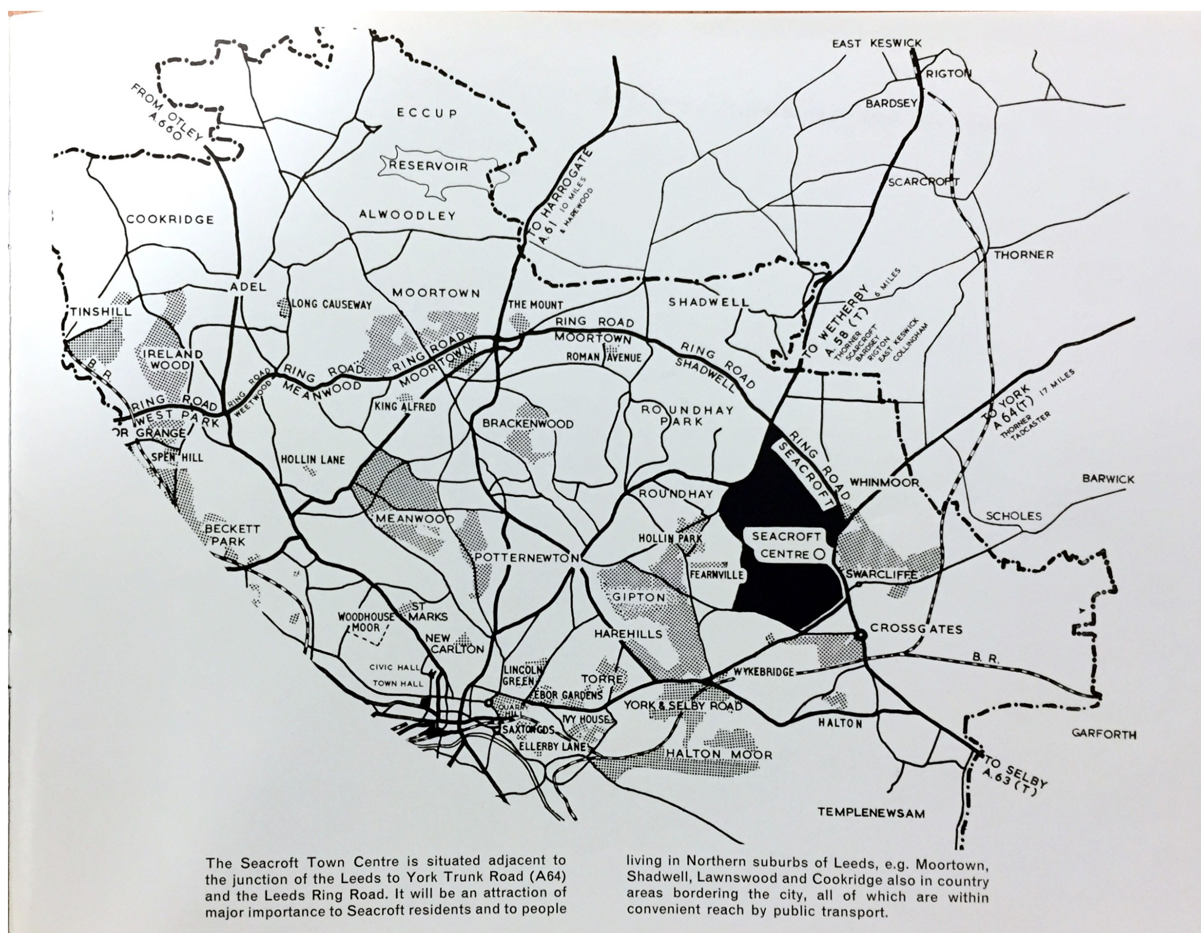

Figure 4.12. WYAS Leeds LLD1/2/824956. Leeds City Council, *Seacroft Town Centre*.

Retailing expertise would suggest that providing a market in Seacroft made sound business sense. Post-war shopping surveys found that housewives, in particular, visited city centers more often when there was a market (and particularly a *good* market, as was the case in Harlow of women fleeing to Romford, or in the case of Middlesborough shoppers patronizing other regional markets).[67] Retail markets were one space marked by the "conservatism of the shopper": patronizing these institutions was part of the intractable habits of consumption that

[67] TNA HLG 125/33. Retail trade: various aspects of shopping provisions and central area building use, B.M. Osborne, "The Uses of Shopping Centers," *Social Survey Studies for Town Planning*, 4.

made up working-class community.[68] For Seacroft's planners, then, a market represented a steady catchment draw of local residents.

On the other hand, the promise of embourgeoisement and affluence raised doubts about the ultimate longevity of informal types of buying and selling.[69] The same year that a small market for Seacroft was proposed, the *World's Fair* published an article, "The Future of Markets," which divided their readership into two camps. On one side, there were those who believed that markets would continue in their present form for "countless years," serving a consumer need for affordable, personable, and atmospheric shopping. On the other side, there were those pessimistic market traders who saw the supermarket and the multiple store as the modern form of retail that would "eventually swallow them up."[70] For the immediate commercial stability provided by retail markets, there was a lingering fear that the world of chain stores and supermarkets—in addition to the world of full employment—would significantly undermine the appeal of small-scale buying and selling.[71]

Not only was debate about Seacroft's retail development shaped by these fears of social change, but it was also wracked by partisan divides. The Labour-dominated Housing Committee, led by Stan Cohen and Amy Donohoe, threw themselves into municipal commercial development, seeing the Seacroft plan not only as a model for other public enterprise projects across the country, but also as an ideological pillar of their image as a party of "small business." Donohoe imagined Seacroft as a small-scale community rebuilt for the post-war age: The Shops Committee would welcome all those retailers who "gave service to the public": family

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[68] TNA HLG 125/33. Shopping Facilities, 23 October 1950, 7 and Shopping Facilities. A Review of Existing Surveys, 12.
[69] "Town Centre Development," *Municipal Review* (October 1962,) 649.
[70] "The Future of Markets," *World's Fair,* 24 October 1959, 25.
[71] TNA HLG 125/33. Shopping Facilities, A Review of Existing Surveys, 16.

businesses, businesses displaced by slum clearance, businesses in danger of being overtaken by "nameless, faceless multiples."[72] The proposed open-air market, sitting on top of the underground car park, would be an integral part of this shopping landscape that blended traditional commerce with modern convenience: private local traders would exist along-side nationally recognized chains who rented the surrounding shops, giving Seacroft residents and customers further afield an attractive mixture of choice and atmosphere within the new precinct. The eighty-eight applications received by the Housing Committee for market stalls attest to this mixture: a fourth were from the predictable vendors of fruit and vegetables, but the rest represented was a diverse group of thirty-three trades of clothing, home goods, and luxury items.[73]

Seacroft Town Centre opened with aplomb on 22 October 1965, presided over by the Queen and Prince Philip. The royal couple started their visit at the market, where they spoke informally with the select of local market traders: some brand name stores and companies, other independent stalls keepers, and even a selection of South Asian businesses who were branching out into the clothing trade.[74] The civic pride on offer that opening day was short-lived, however. By December, only three stalls were actually operating on certain weekdays, and only 22% of the retail units in the precinct were operated in February 1966.[75] Leeds City Council's insistence that

[72] Local History Collection, Leeds Central Library (hereafter LHC). Housing Committee, Verbatim Reports of Proceedings Supplementing the Minutes of Council of 2nd December 1964, 101-102.
[73] WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/81711. Meeting of members to deal with Seacroft Town Centre Development to be held at the Civic Hall at 12:30pm on 4 October 1965, 10.
[74] WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/817418. Royal Visit Seacroft.
[75] WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/833129. Seacroft Town Centre, Memorandum submitted to the Town Clerk, the Chairman, and Members of the Housing Committee on behalf of Leeds Industrial Cooperative Society, 22 February 1966.

they could meet the growing and varied demands of the citizen-shopper proved to be idealistic and overly ambitious.[76]

Seacroft's immediate struggles widened the ideological divide between Labour and Conservatives on Leeds City Council. Tory Councilors opposed the speculative nature of municipal commercial development, reasserting that the Housing Committee had neither the knowledge nor the backing to risk ratepayer money on a "civic folly" like Seacroft.[77] Labour refuted these worries by reaffirming their ideological commitment to "public" not private enterprise, of which shopping facilities played a large role. However, the Seacroft public was highly ambivalent about the success of the Centre as it stood. One local community association publication labeled the Centre "cold and cheerless," a relative trading island with no organic connection to its surroundings.[78] John Betjeman echoed these sentiments on the national stage: his 1968 BBC documentary *A Poet Goes North: Sir John Betjeman Discovers Leeds* concluded at the new Seacroft development, where he wonders whether residents feel lonely and nostalgic for their old back-to-backs, forced as they were into "compulsory shopping, compulsory pleasure, and compulsory leisure" instead of using their old "crowded markets."[79] From those residents on the ground to observers parachuting in from afar, Seacroft had become burdened with the label of a "failed" local authority project, particularly when it came to planning for retail and consumption.

What, then, could and should be done to reverse Seacroft's fortunes? In terms of attracting catchment, Seacroft suffered from two seemingly contradictory forces: suburban

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[76] For more on the difficulty of provincial city councils planning for the individual affluent consumer, see Alistair Kefford, "Constructing the Affluent Citizen: State, Space and the Individual in Post-war Britain, 1945-1979" (DPhil dissertation, University of Manchester, 2015).
[77] LHC. Housing Committee, Verbatim Reports, 2 March 1966, 165.
[78] LHC. "Visitors at the Seacroft Town Centre," *SCAN: Magazine of the North Seacroft Community Association* (July 1966).
[79] YFA, *A Poet Goes North: Sir John Betjeman Discovers Leeds* (BBC, 1968), film no. 3249.

competitors and the lasting appeal of city center shopping. The nearby Crossgates Arndale (the first enclosed "mall" in England) was attracting those "further afield" shoppers whom Seacroft backers had hoped to entice. In addition, many Seacroft residents still did their shopping in Leeds city center, easier and cheaper to reach on public transportation for those that did not have the private vehicles anticipated by Seacroft's many car parks.[80] The flow of consumers out of Seacroft and into Leeds city center speaks to a larger structural issue, as planners often planned for parking and not public transportation in postwar Britain: a study of shopping centers built between 1963 and 1979 found that 87% of projects had car parking, while less than 20% included a bus station.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Leeds Housing Committee had anticipated Seacroft as a natural "draw" not only for shoppers, but also for traders who moved from the center of Leeds. Councilors and planners were not prepared for the commercial growing pains that accompanied the rush of shoppers returning to familiar markets and stores in Leeds city center or new consumerist enclosed precincts like Crossgates. Small shopkeepers depended on the custom attracted by large, chain stores like Marks and Spencer, Woolworths, and Littlewoods. As these brand name stores dragged their feet in light of Seacroft's slow start and on-going construction, Councilors suggested rent relief and the hiring of a private estate agent.[81] Retail traders hit back at these concessions, however, demanding "trade not aid" for Seacroft's struggling businesses. They proposed a bargain week, free car park, bus station, and health center, asking, in essence for the services and infrastructure that longer-established commercial areas took for granted.[82]

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[80] WYAS Leeds LLD1/2/834635. Seacroft Town Centre. Consideration of a Rental Structure Related to Trade, 9.
[81] Ben Philliskirk, "'Bogged down in housing': Politics and Planning in Residential Leeds, 1954-1979" (DPhil dissertation, University of Leeds, 2016), 197-199.
[82] "We want trade, not aid, say Seacroft tenants," *Skyrack Express,* 6 May 1966, 10; "Traders urged to avoid drawing adverse comment," *Skyrack Express,* 13 May 1966, 10.

At a Finance and Planning Committee meeting in 1968, Councilor Donohoe defended Seacroft as a municipal enterprise, arguing "that the good of [the Town Centre], or, indeed, the bad of it, should accrue to the citizens of Leeds rather than be a matter of private property" and that her counterparts in the Tory Party would sell the seats from under themselves if they were able.[83] In opposition to Donohoe's full-throated defense of Seacroft's public ethos, Tory councilors responded that there was "nothing sacrosanct" about Seacroft and its management. Indeed, when the Conservatives returned to power on the Leeds City Council, they hired an estate agent to manage the Town Centre privately.

Amidst these political debates over the relationship between retail, private enterprise, and public service provision, it was the unlikely Seacroft market that proved to be the precinct's saving grace. Positioned away from the shopping core on the roof of a car park, the original open-air market benefited from the weekend shoppers passing through to the brick and mortar shops on their way to and from their parked cars (Figure 4.13). During Seacroft's immediate struggles, Leeds City Council proposed moving the market indoors to mimic the atmosphere at the Merrion Centre or the Shipley Shopping Centre market, thinking this choice "would have a beneficial effect on the main part of the Centre and could certainly do no harm."[84] In the winter of 1968 and 1969, the market was moved *into* one of the car parks, and gradually built up trader confidence and a consumer base once again, growing to a 50-stall operation by the summer of 1969.[85]

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[83] LHC, Finance and Planning Committee, Verbatim Reports, 17 January 1968, 8.
[84] WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/83463. Seacroft Town Centre, Possible Uses, n.d.
[85] David Snook, "At last market finds its level," *The World's Fair,* 27 July 1970, 15; WYAS Leeds, LLD1/2/833129. Housing and Property Department, Seacroft Town Centre. 16 August 1968.

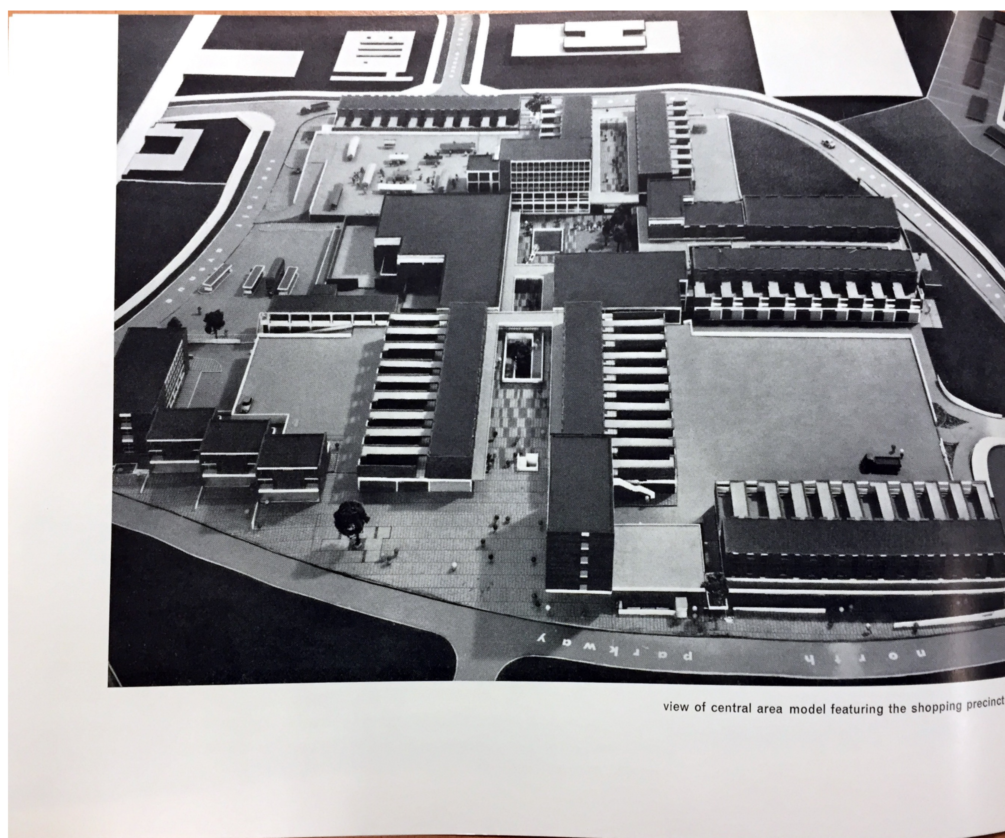

Figure 4.13. WYAS Leeds LLD1/2/824956. Leeds City Council, *Seacroft Town Centre*. The open-air market can be seen on the roof of a car park in the left-hand corner.

The indoor move proved such a success that the market managers decided to take over unlet retail space closer to the shopping center as the market's permanent, covered home. Business returned, and local residents labeled the market's enclosure as "the best innovation so far at the Centre" and a real contrast to the dejected shops.[86] Assistant market manager T. H. Gledhill spoke of the ultimate success of the market as part of the "re-education of the 50,000 people living in this area." It took time for Leeds housewives, conditioned to travel to Kirkgate Market for their market shopping, to come around to shopping in a new-build shopping precinct.[87] With the passing of postwar generations, the 1965 market became a highlight of "old"

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[86] LHC. "Town Centre Blues," *SCAN: Magazine of the North Seacroft Community Association,* 18 August 1971.
[87] Snook, "At last market finds its level," 15.

Seacroft, bringing bargain fashions, affordable and fresh produce, and a social hub for the growing residential community on the outskirts of Leeds.[88]

These memories of Seacroft's past—particularly the role that the retail market played in consumption practices and sociability—are echoed in other oral history collections focused on postwar British provincial shopping. This chapter began with the opening of Sheffield's Castle Market in the early 1960s. In 2012-2013, public historians in Sheffield recorded the views of shoppers and traders in the soon-to-be-demolished brutalist Castle Market. The building that was hailed by architecture journalists as "of the greatest importance to us all" had survived for fifty years, after which traders and customers would be relocated to a newly built market and food hall to the south of the established shopping core. In these interviews, anxiety about the site's distance from public transportation links, the costs involved with retail embourgeoisement, and the costs passed along to both the small smallholder and their working-class customers, were all aired. And amidst these fears for the present and future of market trading in Sheffield, the 1960s past emerged as a golden age of community shopping: Nora Platt (b. 1948) recalled Castle Market as "clean and sparkling," while Malcolm Walker (b. 1946) relished the old market because it connected his life to the shopping lives of his mother and grandmother. Both Platt and Walker also evoked Castle Market as the antithesis of the supermarket, where people were "trained" to shop and where the atmosphere was unconnected to human activity.

The histories of markets like Seacroft and Sheffield's Castle Market pin-point why property developers' and planners' promises of designing a "new way of life" through British shopping was an incomplete project.[89] In many cases, property developers and most of their local

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[88] LHC. Carol Parker, "I love Seacroft and I'd wear the T-shirt," *Celebrating Seacroft* (Leeds: Seacroft Community Literature (and Art) Society, 2011), 94; LHC. Pauline and M, "Memories of Old Seacroft Town (Civic) Centre," *Celebrating Seacroft,* 98 and 103.

[89] "The Shape of Things to Come?" *SCAN: Magazine of the North Seacroft Community Association* (August 1965).

authority allies wanted to reform the market, not only improving its economic return on valuable city and town center land, but also making it a more attractive place to shop in the eyes of the public. These material concerns were continually counter-acted, however, by a core group of small traders and working-class shoppers with a vested interest in keeping the market small-scale and "under-developed." Debates over markets suitability in the postwar British retail culture, then, should be read onto larger issues of economic planning as a state project. On top of these political economic concerns, the case of Seacroft demonstrates the political cultural freight of municipal trading in the 1960s. How far local authorities should stretch their activities into the "commercial" realm had far-reaching political ramifications. The issue of whether or not the retail market—as a feature in the built landscape of city and town shopping districts—was a public asset or a private commercial venture would only become thornier and more political as the 1960s gave way to the economic anxieties and political battles of the 1970s.

Conclusion/Interlude:

In September of 1968, North East Leeds Conservative MP—and future Margaret Thatcher ally—Keith Joseph approached the Leeds Town Clerk with a problem raised by one of the former's constituents. Mr. A.I. Cohen of Moortown was a retailer and an Orthodox Jew living in a demolition area of the Yorkshire city. Under the Shops Act of 1950, Cohen claimed a legal right to trade on Sunday, so long as he closed his premises on Saturday. This economic right was exercised in many Jewish districts of urban Britain, most visibly in the street markets on London's East End. The plight of A.I. Cohen, however, proved to be a particularly trenchant case of individual enterprise versus local retailing norms. After Cohen's property was demolished under comprehensive development, he took up a lease with the local authorities at Seacroft Town

Centre. Cohen and Keith Joseph were alarmed when over the summer of 1968, traders at the revitalized Seacroft market—Jew and Gentile alike—had decided to open their own Sunday market, building on the popularity of such institutions in cities like London, Newcastle, and Glasgow. Joseph wrote to the Leeds Town Clerk to seek assurances that Cohen "[would] be protected" from any prosecution of against the rogue Sunday market traders, as it "was no small task for [Cohen] to retain any clientele at all" after the city had forced him out of his premises and into a new catchment area.[90]

As the preceding section argued, Keith Joseph's defense of A.I. Cohen was merely one battle in the larger war over Seacroft and its status as a municipal retail outlet. Since the early 1960s, tension between Labour and the Tories on the Leeds City Council had manifested itself in a war over the commercial nature of Seacroft Town Centre: should the site be run as a public utility, or open to tender on the free market? When traders—led by Tory councilor and stallholder May Sexton—introduced a Sunday market to build on the popularity of the Friday and Saturday markets, it was with the belief that there was still a public demand going unmet by the shopping landscape in late 1960s provincial Britain. In a 1968 *Yorkshire Evening Post* article about the Sunday market, Sexton asked why the sellers and shoppers of Leeds shouldn't be able to enjoy the same retail-leisure as Londoners at Petticoat Lane Market.[91] The popularity of the market, especially after it opened its stalls on Sundays in April 1968, compelled the state to weigh the desires of consumers against their duties to enforce shops legislation.

Over the summer of 1968, Councilor Sexton exchanged letters with Seacroft's MP, Denis Healey, and the Home Secretary, James Callaghan; Callaghan exchanged letters with Keith

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[90] WYAS Leeds LLD1/2/833129. Seacroft Town Centre, Letter from Keith Joseph to Town Clerk, 5 September 1968.

[91] "Open air market goes underground," *Yorkshire Evening Post,* 2 November 1968, 6.

Joseph; and the MHLG exchanged letters with Leeds local officials; all were attempting to understand the legal position of the Seacroft Sunday Market and its traders.[92] The economic benefits of the Sunday market were clear: the Housing and Property Department remarked that the Sunday market was "the finest idea produced by the center" and "the most beneficial publicity that Seacroft Centre has ever had [original emphasis]."[93] When a shopkeeper within Seacroft Centre pressed the case for the market's illegality in the eyes of the Shops Act, nearly 2,000 market attendees signed the petition to the local council to keep the Sunday market open.

The fact that three of the most prominent politicians in 1970s Britain ended up weighing in on A.I. Cohen's case is coincidence. For proto-Thatcherite MP Joseph and future Labour Chancellor Healey, this was a constituency issue. For future Labour Prime Minister Callaghan, this was an obscure matter of shops legislation. Nevertheless, the Seacroft Sunday controversy focused a number of questions around the relationship between the independent market actor and the state in late modern Britain. Were traditional markets effective safety valves for retailers and consumers displaced through the processes of comprehensive development? Did markets support small traders and working-class shoppers in ways that supermarkets or chain stores could not? Should local authorities, as the managers of markets, uphold legal presence to curtail the opening hours of markets, even if a majority of local shoppers and traders were against this interference in retail-leisure hours?

Seacroft's controversy in 1968 was, in fact, the beginning of a bitter debate between business, local authorities, and the British state that would stretch into the 1970s and beyond: was the public best served by the iconoclastic entrepreneurialism of traders like May Sexton, or

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[92] See letters in WYAS Leeds LLD1/2/833129.
[93] "Seacroft market move 'forced on Corporation' - Traders Allegation," *Skyrack Express* 21 June 1968, 1; WYAS Leeds LLD1/833129. Housing and Property Department, Seacroft Town Centre, 16 August 1968.

did municipal and national authorities still have a role to play in regulating when, where, and how people bought and sold goods? This controversy would embroil large retail outlets, small shopkeeping trade associations, residents' groups, and anti-discrimination advocacy groups, all organizations with a stake in the language and stipulation of British shops legislation and its relation to changing consumer and retailer demands. As an institution that was at once "public" and "private" in its ownership, "stable and "mobile" in its structure, retail markets would attract considerable press and legal attention as the shops acts became increasingly incompatible with modern shopping habits.

Chapter 5: "The Great Philanthropist of the 1970s": Private Market Trader Controversies

Introduction

At the 1973 meeting of the National Association for British Market Authorities (NABMA), President Trevor Thomas surveyed the problems faced by public market in a struggling British economy. In particular, Thomas grappled with his organization's on-going challenge to make markets "relevant" in a late modern retail economy while still upholding the ancient duties associated with market charters and customs. In the contemporary climate, this gap between the reality of shifting shopping habits and the perceived "rights" of local authorities was being leveraged by a retail competitor: the private market. These institutions—held with neither the right of a charter nor the sanction of the local authority—proliferated on under-used and under-developed land on Britain's urban periphery or demolished inner urban areas. As retailing spaces that bypassed planning legislation and the traditional local monopolies of local public authorities, they attracted the ire of the state and economic competitors alike. NABMA worried that here were more of these rogue businesspeople in Britain "than there are rabbits on Salisbury plain" and that the bandwagon of private market trading had become a "greatly overloaded juggernaut."[1]

At the 1973 meeting, president Thomas laid out the case for keeping markets "public" and attentive to the needs of its local consuming public. In a somewhat dismissive tone, he claimed that NABMA should "conserve not just a patchwork of different colored tarpaulins or

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[1] NABMA, Report of the Proceedings of the 27th Annual General Meeting and Conference (Bournemouth, 1975), 22.

any building or anywhere else just because it happens to be called a market."[2] This campaign was not fueled by nostalgia, but rather by a belief in the "vital economic function" that retail markets performed. For Thomas, the market was the basic national economic unit and an institution that must be "got right" if Britain was to weather the economic fluctuations of the early and mid 1970s. Its ubiquity and persistence were constant reminders of the pitfalls of past economic policy:

> I do not mean to suggest that the mere existence of one retail market in a small town in the United Kingdom will prevent financial disaster. The existence of such markets throughout the country is however a useful and daily reminder of the hard facts of life and to those who would otherwise nestle in the comfort of carefully constructed price structures, pyramid selling and other passing phases. I do not put forward the retail market as the greatest weapon against the repetition of protectionist economic thinking but it is a vital and resourceful element which must not be abandoned to fickle commercialism.[3]

Thomas used the market's evocative yet tangible trade culture to parallel periods of economic trials and tribulations. The interwar depression (the "repetition of protectionist economic thinking") was invoked as a period of retail markets' necessity, just as the working-class communities who survived the decade referred to its centrality in making ends meet. Thomas elaborated a two-tier model of the market: the first as an institution of day-to-day economic necessity (the "hard facts of life") and the second as a sound model of national policy.

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[2] This comment comes soon after Bradford demolition of Kirkgate Market and in the midst of Chesterfield's fight to save their market hall and market place. These will be examined in further detail in the following chapter.
[3] NABMA, Report of the Proceedings of the 25th AGM and Conference (Jersey, 1973), 20.

Thomas hitched this two-pronged market function to a critique of local government reorganization. The 1973 speech came amidst one of postwar Britain's periods of political and economic upheaval: Local Government Acts in 1972 (England and Wales) and 1973 (Scotland) had disrupted and reshuffled the powers held by local councils, molding these bodies to corporate management goals of "integration, control from the top, more efficient use of money and labour, [and] forward planning for a bigger impact on the job in hand."[4] The Local Government Act was intended to rationalize the scope of local government across regions of varying size, and cut down on some of the "waste" that local bureaucracies created. For market authorities, this was taken as an attack on their sovereignty and as a dangerous move towards centralization.

This managerial remaking of local services was, in part, a response to Britain's lagging economy, accelerated by the Oil Crisis of 1973 and capped by the inflation crisis of 1975. From the structure of the local state to the economic sustainability of the postwar settlement, pillars of British life seemed to be crumbling. For a public employee such as Thomas—whose profession served the consuming public and existed by the grace of devolved, localized power—the breakup of local power and the influx of private competitors were dual disruptive forces. Thomas's wariness of a central government that already "[had] a huge say in the running of our daily lives," underscored the debates over the relationship between local authority, public assets, and the central state in 1970s Britain.

The following chapter will trace the contours of this debate through the ethos and operation of "private" markets. More specifically, I will flesh out the stakes of making retail markets "private" rather than "public" for not only British retail culture, but also for the devolved

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[4] Cynthia Cockburn, *The Local State* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), 13.

power of the British local state. As local authorities' responsibilities shifted according to the corporate managerialism noted above, and as public trust in the character and competence of government officials was shaken by the reveal of councilors' backhand deals, the rushed nature of reorganization, and the economic stand-still of the three-day week, there was arguably a deficit developing in the political authority and morality at various echelons of the British state.[5]

The private market, therefore, was a material and rhetorical appeal to a British public increasingly weary with the mismanagement of local government. Market firms such as Graysim Properties, Wendy Fair, Tekram Enterprises, Barcourt Ltd., and Hughland Markets expanded exponentially between 1968 and 1972, with seventy-five private markets opening in mid-1972 alone.[6] Geographically, these firms concentrated in regions where the public market tradition was not strong. Their strategy was to lease underdeveloped or underused land (often the car parks and football grounds of struggling lower clubs or disused airfields) for part-time market use. Although these private markets occasionally entered city centers, the largest and most successful were in rural or green belt districts. These markets targeted not only the traditional Saturday market day, but increasingly expanded to rogue operation on Sundays. This Sabbath-breaking meant that the private market challenged not only local planning permission and market rights, but also the cultural sanctity of Sunday as a day free of leisure, retail, and profit.[7]

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[5] See Nick Tiratsoo, "'You've never had it so bad': Britain in the 1970s," in *From Blitz to Blair: a new history of Britain since 1939,* ed. Nick Tiratsoo (London: Phoenix, 1997); Richard Coopey and Nicholas Woodward, *Britain in the 1970s: The Troubled Economy* (London: Palgrave, 1996); Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (eds.), *The Heath Government 1970-74: A Reappraisal* (London: Routledge, 2014); Ronald McIntosh, *Challenge to Democracy: Politics, Trade Union Power and Economic Failure in the 1970s* (London: Politico's, 2006). Dominic Sandbrook, *State of Emergency: The Way We Were: Britain 1970-1974* (London: Penguin, 2010).

[6] J.R. Medland, "In the market place: the old style flourishes," *New Society,* 28 September 1972, 609.

[7] I will be using "Sunday" and "private" markets largely interchangeably, in keeping with the slippage in the contemporary debate. For issues where the sanctity of the Sabbath is crucial, I will be more particular about the "Sunday" nature of trade.

The firm that garnered the widest following and the most controversy was Spook Erection Ltd. By the end of the 1970s, this operator was running twenty-two markets in England and Wales, and twelve in Scotland.[8] The founder, owner, and promoter of Spook Erection was Nigel Maby. While Maby started his career as a trader on public markets, his private company would ultimately seek to undermine local authorities' monopoly on municipal trading. His rise and popularity will thus serve as a lens to examine how private competitors capitalized on the weakness and flux of local government to meet the changing retail-leisure demands of consumers.

At the height of private market controversy in 1972 and 1973, the Home Office affirmed that they would approach any legal changes to the Shops Act—and thus the legalization of many private, Sunday markets—with "benevolent neutrality," leaving the controversial subject in the hands of local councils and the courts.[9] Therefore over the remainder of the decade, the British state and retailing interests would feel the threat of private operators at the local, rather than the national level.[10] This uneven, regionally specific tension shapes the source base of this chapter; in order to capture the geographic breadth and the place-specific stakes of private market development, I draw on local archives in Bristol, West Lothian, and Leicestershire. Within these archives, planning appeals and chamber of commerce minutes flesh out the fears of entrenched retail interests in provincial Britain. In addition, local newspapers from across England and

[8] John Coates, "Market World Turned Upside Down… In Just 11 Years," *World's Fair*, 1 September 1979, 12. There were 161 private markets in England and Wales, and 17 in Scotland (compared to 536 Corporation run markets in England and Wales and 4 in Scotland). At the beginning of the decade, there had only been 95 private markets in England and Wales, and 2 in Scotland. Statistics compiled by author from the *Markets Year Books*.
[9] Roland Adburgham, "Market men fight never on Sunday law," *The Sunday Times,* 15 July 1973, 54; "Home Office is keeping an eye on Sunday market," *Warwick Advertiser* 28 January 1972, 7.
[10] Leicester Mercury Archives, University of Leicester Special Collections, LMA/Cuttings/MA. "Sunday Market is illegal - High Court ruling," *Leicester Mercury,* 10 May 1972, 16.

Scotland help extend and contextualize the public debate over the efficacy of private markets as "fair" competition.

National newspapers also followed the growth of private markets with interest, although their coverage usually focused on the personalities who made open-air, occasional shopping an attraction, rather than the minutia of legal and political jockeying. This focus on "personalities" is a vital component of the private market phenomenon: to understand the way cultural attitudes towards economic best interests and business freedoms were changing on the ground throughout the 1970s, we need to shift away from high political machinations, national debates about trade unionism, or think tank policymakers: we must delve into the way individualism and entrepreneurship were championed in the language of populist commercial interests. In this respect, I take my cues from Stuart Hall and Alan O'Shea's theory of "Common Sense Neoliberalism," a mode of everyday thinking and making sense of the world that gradually—yet coherently—privileged the free market actor above all other subject-positions.[11] In the case of private markets in the 1970s, this was manifested in a set of individualist operators like Nigel Maby who coopted the terrain of "public" service from a retail institution that was, by definition, a publicly owned asset.

Private market operators, led by firms like Graysim, Wendy Fair, and Spook Erection, had slightly different geographic foci and management structures, but they all relied on three general strategies to expand their share of the market industry in Great Britain. First, they took advantage of gaps or oversights in local authorities' runnings of retail markets, whether this was encroaching on weak market areas or purchasing charters from councils. Second, they overwhelmed their municipal competitors with provocative media campaigns - features in trade

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[11] Stuart Hall and Alan O'Shea, "Common-sense Neoliberalism," in *After Neoliberalism? The Kilburn Manifesto,* eds. Stuart Hall et al (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2015), 52-55.

journals and national broadsheets set them apart from their quotidian competitors. Finally, they defended their unconventional tactics as "willed by the people." This rallying cry combined their belief in individualism with their opposition to local government's monopoly on market rights.[12]

Private firms' successes were precipitated by political and economic particularities in the 1970s, yet their tactics were not necessarily new to retail market culture. London's street markets, alongside regional markets in Newcastle, Glasgow, and other industrial towns and cities had flourished in the gray area between private enterprise and public oversight for roughly a century. For example, the "Caledonian Market" detailed in chapter one would become one of the most celebrated private markets in urban Britain, transforming into Margaret McIver's Barras Market. McIver made her name in the East End of Glasgow, and beyond, by catering to the retail and consumption needs of the "people." McIver's indirect influence on 1970s private marketeers should not be understated: she consolidated her retailing empire in the interwar period by branding the Barras as a destination for retail-leisure, much like the men and women who would later run open-air markets on sporting grounds or airfields.

Nigel Maby, however, transformed the populist appeal of McIver's market model into a quintessential project of "finder's keepers" entrepreneurship. Rather than producing or innovating, Maby relied on his alertness to under-used resources and un-met demand to "discover" value in the burgeoning world of retail-leisure.[13] By expanding his business to areas where marketing had been traditionally weak, by instigating a charm offensive through the trade, local, and national press, and by consolidating his business practices through specialized

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[12] Wendy Hobday, the owner of Wendy Fair, stood as a Tory candidate in Ruislip-Northwood in 1974. She claimed that there was "a need of someone who will fight for the local people." She ran on a platform of opposing Labour compulsory purchases and pro-Sunday Trading. *World's Fair*, 2 March 1974, 15.

[13] Gerard Hanlon, "The entrepreneurial function and the capture of value: Using Kirzner to understand contemporary capitalism," *Ephemera* 14, no. 2 (2014), 182.

manuals, Maby shifted the authority over market trading from local government to the individual trader. Just as earlier postwar entrepreneurs such as direct sales washing machine magnate John Bloom, low-cost airline kingpin Freddie Laker, or mini-cab pioneer Michael Gotla had capitalized on distorted consumer and service markets, Maby succeeded in wrestling expertise that had once been the property of monopolistic firms and state-backed enterprise.

Michael Gotla and the London "mini-cab battle" of the 1960s and 1970s provides the most salient parallel for Nigel Maby and the private market controversy. Gotla's unlicensed mini-cabs were a direct challenge to the protected, guild-like London black cab business. The entanglement and cross-influence of these two business models over the 1970s created a geographical disparity between "unlicensed" and "licensed" cabs. Historian John Davis has explored not only the complex legal developments that paved the way for unlicensed cabs, but also what these changes meant in terms of the political culture of popular individualism in the 1970s: in his estimation, the freedom of owner-driving, the frustration with bureaucratic illiberalism, and the expansion of London suburbia helped lay the groundwork for the rise of Thatcher's "Essex Man" in the 1980s.[14] The opportunism, place-based enterprise, and cultural underpinnings of Gotla and his disciples adds context to Nigel Maby's own valorization of self-sufficiency and disruption in the market trading business.

Amidst the rhetorical rise of "enterprise" and "entrepreneurism" in the 1980s and 1990s, sociologists, anthropologists, and critical organizational theorists attempted answer what was distinct about an abstracted theory of entrepreneurship, as opposed to its application as part of

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[14] John Davis, "The London Cabbie and the Rise of Essex Man," in *Classes, Cultures, and Politics: Essays on British History for Ross McKibbin,* eds. Clare V.J. Griffiths et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 114-116. The "Essex man"—characterized by a new class of Conservative voter rooted in self-made entrepreneurship—would come into common parlance in the later 1980s.

the neoliberal political project.[15] Indeed, the cross-pollination between Austrian School economists like Israel Kirzner, contributors to the conservative thinktank the Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA), and members of Thatcher's cabinet makes it difficult to disaggregate the political and intellectual leverage of "entrepreneurship" from its rootedness in social reality.[16] Yet there were modes of self-fashioning, like the rise of the "Essex Man," which engaged with enterprise from a more visceral and materialist standpoint. Dick Hobbs's scholarship, embedded in the cultural and commercial milieu of London's East End, is one of the most successful examples of dissociating lived "entrepreneurship" from its rhetorical political appeal. *Doing the Business: Entrepreneurship, the Working Class, and Detectives in East London* (1988) takes terms such as "entrepreneurship" and "enterprise culture" and traces their historical-social roots in the economy of the East End. These working-class entrepreneurs' immersion in a commercial world led to what Hobbs called a "commodification of reality,"[17] or a fundamental belief that all available goods and services could be bought and sold within the accepted terms and social norms of the discrete East End environment. This modeling helps explain the tactics and success of entrepreneurs like McIver and Maby, whose businesses never strayed very far from the demands and tastes of their customers, and the showmanship of their traders.

One of the criticisms that Dick Hobbs levied on enterprise scholarship was its lack of historical grounding. In 1992, he claimed "as we are entering an era that is ambiguous about enterprise as an emblem of Britain's moral economy, we can afford to apply hindsight beyond

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[15] Roger Burrows (ed.), *Deciphering the Enterprise Culture* (London: Routledge 1991); Nicholas Abercrombie and Russell Keat (eds.), *Enterprise Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991); Paul Heelas and P. Morris (eds.), *The Values of the Enterprise Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992). For a broader overview of this literature, see Dick Hobbs, "Review Article: Enterprise Culture," *Work, Employment & Society* 6, no. 2 (1992), 303-308.
[16] Israel Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973) and *Perception, Opportunity and Profit (*Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Institute of Economic Affairs, *Prime Movers of Progress: The Entrepreneur in Capitalism and Socialism* (London: IEA, 1980). Martin Binks and John Coyne, "The Birth of Enterprise," *Hobart Papers* 98 (London: IEA, 1983).
[17] Dick Hobbs, *Doing the Business* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 115.

the 1980s."[18] I would like to take up Hobbs's assertion by extending the scholarship of historians like John Davis, Emily Robinson, and others on the "popular individualism" that underpinned social life in 1970s Britain.[19] This chapter will argue that the private market boom in the 1970s was part of long-term debates about commercialization and competition within the marketing community, but its immediacy was compounded by short-term political reorganizations and economic volatility. Running through these developments were unresolved debates about whether or not markets should be money-making operations, and how far civic trading should revise its values and rights according to the will of consumers. This critique of local government interference in retail trade opened up a space for entrepreneurs like Nigel Maby to stake new ground in the market industry.[20] By coopting the allure of market "atmosphere" in the name of efficient business, Maby brought a competitive market mindset to a historically publicly run asset.

Part one will examine the structural conditions that precipitated the rise of private markets in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These were a mix of legal and jurisdictional changes, along with more nebulous changes in consumer tastes that revolved around the economy of the family unit. Ultimately, occasional markets bridged the division between shopping for bargains and shopping for pleasure. Drawing on parliamentary debate, periodicals, and internal documents of shopkeeping trade associations in Leicestershire, Bristol, and West Lothian, this section will

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[18] Hobbs, "Review Article," 307.

[19] Emily Robinson et al, "Telling Stories about Post-war Britain: Popular Individualism and the 'Crisis' of the 1970s," *Twentieth Century British History* 28, no. 2 (2017), 268-304. For similar projects, see Rodney Lowe, "Review Article: Life Begins in the Seventies? Writing and Rewriting the History of Postwar Britain," *Journal of Contemporary History* 42 (2007), 161-169.; Lawrence Black, "Review Article: An Enlightening Decade: New Histories of 1970s' Britain," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 82 (2012), 174-186; Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton and Pat Thane (eds.), *Reassessing 1970s Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

[20] One of the accepted preconditions or at least catalysts for entrepreneurs is volatility, which precipitates a corresponding decrease in demand for managers. Mark Casson et al, "Introduction," in *Oxford Handbook of Entrepreneurship,* eds. Casson et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9.

elaborate why the competitive force of private markets was seen as particularly economizing or detrimental for “ordinary” families and businesses in stagflation Britain.

Leicestershire, Bristol, and West Lothian have few similarities in terms of economic profile—the first is a region characterized by light industry, the second a port city, the third a district steeped in mining and surviving on a major British Leyland car plant. While studies of urban typology would never study these locales together, the similar debates around private markets raised in each area provides a different angle on economic “decline” in the 1970s. Decline was not merely felt on the level of industrial relations or in terms of Britain’s economic health relative to its European neighbors; decline was about entrenched commercial interests in town and city centers jockeyed for the custom of cash-strapped consumers. This visceral fear was shared by retailers across a range of towns and cities, and their anxiety was heightened by the entry of occasional, open-air retail marketeers who appeared not to pay business rates. Private markets were not “of” the local retail community, nor did they necessarily provide for customers within its geographic boundaries; this ability to transcend catchment analysis troubled retailers and local authorities who depended on consistent demand to plan for business and development. Their growth and competition raised concerns from retailers that were parallel to those in the interwar and immediate postwar years; namely that the connection between local belonging and commercial citizenship was being severed in a period of economic crisis.

Part two focuses on these concerns voiced by local independent retailers and local authorities, and how the specter of the “private market” fueled deeper anxieties about the relationship between the state and the free market. Due to the diffuse nature of retail market regulation, it took years before market traders and authorities could agree on a national policy, and even then, the steps which local authorities could take to “protect” market rights were merely

guidelines. The legal case of Maby versus Warwick Borough Council (1972)—when private markets held on Sundays were deemed "illegal" in the eyes of the Shops Act—raised more questions than it offered solutions; namely whether or not local government should suppress a popular consumer outlet in order to please a consortium of local shopkeeping interests.

The final section will shift perspective to the strategies and ethos of private market operator Nigel Maby, the thorn in the side of Chambers of Commerce and Trade, planning departments, and market authorities in 1970s Britain. Maby's goal to create a branded network of private markets across the country was part of a careful negotiation with local authorities: finding geographic areas where private market operators would be met with indifference or even welcomed, or launching a pointed attack on the oversight and legitimacy of the local state when they opposed his business. This final section will elucidate the multi-pronged charm offensive of Maby the populist entrepreneur: his presence in national newspapers, his infiltration of the market trade press, and his self-authored business manuals.

Maby's populist entrepreneur persona was not necessarily novel in 1970s Britain; this ground was tread over forty years earlier by the Glasgow entrepreneur Margaret McIver, the "Queen of the Barrows." Analyzing Maby's rhetoric and strategies in light of McIver helps explain where and why informal, private enterprise in the retail industry was cultivated and celebrated across twentieth-century Britain. McIver and Maby harnessed retail market's rhetorical meaning as a site defined by competitive pricing and entrepreneurial drive, turning these "common good" values against the interfering mechanisms of the state. In many ways, this business philosophy reads as a pre-history to the Thatcherite neoliberal individualism. By grafting this authoritarian, highly masculine persona onto his press character, I will elucidate

how his grievances against government oversight melded with his everyman biography. The result is a material record of nascent enterprise culture values.

Structural Conditions

There was a confluence of legal and jurisdictional issues in the late 1960s and early 1970s that encouraged the private market, especially its holding on Sundays. The first was the 1969 repeal of the Sunday Fairs Act of 1448 (never extended to Scotland), which had made it illegal to hold markets on Sundays and Good Fridays.[21] This meant that from January 1, 1970, national statutes banning Sunday markets were lifted — although the local enforcement of the 1950 Shops Act was more haphazard. The second was the fallout from the Department of the Environment (DoE) replacing the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) in 1970. MHLG had been the national overseer of market issues; when this office disappeared it shifted not only the value placed on public markets, but precipitated the DoE's decision to relinquish jurisdiction over certain market charges, opening days and hours; these changes sat in line with the corporate reform of local government management.[22] The National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) abhorred this DoE decision, claiming that many of their members would have no rights or recourse to challenge rent increases. This also left many traders disillusioned with the ethos of the public market and more open to standing private markets if the conditions between public and private were so negligible.

The final issue was the road toward local government reorganization. An aura of uncertainty and fear hung over market traders and authorities in the early 1970s, when Local

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[21] "Sunday markets: a few facts," *World's Fair,* 13 November 1976, 14.
[22] "DoE to relinquish control," *World's Fair*, 6 May 1972, 10 and "Who's kidding who…?," *World's Fair,* 30 June 1979; Cockburn, "The Local State," 19.

Government Acts shrunk the number of local authorities in England and Wales from 1425 at the beginning of the decade to 456 by 1974.[23] In what David Wilson coined a "democratic deficit," the traditional authorities who had fostered a sense of closeness and identity were becoming more remote from the local population. Crucially, reorganization was not a strictly partisan issue: although Keith Joseph, as Minister for Housing and Local Government, had originally convened the Maud Committee in 1964 and local government reorganization had been legislated under a Conservative government in 1972, Harold Wilson's "White Heat" Labour government saw managerialism as a key conduit for modernizing British industrial, social, but also political institutions.[24] Market Committees, relatively small sub-units of municipal government, worried for their sovereign responsibilities and continued existence within these new councils.[25] A *World's Fair* editorial in 1978 concluded that the 1974 reorganization had brought the virtual abolition of control over changes and buried formerly powerful market departments into inferior sections of large local government departments.[26]

The growth of private markets was in part fueled by these disruptions in the power and oversight of market administration, but they were also dependent on long-shifting shopping and consumption patterns among the British public. A 1976 Seminar presented to the House of Commons by the Unit for Retail Planning Information listed increases in female employment,

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[23] David Wilson, "Structural 'Solutions' for Local Government: An Exercise in Chasing Shadows?" *Parliamentary Affairs* 49, no. 3 (1996), 444. In Scotland, 65 principal councils replaced 430 authorities.
[24] Cockburn, *The Local State,* 23-24; Sandbrook, *Seasons in the Sun,* 69-70; Bryan Keith-Lucas and Peter G. Richards, *A History of Local Government in the Twentieth Century* (London: HarperCollins, 1978), 223; Alan Alexander, "Structure, Centralization and the Position of Local Government," in *Half a Century of Municipal Decline,* eds. Martin Loughlin et al (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 69-70. Historians such as Peter Jones have connected the local government reorganization to cases to corruption in large urban councils, with John Poulson and T. Dan Smith being the most notorious examples. Peter Jones, *From Virtue to Venality: Corruption in the city* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 90.
[25] Paul Fourdrinier, "Increased rights of new district council," *World's Fair*, 9 June 1973, 11; "Privately owned markets mushroom," *World's Fair,* 18 August 1973, 1. Others believed that the breakup of local power monopolies would hurt the anti-market shopkeeping class and benefit the market in the long run. "The end of civic pride," *World's Fair,* 30 March 1974, 1.
[26] "Market Medley - Market problems," *World's Fair*, 14 January 1978, 2.

population shifts away from major towns, and the growth of car ownership as the main consumer trends that put pressure on the retail sector - namely precipitating the demand for superstores and hypermarkets that were sited on motor-convenient rather than pedestrian-convenient routes.[27] Car owners favored hypermarkets and superstores with their flexible hours and abundant parking.[28] Discount traders used the idea of consumer comfort to justify their expanding share of the retail market. Peter Firmston Williams, Managing Director of out-of-town supermarket pioneer Asda, described the "harassed housewives who have to do their food shopping in the High Streets and city centers," and argued that the ample parking provisions at his store outstripped parking in towns, or the "inadequate public transport."[29] Out-of-town stores were fast becoming the affluent housewife's choice, insulating her from the bustle of downtown shopping.

Yet changes in employment and family structure in the 1970s upset this image of the housewife solely focused on shopping and domestic choices. In 1972, Shadow Home Secretary Shirley Williams cited the fact that women were working longer hours made it harder to gauge the relationship between women's working and shopping hours.[30] The figure of the working housewife was a frequent justification for liberalized shopping hours, with Baroness Sumerskill invoking their needs as the Sunday trading debate dragged on into the mid-1970s.[31] The market had already responded to the new schedule of working women: supermarkets rolled out late night opening, and hypermarkets often traded until 9 or 10pm, with the busy rush on Friday evenings

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[27] By 1973, 58% of the British population was living in a car-owning household. Peter Jones, "Recent Changes in the Patterns of Retailing" in *Hypermarkets and Superstores: Report of a House of Commons Seminar* (London: Unit for Retail Planning Information, 1976), 1-2.
[28] In 1947 there were only ten self-service stores in Britain, by 1970 there were 28,000, of which 3,400 were supermarkets. Dawn Nell et al, "Investigating Shopper Narratives of the Supermarket in Early Post-War England, 1945-1975," *Oral History* 37, no. 1 (2009), 64.
[29] Peter Firmston Williams, "The Case for Hypermarkets and Superstores," in *Hypermarkets and Superstores,* 10-11.
[30] House of Commons Debate, 20 October 1972, vol 843, col 701-703.
[31] House of Lords Debate, 19 June 1974, vol 352, col 908-910.

after the end of the working week.[32] Yet this flexibility in schedule was often met with consumer inflexibility in transport: the fact remained that in the early 1970s, 48% of households in Britain still had no car, and even in car-owning households women rarely had daytime access to this form of transport.[33] The demand for flexibility according to work needed to be accompanied according to family circumstance and sociability. A 1970 market research survey showed that over a third of young couples (ages 18-34) liked to shop together, and by the middle of the decade over half of this demographic preferred to shop together on a Sunday.[34] "The weekend" was therefore an underdeveloped site for the synergy of retail *and* leisure, where the logistics of mobility and sharing of household duties might be dually accommodated.

The diversifying modes and timetables of shopping sit uneasily with another popular image of the 1970s: rampant inflation and spiraling consumer costs. After Britain joined the EEC in 1973, the cost of food went up by over a tenth.[35] Over the decade as a whole, prices increased by roughly 200% on most goods. While difficult to separate market shopping from shopping more generally, the media did frame the popularity of Sunday markets as part of that groundswell movement to "make ends meet" during a period of economic uncertainty. One newspaper article quoted that the goods on offer at these proliferating private markets were 60% the price of those in shops, helping struggling families "beat inflation."[36] The cheap commercial

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[32] The National Archives (hereafter TNA) HO 308/37. Trends affecting shopping habits and requirements. Report of the Departmental Committee on the Law of Sunday Observance (1965), 53; R.D. Mansley and R. Verrico, S*hopping Centers and Hypermarket Developments in and around Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1971), 3.
[33] Sophie Bowlby, "From Corner Shop to Hypermarket: Women and Food Retailing," in *Women in Cities: Gender and the Urban Environment,* eds. Jo Little et al (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 75.
[34] British Market Research Bureau, *Shopping in the Seventies: Highlights of a Survey of Housewives, June 1970* (1970), 21; "Shopping Basket: Why it's boom-time at the Barrows," *Glasgow Daily Record,* 3 December 1976.
[35] Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went Out: Britain in the Seventies* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 95.
[36] Glasgow City Archives (hereafter GCA) D-PL 1/6/4. Paper No. 8 - The Views of Shoppers (Mrs. E.S. Whatley, West of Scotland Federation of Townswomen's Guilds). Discount Trading and Hypermarkets: Report of Conference Proceedings. Corporation of Glasgow. July 1971; James Gibbins, "You'll find there's a better class of barrow boy these days," *The Daily Mail*, 28 October 1975, 2.

culture of private markets were not only driven by the demand of consumers, but the unexpected supply of unsold goods during the economic upheavals of the early 1970s: a 1974 *Glasgow Herald* article claimed that many of the goods on Scottish private markets originated from bankrupt English firms who had overstocked as a precaution following the three-day week.[37]

The unpredictable spatial and social developments of bargain market shopping—with families trekking to rural or green belt locales for a chance buy rather than housewives traveling to the city center for a regular shop—drew the attention of academics and planners. University of Leicester-based geographers carried out surveys at the two largest private markets in England and Scotland, each owned by Nigel Maby: a Melton Mowbray survey in 1972, followed by an Ingliston survey in 1976.[38] Their findings provide some insight into the motivations of shoppers and traders, and how they aligned with the move towards hyper and supermarket shopping. At Ingliston, 91% of shoppers came by car, and only 2% made single-person visits. Sunday markets appeared to be meeting the weekend demand for family retail-leisure. However, the distances these shoppers traveled did not fit the arterial or ring road convenience model. At Ingliston, shoppers were driving an average of 17.2 miles to reach the market, at Melton Mowbray it was 21.6 miles. These residents came from Central Belt or East Midlands conurbations, where retail outlets were supposedly sufficient. At Ingliston, 64% of respondents came with no purchase in mind, further adding to the picture of a weekend car outing rather than a focused chore. The purchase totals reflected this lack of purpose and plan: a single car party would likely spend eight pounds at a Sunday market, compared to twenty at a hypermarket.

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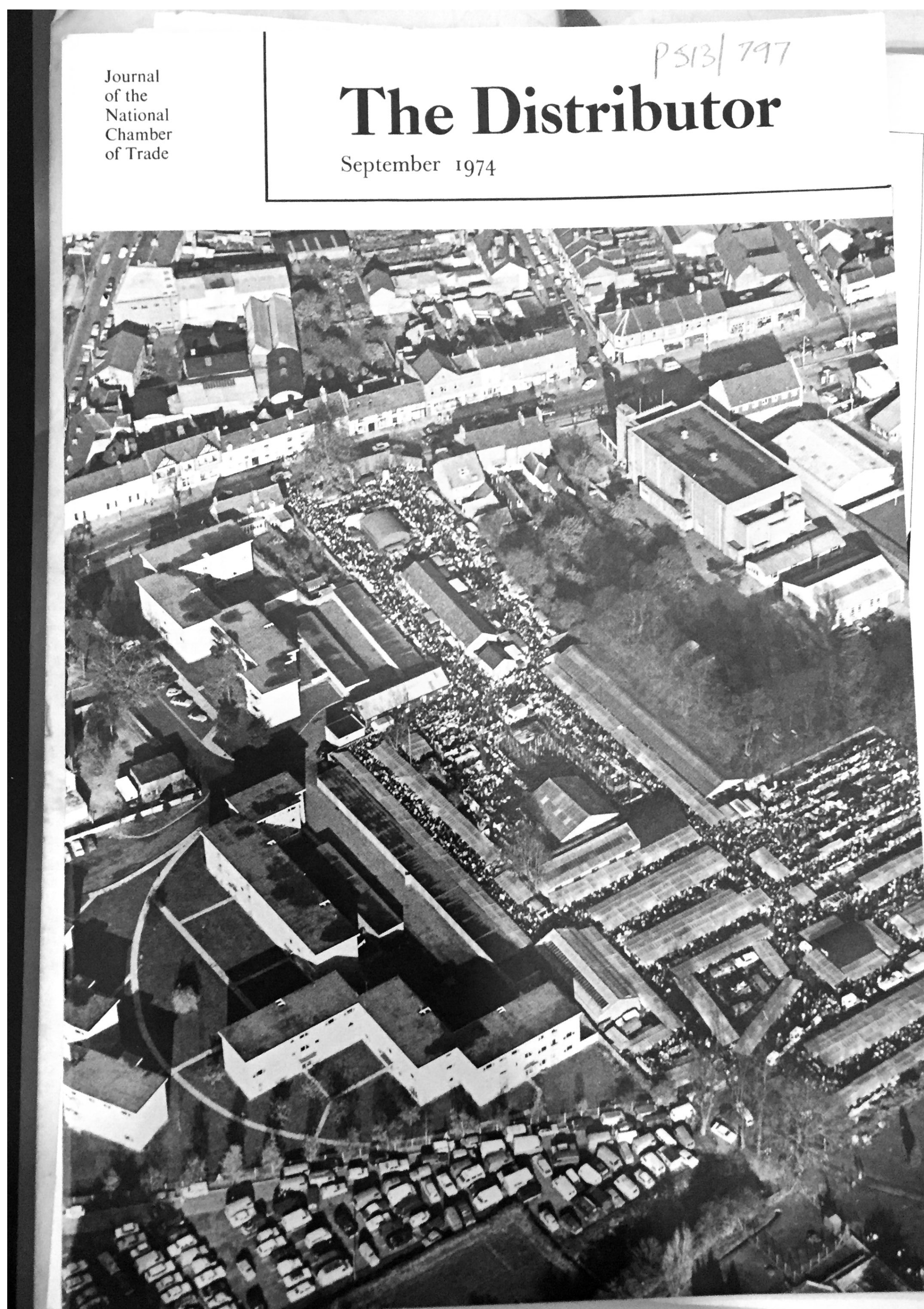
[37] "English Barrow Boy Loophole in Scotland," *Glasgow Herald*, 28 October 1974, 12.
[38] J.J. Fagg et al, "Melton Mowbray Sunday market," *Town and Country Planning* 42b (1974), 513-517; Alan J. Strachan, "The Sunday market in Scotland: A case study of Ingliston," *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 94, no. 1 (1978), 48-58.


P513/797
Journal of the National Chamber of Trade

The Distributor

September 1974

Figure 5.1. *The Distributor*, September 1974. Aerial view of Warwick Sunday market.

Although Sunday markets were “twice as busy” as hypermarkets—attracting daily crowds in the tens of thousands (Figure 5.1)—their revenue did not match the brick and mortar stores. Geographer Jean Berman argued that customers treated Sunday markets in fundamentally

different ways than standard stores: the willingness to drive twenty to forty miles to reach markets meant that their popularity was tied as much to leisure as it was to retail.[39] The composite picture of the typical Sunday market shopper suggests a family who was put off by traveling *into* a city or town to support an occasional market, but who sought the open-air, casual atmosphere of markets in more rural and car-friendly spaces. Human geographers, popular sociologists, and journalists flocked to these new retailing sites on the urban fringe, with the aim of contextualizing and historicizing why private markets boomed in the early 1970s when hypermarkets and supermarkets were consolidating retailing, streamlining it for convenience and cost.[40]

The planning researcher's data on the markets' traders confirmed the private market as a site of variegated and unpredictable aims and desires. The goods on offer undoubtedly met the consumers' wish for frivolity and "special" purchases rather than perishables and staples: At Melton Mowbray, less than 10% of the goods on offer were food and refreshments, and clothes accounted for almost half of the stalls at the Ingliston market. The number of brick and mortar shopkeepers who worked at Ingliston as a side job almost equaled the number of full-time market traders (22% to 25%), suggesting that traders were capitalizing on an opportunity to "make ends meet" more so than the shoppers.[41] Attending these markets was a casual weekend job, a career change, or a way to boost trade in a main line of work. A *Daily Mail* feature alerted the shopper that at Melton Mowbray, you were likely to come across "the stockbroker who sells

[39] Jean Berman, "Sunday Markets," *Town and Country Planning* 44 (1976), 227.
[40] J.R. Medland, "In the market place: the old style flourishes," *New Society,* 28 September 1972, 609-613.
[41] Local housewives selling homemade goods or goods made by friends made up 10% of the stallholders at Ingliston.

binoculars and sporting goods, the architect in Manchester who flogs frying pans from Taiwan and the schoolmistress in Newcastle who does a line in long johns and other winter woolies."[42]

These studies give vital context about the demographic, economic, and geographic features of the private market. At these sites, the volatility of the 1970s economy joined up with the rise of retail-leisure to produce the social praxis of the Sunday open-air market. For retailers struggling to maintain their market share and consumer base, markets like those in Melton Mowbray or Ingliston raised the question of whether shoppers in the 1970s ultimately wanted "potential" bargains or a "social" atmosphere when they shopped. The popularity of occasional, open-air markets suggested that it might not even be possible to "reconcile [these] economic and social factors of retailing."[43] Like the second-hand goods market, the car boot sale, or even the growth of the mini-cab industry, private open-air markets were the meeting point of unmet consumer demand and gaps in public regulation.[44] Although their allure stemmed from their liminal status and their feel had a dose of the fairground, the interest they elicited from retail geographers and retail competitors suggested that they were becoming central players *within* the mainstream retail economy.

As parliamentary politicians, geographers, and journalists hypothesized about the broader social forces that had aided the rise of private markets, a host of actors closer to the day-to-day realities of economic survival saw these markets in slightly different terms. For market defenders, the attractiveness of open-air shopping was not merely its capacity for "fun," but for

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[42] Gibbins, "You'll find there's a better class of barrow boy these days."
[43] Bristol Archives (hereafter BA) 38605/M/70. Retailing and Planning: Some Problems. Notes for Discussion. Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Industry: Minutes (May 1976-April 1977).
[44] Nicky Gregson et al, "Excluded spaces of regulation: car-boot sales as an enterprise culture out of control?" *Environment and Planning A* 29 (1997), 1717-1737; Gregson and Louise Crewe, *Second-Hand Cultures* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003); Allison Clarke, "'Mother Swapping': The Trafficking of Nearly New Children's Wear," in *Commercial Cultures,* eds. Peter Jackson et al (London: Bloomsbury, 2000): 85-100; Neil Wrigley and Michelle Lowe, *Reading Retail: A Geographical Perspective on Retailing and Consumption Spaces* (London: Routledge, 2002), 187-202.

the very real economizing function it played in the family budget. When Melton Mowbray's market came under attack from local ratepayers and planning officials in the mid-1970s, local councilors sang its economizing praises, claiming that it "created work," "extra income," and "enabled the working class and middle class to shop around and beat prices."[45] Melton Borough Councilor Mrs J. Stokes Morris put it as simply as possible when she observed that "there are many children in this borough who would not be so well clothed or shod if it was not for the Sunday market."[46] This imagined service positioned the private market positioned the private market as godsend to the "ordinary" British family.

While market defenders may have focused on the market as "godsend" to consumers, market detractors focused on these institution as the destroyers of the local firm. Opposition to private markets was most often instigated by local Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Trade, and Retailers Associations. In Bristol, where the threat of private markets began in the late 1960s and carried through the 1970s, the Chamber of Commerce urged the city's planning department to enforce the Shops Act, protect consumers, and indeed the "social structure of the city."[47] In an economic argument that pitted consumer choice against retailer protections, members of the Chamber of Commerce fixated on private Sunday markets' "return to a peasant society," or a "medieval society," where "itinerant traders descend on open spaces."[48] The sin of itinerancy—both that it made recourse to faulty goods difficult, and the consistent payment of local rates almost impossible—became a major plank of the Chamber of Commerce platform. In the eyes of these business interests, itinerant "undesirables" sold presumably stolen goods and evaded

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[45] LMA/Cuttings/MA. "Most people want a Sunday market," *Leicester Mercury 6* October 1972, 19; "Sunday market is a godsend, witness tells all-day inquiry," *Leicester Mercury* 21 May 1975, 33.
[46] LMA/Cuttings/MA. "Stallholders in Sunday market road block road threat," *Leicester Mercury* 17 March 1977, 37.
[47] BA 3860/M/68. Letter from G.J. Shore (Chief Executive to J. Fleming Esq., CBE (Chief Executive, Bristol City Council), 18 September 1974. Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Industry Minutes, 1 May 1974-30 April 1975.
[48] BA 3860/M/68. Bristol Chamber of Commerce Minutes of 19 September 1974 and Letter from G.J. Shore.

purchase tax.[49] The Chamber of Commerce even suggested issuing a "passport" to market traders, to prove their social and economic investment in the city, a step which planning officials were not prepared to take.[50] This specific threat of itinerant "unknowability" links fears of the commercial foreigner in the 1970s to the language used against peddlers and black marketeers in the interwar and war years: unregulated market trading represented not only a step back to a "medieval" era of buying and selling, but a specific threat to highly rated businesses looking to weather economic downturn.

Bristol was not alone in this attack on the "do-nothing" attitudes of many local authorities. In Bathgate, West Lothian, local shopkeepers likewise approached the planning department with concerns about the growth of itinerant retailers. Independent shopkeepers, the Cooperative, and the Bathgate Traders Association were struggling to keep afloat financially in Bathgate, where they were challenged by the upstart market on the derelict Cattle market site and by the new regional shopping center at Livingston New Town. Letters to the planning department from "local traders of long standing" or "bona fide" traders underscored their unique claim to the protection of local authorities against upstart business interests.[51] These letters oscillate between the strictly commercial need their writers filled in the local community and these residents' extra-economic service to the "wellbeing" of the town. Small businesspersons claimed that the rise of supermarkets and discount stores had forced them into a more communal, altruistic role in the retail landscape: they would "stock and service articles and items unlucrative

[49] BA 38605/ROB/2. Bristol Chamber of Commerce, 1953-1978. Minutes of the Retailers' Advisory Committee, 28 September 1970.
[50] BA 38605/ROB/2. Minutes of the Retailers' Advisory Committee, 25 March 1969; BA BCC/A/M/PTR/1/4. Bristol Planning and Traffic Committee, Jan-May 1969. Report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer, 7 May 1969.
[51] West Lothian Archives and Record Centre [WLARC], GB1829/WLDC 19/3/6. West Lothian District Council Planning and Development Committee, January-July 1977. Letters from Agnes Mackay (2 July 1976), Greig Bros. Ltd (15 June 1976), and Margaret Drummond (16 May 1976) to Director of Administration, West Lothian District Council.

for the Big Boys but nevertheless essential to [their] customers."[52] This "public service," service to the "community," and "backbone of the burgh" was increasingly untenable with the high costs of running a business that paid rates and employees, and collected purchase tax. By adopting a "do nothing" attitude towards private market competitors, Bathgate's traders believed the local state was in breach of the economic and social contract between local businesses and local government.

The threat of the open-air market, therefore underscored what was "collective" about local business and what was "individualist" about private market operators. The local retailer was an employer and a taxpayer, while the market operator was unhindered by responsibilities to employees or locality. This anxiety about the severing of employment and citizenship was wrapped up in larger structural changes between the mid-1960s and the early 1970s, when the number of employers and self-employed in the British economy had risen by an estimated 255,000, while the number of employed men fell by half a million.[53] The tension between stable retailers and itinerant market traders was conditioned by this context of what Scott Lash and John Urry have labeled the "end of organized capitalism."[54] Open-air, occasional private markets profited from minimal overheads (including fewer employees), answered to no tangible community or public good, and preyed on consumers' paucity rather than their prosperity. Independent shopkeepers from Bristol to Bathgate, Folkestone to Melton Mowbray felt this competition in their weekly profit margins, but the questions remained: what legal steps could

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[52] WLARC GB1829/WLDC 19/3/6. Letter from Bathgate Traders Association to the Director of Administration, West Lothian District Council, 22 June 1976. West Lothian District Council Report on Application for Planning Permission. Proposed temporary change of use of part of cattle market site to open air retail market at Cattle Market, Bathgate, 2 February 1977.

[53] John McHugh, "The self-employed and the small independent entrepreneur," in *Respectable Rebels: Middle Class Campaigns in Britain in the 1970s,* eds. Roger King and Neill Nugent (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), 48.

[54] Scott Lash and John Urry, *The End of Organized Capitalism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

and should market authorities and planning departments take to regulate a popular form of retail-leisure?

Local Councils' Reactions

Although NABMA took on the private market challenge at their AGMs, the localized threat of these operators meant that local councils were engaged in the day-to-day management of itinerant trading versus stable commercial interests. As a general rule, many larger, powerful English councils with successful rate-supporting markets successfully blocked private operators,[55] while smaller struggling councils often turned to private operators as a cost-effective way of managing the market as a public asset.[56] Within regions that shared shopping catchments and therefore competing for custom, the response to private competitors could vary wildly: as noted above, Bristol's Chamber of Commerce lamented their planning department's laissez faire approach, especially as their neighbors in South Gloucestershire had banned private, Sunday markets in the district.[57]

The local action that garnered the most attention, however, was that of Warwick City Council, where Spook Erection's director Nigel Maby had started his first market and gradually expanded trade to Sundays in 1971. Labour councilors on Warwick Council were quick to adopt a minimalist approach to retail regulation and the enforcement of Sunday trading laws: Councilor Jim Savory saw the market as a legal issue for the Chamber of Trade, rather than a Council that was meant to mind ratepayers' money and support leisure and shopping activities that had visible

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[55] Leeds and Leicester would successfully block Spook Erection Markets. "Charter thwarts opening of new Sunday market," *World's Fair*, 27 November 1971, 24; J.J. Fagg et al, "Melton Mowbray," 513.
[56] Dronfield councilors lamented the leasing of their public market to Spook Erection, while pro-Spook factions saw it as a way to prevent the loss of public funds. In Market Bosworth, the Spook market was viewed as a "service to the public." *Derbyshire Times,* 21 December 1973. "Spook Moves in on Another Dying Market" *World's Fair,* 17 March 1973, 14.
[57] BA 38605/M/66. Minutes of the Retail Committee, 11 July 1972.

popular support.[58] The local Chamber of Trade saw things differently: like their compatriots in Bristol and Bathgate, they countered that their business rates entitled them to a particular form of protection and legal cover from the local state. As Nigel Maby and his lawyers, the Warwick Chamber of Trade, and the factions in Warwick Council stood obstinate, the case gathered national attention. Some of these national acts were performative, like the district organizer of the National Union of Small Shopkeepers writing to the Queen for protection after trust with the Council "broke down."[59] Other decisions, however, would shape how national networks and institutions went about regulating private markets in their own towns, cities, and regions. The National Chamber of Trade devoted manpower and publicity to the Warwick fight, singling the debate out as a "test case" for other private markets.[60] This sent ripples throughout the country: local authorities in Bristol, Leicestershire, and Essex all turned their attention to Warwick for guidance about how to manage and regulate the proliferation of private market competitors.[61]

When a High Court ruled that Maby's version of Sunday trading—where sites were let informally on a daily basis from movable stalls—constituted trading from a "place" defined as illegal in the 1950s Shops Act,[62] it precipitated a legal and financial war of attrition: as long as the benefits of increased profits outweighed the fines incurred, Maby and his followers would habitually break Sunday trading laws. As this battle dragged on, Warwick councilors from both the Labour and Conservative camps supported both the legalization and public regulation of Sunday markets: if the public showed a real interest in the leisure and bargain facilities offered

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[58] "Sunday market legal inquiry will go ahead," *Warwick Advertiser,* 2 July 1971, 8.
[59] "Man writes to Queen over market wrangle," *Warwick Advertiser,* 13 August 1971, 1.
[60] "Sunday market national test case?" *Warwick Advertiser,* 21 January 1972, 6; "Shopkeepers unite against Sunday market," *Warwick Advertiser* 28 April 1972, 5.
[61] BA 38605/M66. Minutes of the Retail Committee, 11 July 1972 and 13 March 1973; LMA/Cuttings/MA. "Sunday market is illegal - High Court ruling," *Leicester Mercury,* 10 May 1972, 16; Essex Record Office (hereafter ERO) A8791 Box 4/09 EC 131/7/1. Records of the Basildon Development Corporation Administration Department, Box 4 (Estates Department). Sunday Market, Mundells Farm, Basildon. Advice. 10 January 1976.
[62] "Sunday market goes on," *Warwick Advertiser,* 12 May 1972, 8-9.

by Maby, government should stop litigating the market and hold it on public ground where the local authorities could extract rent.[63]

Eventually, the rule of law triumphed over Maby's populist, quasi-legal retailing. In November 1973, over a year since a High Court deemed Spook Erection's Sunday Warwick Market to be illegal, Maby finally decided to cut his losses on his first major private market undertaking. The case had extracted an estimated £14,000 in fines from Maby and his traders, but the immaterial cost to Warwick Council and other activist local authorities was immeasurable. While this test case had given other councils a legal precedent from which to argue that Sunday markets were in fact "illegal," but it had not won Warwick many supporters among the general population. Accusations that the local authority defended retail interests over the will of "the public" were aired in the local press,[64] and Maby could now take this populist argument to his other Spook Erection markets. Throughout the Warwick saga, voices both within the outside the council had celebrated private Sunday markets as convenient, affordable retail outlets that deserved support and protection on par with the "ancient" rights of market charters and business ratepaying shopkeepers.

In isolation, the Warwick case was local politics at its most petty; characterized by council in-fighting, myopic protection of business interests, and superfluous legislating. Yet if we pull the scope back to consider the question of decision-making and oversight in the local political economy, the Warwick debate takes on a different valence of meaning. Warwick, its ripple effects to other localities, and the arguments put forward by NABMA suggested how battles over private or public control of market rights and profits were predicated on larger issues

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[63] "Sunday 'make it legal' plea," *Warwick Advertiser,* 29 September 1972, 1; "Vendetta claim against the Sunday privateers," *Warwick Advertiser,* 2 February 1973, 1.
[64] "Sunday marketeers' fines ruled not too 'steep'," *Warwick Advertiser,* 25 May 1973, 4; "Shopkeepers before public," *Warwick Advertiser,* 30 November 1973, 9.

surrounding representation and accountability in local government. When a *Leicester Mercury* editorial on private markets questioned whether it was "right that something which has such a wide popular appeal, and which in itself is not illegal or harmful, should be officially harassed" in the way that Warwick had done to Spook Erection, the editor answered in the affirmative. In their words, the "entrepreneur" of the early 1970s was to stay one step "ahead of officialdom," profiting financially from customers while simultaneously turning them against local government and established traders.[65] This *Leicester Mercury* editorial condensed many of the direct and indirect anti-private marketeer arguments: that these businesses traded on "false altruism," and the belief they were "saving the poor consumer from bankruptcy if not imminent starvation."[66] Retail markets that turned a profit for a singular market operators—the NABMA-satirized "great philanthropist of the 1970s"—would never be answerable to the public good and would always undermine trade stability. How, then, did private operators co-opt and reinterpret the values of the "public good" for their own ends? How did they construct the argument that retail markets were a public service that needed reorganization in the economic and political context of the 1970s?

The Cult of Nigel Maby

Nigel Maby and Spook Erection were the most visible firm in the private market wars, leaving behind a trail of archival and published material that attests to their entrepreneurial charm offensive in the 1970s. The company produced a plethora of self-promotional material that catered to multiple audiences. The first of these materials targeted the general public: Spook's

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[65] LMA/Cuttings/Sunday Market – Oadby. "Editorial: Mushroom Markets," *Leicester Mercury,* 23 December 1971, 13.
[66] NABMA, Report of the Proceedings of the 27th AGM and Conference, 22.

story received the Sunday features treatment on a regular basis, as his personality, along with his markets, were media draws. The second were the appeals Maby made behind the scenes with Councils, simultaneously ingratiating himself to planning departments and critiquing the very premise of their power over commerce and development. The third audience were market traders and the market industry itself: Maby reached his individual entrepreneurial peak in his regular editorials in the *World's Fair* and his self-penned market traders' Manual. This self-published tome was distributed to new traders, and its primary purpose was to instruct Spook employees on the rules and regulations of market day. However, this text is not merely a reference work. Reading its anecdotes, analogies, and authoritarian tone in dialogue with the periodicals referenced reveals how Spook layered and constructed the belief that he was the ultimate shaper of enterprise culture. Dick Hobbs has argued that the study of rhetoric is crucial to understanding how the individual gains cultural legitimacy as an "entrepreneur."[67] Maby the market expert was no exception: his self-made celebrity status reveals how the private marketeer traded on tropes of "independence" and "innovation" while eliding the collective ethos that had long undergirded the institution of the public market.

Nigel Maby was a frequent feature in regional and national media in the mid-1970s. Spreads in the *Glasgow Herald, Glasgow Daily Record, the Daily Mail, the Guardian*, and BBC *Current Account* labeled him the "Mogul of the Market Trade" or the "King of the Markets."[68] Maby used these platforms to advertise both his market business and his personal journey. Although the son of "a distinguished scientist in [Gloucestershire] - a freelance professor," Maby

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[67] Dick Hobbs, "Business as a master metaphor: working-class entrepreneurship and business-like policing," in *Deciphering the Enterprise Culture,* 114.

[68] "English Barrow Boy Loophole in Scotland," *Glasgow Herald,* 28 October 1974; "Market empire named Spook," *Glasgow Herald,* 17 April 1979; "Chatalong with Max. Nigel Shows the Flag…" *Glasgow Daily Record,* 3 November 1976; James Gibbins, "You'll find a better class of barrow boy these days"; Eileen Totten, "Sunday spooking," *The Guardian*, 23 November 1973, 11.

left school and began selling linens from a market in his native county, working his way to market operator. He cited two reasons for his decision to enter the private market trade: The first was the horrible "tawdry and inhuman" service his wife received at the hands of council markets. The second was the prevalence of backhand deals that prevented many talented traders from breaking into the dynastic and monopolistic world of these official markets.[69] In this motivation, we can identify a focus on personal adversity, combined with a focus on familial background and values. These shaped both Maby the man and Spook the business: a rogue determination and independent streak railed against the constraints and perversions of local government inadequacy.[70]

The flair of the showman gilded this rags to riches tale. Maby was often photographed with his Great Danes, in front of his Rolls Royce, in his luxurious office, or discussing the estate he was building outside of Edinburgh. This hyper-masculine image of "the businessman" was tempered by the ethos of the barrow boy made good: Maby wrote off the Rolls Royce as merely the best way to get from one market to another and claimed that he bought all his clothes at his markets. The only holidays he took were business trips to America, where he was intrigued by the Pasadena Rose Bowl market, but reassured to discover that Ingliston still had twice as many stalls, so many that in 1975 he claimed that his 1,000 stalls and 20,000 visitors topped Kingston, Jamaica's market for the Guinness World Record title.[71] This combination of enterprise, populism, and self-promotion was in the style of John Bloom or Freddie Laker, but updated for the 1970s: whereas the former entrepreneurs had capitalized on a decade of spreading affluence, Maby branded his business as a turn against the conspicuous consumption of the 1960s. He

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[69] "We give better value, tip top service and get great loyalty in return," *World's Fair*, March 3, 1973, 5.
[70] Casson et al, "Introduction," in *Oxford Handbook of Entrepreneurship,* 4; Paul Heelas, "Reforming the Self: Enterprise and the characters of Thatcherism," in *Enterprise culture,* 72-73.
[71] "Market empire named spook,"; "Biggest open air market in world," *Lothian Courier* 7 November 1975, 11.

devoted his energy and expertise to creating a space of quotidian shopping and leisure that complimented the mood of the country.

Maby used the modern, impersonal shopping centers of the 1960s as a foil to his niche. Barraged by claims of unhygienic operation, circumventing planning permission, and breaking Sunday trading laws, Maby always returned to the "service" he was performing for trader and customer alike. In the end, "crowds come because they want to break away from concrete and clay. They want to get a bit of personal service... All market traders are experts in their own particular line - whereas in a supermarket they just know it comes in a packet."[72] Maby was by no means reinventing the form and function of shopping, but was distilling it to its most efficient and personal essence: he was the man who "got things done" for his customers, rather than unnecessarily creating more elaborate forms of buying and selling.[73] In an era that valorized the small and the slow, Maby's retreat from the modernizing shopping trends held appeal.[74]

Although Maby was a man of his age, the every(wo)man entrepreneur was a familiar trope in the market business. Margaret McIver trod this path in mid-century Glasgow, and likewise turned to the press to promote her philosophy. Newspaper features of McIver focused on her affective connection with informal trading in Glasgow, her heart that was "touched by the plight of the traders" who were victims not only of the Scottish weather, but also of the Council crackdown on mobile vendors. Her covered site was the antithesis of Council dealing: it was controlled by individual interest for the good of the market "public." In one-on-one interviews with newspaper reporters, McIver is simultaneously an altruistic local entrepreneur, a hardline

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[72] Totten, "Sunday spooking."
[73] Joseph Schumpeter, "Economic Theory and Entrepreneurial History," in *Essays on Entrepreneurs, Innovations, Business Cycles, and the Evolution of Capitalism,* ed. Richard V. Clemence (London: Routledge, 1989), 266.
[74] Leon Hunt, *British Low Culture: From Safari Suits to Sexploitation* (London: Routledge, 1998). For the American case, see Sam Binkley, *Getting Loose: Lifestyle Consumption in the 1970s* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

businesswoman, and a tea-providing matriarch.[75] The family nature of the market is a frequent theme, as all the McIvers (two boys and four girls) would put in the manual work of assembling, guarding, running, and dissembling the market each weekend.[76]

[75] Jack House, "Mrs. McIver Is…," *Glasgow Evening News,* 16 November 1954 and 18 November 1954. The refusal of McIver to do business on credit was also remembered in her obituary in the Millings, "Glasgow," *World's Fair*, 7 June 1958, 23.
[76] "At the Heart of It All - the McIver Family," *World's Fair*, 1 January 1972, 3 & 7.

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"BARROWLAND HALL," the opening of which was dealt with fully in last week's *Standard*, is a magnificent erection, made possible by the enterprise of Mrs. Margaret McIver, whose romantic career makes her one of the most successful business women in the annals of Glasgow.

In erecting this great centre she has had the help of the most progressive firms in the city. Messrs. Hunter & Clark, Ltd., the main contractors, who built the edifice, constitute a firm which has already many important structures to its credit, and the hall at Gallowgate, perfect in every detail, will certainly lead to many more such contracts. Mr. Gilmour and his colleagues can take pride in their work.

Mr. A. Aitkenhead, whose plumbing, lighting effects, and heating installations are features of "Barrowland," is an East End man whose rise to business eminence is a romance of talent and enterprise speedily rewarded. Within a relatively short period of years he has built up a business which is unexcelled of its kind.

The glazier work, too, has been done by an East End firm, Messrs. Summers, which has now flourished and progressed for several generations within a short distance of the hall which they helped to adorn. The quality of "Summers' work" needs no praise.

For the seating, etc., furnishings no finer firm than Messrs. James D. Bennet, Ltd., could have been consulted. Their merits as makers of the finest equipment of its kind has been recognised by many big contracts.

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Figure 5.2. *Glasgow Eastern Standard,* 5 January 1935, 5. The opening paragraph reads: "'Barrowland Hall,' the opening of which was dealt with fully in last week's *Standard*, is a magnificent erection, made possible by the enterprise of Mrs. Margaret McIver, whose romantic career makes her one of the most successful business women in the annals of Glasgow."

Figure 5.3. *Edinburgh Evening News,* 13 July 1973.

Both McIver and Maby's media presences valorized their bootstrap-pulling roles in the retailing landscape of mid-twentieth-century Glasgow and 1970s Britain, respectively (Figures 5.2 and 5.3). They were the family-run business, the housewives' champion, the traders' advocate, and the unpretentious populist. If we "expect our entrepreneurs to be trustworthy, or if that is too much, to find trust somewhere in their vicinity,"[77] then McIver and Maby transformed their family backstories and tales of matriarchal and patriarchal self-sufficiency into vehicles for social trust between private markets and their publics. For the general periodical reader, the humble origins of the private market trader was a relatable and attractive storyline. This tone and scale of everyday trust stood in contrast to their commercializing municipal rivals. Scaling down

[77] Peter Armstrong, *Critique of Entrepreneurship: People and Policy* (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2005), 45.

business models to the intimate and the familiar emphasized their altruistic values, while deflecting their moneymaking impetuses.[78]

Nigel Maby was particularly critical of local government and big business, reflecting the 1970s turn against large-scale state and economic bodies. Maby argued that retail expertise and service could and should not live within political institutions; the independent firm was the way forward for Britain's struggling retail cores. As the previous chapter argued, this arrangement was often welcomed by provincial planning departments and councils, who depended on private developers to front the capital and hold the risk for large-scale commercial undertakings in the town or city center. Maby, however, envisioned a relationship between retail management and profit that transcended this 1960s model: low investment, flexible shopping institutions that harkened back to traditional buying and selling. Introductory letters to Councils—a feature not only of Spook Erection, but also of other firms like Graysim—paint the picture of a private market operators who intends to work in the service of the local Council.[79]

For example, Spook Erection's 1975 letter to Linlithgow Council relied on two arguments to convince the local authority to cede valuable public land to private interests. The first was the company's belief that private markets worked in contemporary Britain: these open-air, occasional gatherings were the anti-thesis of the "highly pressurised concrete jungle of today's society," giving local shoppers a social and an economic reason to return to the shopping

[78] This language would be taken up by Brian Griffiths, Thatcher advisor and key ideologue in the "morality of the market" argument, in the late 1980s. Eliza Filby, *God and Mrs Thatcher* (London: Biteback, 2015), 235. Paul Morris, "Freeing the Spirit of Enterprise," in *Enterprise Culture*, 26.

[79] Gloucestershire Archives (hereafter GA) GBR/L6/23/B7803. New Market, Eastgate, Gloucester: general correspondence, 1963-1973. Letter from Graysim Group of Companies to City of Gloucester Town Clerk, nd.; Derbyshire Record Office (hereafter DRO) D4548/3/1. Chesterfield Borough Council Market Committee correspondence files. Letter from Graysim Group of Companies to Chief Planning Office, Chesterfield Council, 14 April 1972.

landscape of the town center.[80] The second was the company's purported tailoring of their business model to locality: market research and local retail surveys underscored Spook's interest in a given location, and the company could tailor their market from eleven stalls to 600 stalls. In an era where Councils were wary partner with property developers and taking on the financial burden of building and renting large shopping centers, Spook promised a modest return on underused land, offering both "a service to your inhabitants and income to your Council." In other works, Spook Erection was a potential win-win partner for councils; local authorities could outsource the risk, expense, and labor of running a market while still keeping footfall and profits in the town center.

While Linlithgow rebuffed Spook Erection's overture, he nevertheless established a foothold in the town's greater environs. The combination of under-used market charters, ambiguous trading laws, and economic struggles in the industrial conurbations in the Central Belt of Scotland created an ideal scenario for the expansion of informal trading facilities. In June 1974, the *Lothian Courier* reported that Bathgate "might have been just another English town" when Maby established an open-air market at their former cattle market.[81] That summer, public opinion wavered about the use of the Bathgate market: some businesses welcomed the fact that the market attracted a "working class clientele" that would spend their money in the town. Others, especially retailers whose stock was replicated at the market, claimed that they would have to "lower their standards" to compete with the cheap prices of Maby's outlet.[82] West Lothian's Director of Physical Planning recognized that Maby's Bathgate market was centrally

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[80] WLARC GB1829/WLDC, 19/3/3. West Lothian District Council Planning and Development Committee, October 1974-December 1975. Letter from Spook Erection to the Chief Executive Officer, West Lothian District Council, 21 May 1975.
[81] "Open air market turned back the years," *Lothian Courier,* 14 June 1974, 13.
[82] "Market new mecca for shoppers," *Lothian Courier,* 2 August 1974, 3.

located, posing a direct threat to permanent trading premises in the city, businesses which were low turnover, high mark-up outfits rather than the high turnover, cut-price methods of the market.[83] More than simply an economic issue, on an ideological level West Lothian planners worried that open-air market retailers were not concerned with the "longterm viability of a town center."

The potential regional disruption of a large Bathgate market prompted the West Lothian District Council to stake their own claim in the region's retail market structure. The "Open Air Retail Markets" Policy Statement, released in October 1976, was a consolidated effort on the part of a local authority to impose research methods and public oversight onto the informality and private business face of Spook Erection-style occasional markets. West Lothian District Council planners impressed that "markets are now an element of retailing which must be controlled in a way as to complement rather than conflict with existing permanent shop facilities."[84] These controls included limited the number of markets in a district to towns that had 3,000 people or more, ensuring the stall numbers were capped according to demand and population, and regularly reviewed to ensure that market supply kept up with consumer demand.

West Lothian District Council's direct intervention in market trading instigated debate both within and beyond the council about the local state's role in shaping the retail economy of towns in the Central Belt of Scotland. The District Council continued to think in terms of long-term survival; if Bathgate could brand itself as a specialist market town, it would be able to compete with the modern Livingston New Town shopping center for customers. When the

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[83] WLARC GB1829/WLDC, 19/4/3. West Lothian Policy and Resources Committee, January-December 1976. Report of the Policy and Resources Committee of the District Council by the Director of Physical Planning, 6 August 1976.

[84] WLARC GB1829/WLDC, 19/4/3. West Lothian District Council. Open Air Retail Markets. Policy Statement. October 1976.

District Council refused Maby planning permission for his Bathgate market in 1978, then, it sent mixed messages to the retail and shopping public of the region: did local authorities support markets only insofar as they could control their profits and their future vis-à-vis other shopping developments? In the words of the authorities, the size of Maby's Bathgate market upset the stipulations of the Policy Statement and would therefore have a "long-term debilitating effect upon shopping trends in Bathgate."[85] The details of Spook's 1979 appeal of this planning decision tease apart how private market traders battled councils by framing their goals in the language of the public good and free enterprise.

In his appeal, Maby self-characterized himself as a figure of unique, almost mysterious business prowess. He had arrived in a country where open markets had passed out of favor, and with his "substance, standing, and considerable experience," he was able to usurp rights from various local authorities. As it "requires an experienced market operator to assess the demand for a market in a particular place," Spook based his fit for Bathgate on his experience in the region and his knowledge of national shopping trends.[86] Bathgate in the late 1970s was not only struggling after the collapse of the coal and iron industries and the slowdown of the British Leyland plant, but was losing retail revenue to Livingston. Maby, like Bathgate residents who retrospectively remembered the growth of Livingston in the 1970s,[87] claimed that it was the shift in West Lothian's shopping catchment—not his weekly market—which would ultimately accelerate the "long-term debilitation of Bathgate." This attack on the Council's motives had been teased by Spook Erection employees in the press for years; local authorities were "letting

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[85] Appeal by Spook Erection. Lothian-Region - West Lothian District Council - Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1972 [Date of Inquiry 3-4 April 1979].
[86] Austrian economists see the local, specialized knowledge of the entrepreneur as a crucial facet of his business acumen compared to large scale or statist competitors. Ricketts, "Theories of Entrepreneurship," in *Oxford Handbook of Entrepreneurship,* 48-49.
[87] Catriona L. Macdonald, "The shopfloor experience of regional policy: work and industrial relations at Bathgate motor plant, c. 1961-1986" (PhD dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2013), 58-59.

Bathgate die naturally," shifting all regional shopping to Livingston, rather than allowing potential developers to stimulate "healthy competition" in shopping choices.[88]

Maby drove home his service to Bathgate by aligning himself with the consumer versus the self-serving Council. In his words, "It is for the public to indicate... what choice or mix of retailers they want in the shopping center, and it is not for the Council to protect the retail interests of the shopkeepers." In Maby's view, the Council's disregard for the consumer did not end at their pro-shopkeeper position. The planning proposal decision came down on factional lines: Labour favored the market, while the SNP opposed its continuation. According to Maby, this petty politicking was part and parcel of general Council ineptitude: The Council had in fact sought expert advice on operating open-air markets in the earlier years of the decade, and Spook Erection had refused to relinquish its "commercial knowledge and expertise" to a potential competitor. Maby was that "double-edged and inherently contradictory" personification of discovery entrepreneurship: seeking to disrupt and undermine the traditional gatekeepers of economic knowledge, while at the same time using secrecy and hoarding to maintain commercial advantage.[89]

Maby turned the Bathgate case into a referendum on local government's management of local shopping spaces. Appearing as a politically detached everyman, Maby walked the line between expertise and populism, insulating himself from what he saw as the uninspired and ulterior motives of the bureaucrat.[90] His brand of flexible, low capital, and attractive shopping seemed like a quick fix to the expensive and sterile shopping precincts of the 1960s. Maby's self-styled outsider status was extremely marketable in an era when economic transition created

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[88] James C. McGinley (Public Relations Officer for Spook Erection), *Lothian Courier,* 18 November 1977, 4.
[89] Hanlon, "The entrepreneurial function and the capture of value," 180.
[90] Hayek and Kirzner would fully elaborate the essence of low-level entrepreneurship as a corrective to centralizing state power. Casson et al, "Introduction," 3.

spaces of entrepreneurial possibility and when political upheaval chipped away at the innovative capacity of both the central and local state.

Just as he had railed against entrenched interests in Warwick, Maby's struggle in Bathgate was based in the belief that stable business interests and local government were ultimately aligned against the shared interests of the consumer and the commercial outsider. To shore up popular support for his business, however, Maby also needed to get the market traders who had traditionally worked on public markets to see the merit of the private model. In his mind, the constant backhanded deals and drive for "redevelopment" on the public market rendered the individual powerless. Alongside the publicity he courted in the national and regional broadsheets, Maby also crafted a persona in the *World's Fair,* thus infiltrating the organ of the market industry. In the early 1970s, he was a frequent editorialist, defending his business model against monopolistic, greedy councils and the complacency of the NMTF.[91] Starting in September 1973, "Spook Spiel" was a regular column in which Maby offered commentary on current market controversies and promoted his brand as the superior form of market trading.

Aimed at the reading public of the *World's Fair* (members of the NMTF and unaffiliated traders who stood various public and private markets), this column became Maby's platform for celebrating his fellow outsiders who railed against the sanitized supermarket shopping landscape. For example, he valorized Asian traders and their enterprising immigrant culture, a more visible feature of British towns and cities by the 1970s, and often bore the brunt of Sunday trading fines when Maby and his traders were brought before local magistrates' courts.[92] Maby was one of the

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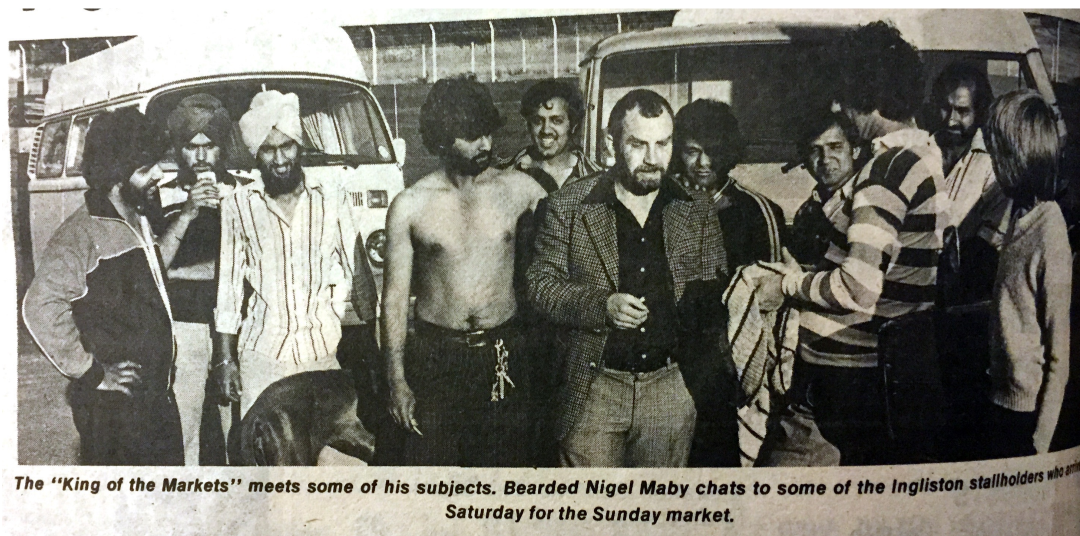
[91] "Stop Knocking the Sunday Markets," *World's Fair,* 11 March 1972, 9; "Britain and the NMTF Must Wake Up to Sunday Trading," *World's Fair,* 9 June 1973, 9.

[92] T. Forester, "Asians in business," *New Society,* 23 February 1978, 420-423; Jane Hamlett et al, "Ethnicity and Consumption: South Asian food shopping patterns in Britain, 1947-75," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 8, no. 1 (2008), 91-116; E. Aldrich et al, "Business development and self-segregation: Asian enterprise in three British cities," in *Ethnic Segregation in Cities,* eds. C. Peach et al (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 170-90; Joanna Herbert *Negotiating Boundaries in the City* (London: Routledge, 2008), 155-156.

few columnists in the *World's Fair* to address issues of markets and multiculturalism on a consistent basis. In his opinion, the pioneering spirit of these traders preserved the personal interaction of the market, not to mention the intangible facets of "authenticity" and "tradition" that white Britain seemed to be abandoning in favor of convenience. In one article, he pondered why the public shouldn't buy from the "Asian gentleman with a turban who stands out in the cold" or the "ruddy faced man who stands on a market stall and sells you cheese direct from the countryside." As a business owner who depended on a high-turnout of traders to maintain the bustle and atmosphere of the open market, Maby was reassured to know "when it is cold and raining... Mr. Singh will turn up even if Mr. Smith does not."[93] The entrepreneur—whether he was an ethnic or economic outsider—had the alertness and drive to capitalize on consumer demands that mainstream shopping had left behind (Figure 5.4).



The "King of the Markets" meets some of his subjects. Bearded Nigel Maby chats to some of the Ingliston stallholders who
Saturday for the Sunday market.

Figure 5.4. *World's Fair,* 6 October 1979, 26.

Maby's outsider entrepreneur was a foil to the shortcomings of market authorities. He criticized "high falutin' councils" who sterilized traditional markets in indoor shopping

[93] "Spook Spiel," *World's Fair,* 17 August 1974, 8; "Indians and Pakistanis," *World's Fair,* 15 July 1972, 3. He also established a mosque at the Ingliston Market so his Muslim market traders could pray during their trading days.

precincts: he claimed these moves violated the democratic nature of the country by controlling where and how citizens could shop.[94] As his interactions with Warwick and Bathgate councils suggested, Maby was adept at galvanizing a perceived "will of the public" in order to accentuate where municipal trading was failing both the consumer and the trader. For Maby, an unmediated shopping experience between an empowered consumer and an enterprising trader was a democratic right. This relationship should not—and *could not*—be polluted by high-cost shopping schemes and antiquated public market policies.

Maby's "straight talking" tone in the "Spook Spiel" columns appealed to the market trader's sense of pride and individualism. His or her ingenuity could not be hampered by state regulation and interference and could only flourish in the Maby-created private sector of market trading.[95] While the Maby character had romantic and heroic overtones in the national press pieces featured above, the directness of communication in the *World's Fair* crystalized the competitive, capitalist landscape and his desired position in this world.

Alongside Nigel Maby's appeal in the mainstream media and his bombastic personality in trade literature, he also left a self-penned compilation of his entrepreneurial musings. The "Spook Erection Manual" collected the insider tips and business savvy that Maby honed over a decade in the market industry. First published in 1982, its 1,000 pages vary from technical instructions on stall measurements to humorous observations on the human nature of the marketplace. Whereas broadsheet features and his columns in the *World's Fair* were formatted

[94] "Sunday markets are illegal rule judges," *World's Fair,* 13 May 1972, 1; and "Spook Spiel," *World's Fair,* 17 August 1974, 8.
[95] For more on the entrepreneur's draw to the private sector, see J.R.T. Hughes, *The Vital Few: The Entrepreneur and American Economic Progress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965). For the IEA's views on the negative impact of local government, see Binks and Coyne, "The Birth of Enterprise," 14-15.

for promotion to a fairly wide and diverse public, the Manual is an exercise in authoritarian expertise within the industry.

Maby rationalized his unbending professional policy by gesturing to the myriad choices presented to consumers in the bargain shopping landscape. There were alternative open markets, hypermarkets, and cash and carrys that appealed to the weekend shopper, and his aim was to provide "an alternative shopping service to the public who are then free to make their own choice."[96] This free market had multiple permutations: Maby believed that just as consumers had their choice in shopping, market superintendents had their choice in selecting traders. Maby's business philosophy elevated "showmanship" to the same free market ideals as goods and customers. In his words, prospective traders needed to help create and maintain that "something special" which is unique to outdoor markets, namely atmosphere.[97]

Maby asserted that following the manual was crucial to his wider business plan. The "Oh! We are Sorry!!" section evoked mock sympathy for a variety of trader "excuses" or "pleas" (needing a stall, being late, not knowing the queue rules, etc.) that Maby had seemingly endured over his years as a market operator.[98] Rather than playing favorites or deferring to seniority, Maby viewed market trading as an exercise in self-education and personal responsibility. In the words of one of the Spook traders, "All men are equal in the eyes of God and Nigel Maby."[99] Maby's lauded egalitarian stall rental procedure was a direct response to the backhanded and antiquated nature of lettings on public markets.

This objective tableau worked from the assumption that ideal traders were self-starters. Maby would pit these individuals against one another for dominance in a particular goods line,

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[96] Spook Erection Manual, C/21.
[97] Ibid., A/87.
[98] Ibid., C/48-49.
[99] Coates, "Market world turned upside down," *World's Fair,* 1 September 1979, 12.

where one trader could dispute "the flash" (i.e. the methods of a rival).[100] Maby's "General Definition" was an encyclopedic guide to triumphing in this contest of survival of the fittest. The active traders, i.e. the "demonstrator," the "grafter," the "pitcher," the "worker," were juxtaposed against the "lurker," the "shirker," or the "quiet stander." The definitions of the "lurker," "shirker" and the "worker" were particularly value-laden. The "lurker" sold those items so prohibitively expensive that they required time and debate over their purchase. Rather than assisting them, the lurker would "go to the 'enth' degree not to in any way intimidate or frighten off his potential customers." And while the shirker aped the complacency of the shopkeeper, the worker drew "resounding attention to his merchandise and himself... verbally declaring the price and description of some or all of his merchandise."[101]

Within these caricatures, there were assumptions made about the relationship between the individual trader and the free market. Rather than posturing as a high-end vendor, Spook Erection traders needed to bend to their clientele and play up the belief that *everything* was affordable and a "good deal." Secondly, in order to keep pace with supermarkets that had the capital to engage in large-scale advertising, each individual trader had to transform him or herself into a living advertisement for their goods and the Spook brand. As an ethos that predated Thatcherite enterprise culture, Maby believed that the free market should shape an individual's "habits of action," making them into an enterprise project in their own right.[102] The characterization of these different trader types elucidated where Maby saw his market within the wider retail landscape—competing directly with modern bargain retailers, but also maintaining

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[100] "Flash" was defined in the General Definitions section as "a display of merchandise intended for sale to punters" (punters being a member of the public who attends a market with a view to purchasing goods). Spook Erection Manual, A/27, A/30, A/55.
[101] Ibid., A/28-A/34.
[102] Marina Della-Giusta and Zella King, "Enterprise Culture," in *The Oxford Handbook of Entrepreneurship,* 643.

the personable style that continually drew customers back to atmospheric forms of buying and selling.

Straddling this divide between atmosphere and modernization was one of Spook's biggest challenges. He was well aware that city councils labeled his circumvention of planning and hygiene laws as "anti-modern." Yet Spook had a different take on the modernity of market retailing. His philosophy deemed *self*-regulation and the subjective drive to be the cornerstones of the modern retail capitalist, not the disembodied authority of the local or central state. In the subsection "'Cartoon' or 'Science'?" Maby divided human nature into two categories. The first, "Cartoon," imagines people bowed down by their work, in a scene of "totally disorganized chaos and therefore absolute inefficiency." The second, "Science," sees people as calm and exceedingly efficient. Cleanliness, tidiness, and brightness characterized their workplace. Maby valorized the latter as the obvious goal of his business. He feared that those who '"stand still" can only be "crushed" or "pushed out of the way" by the progress of others.[103] Efficiency did not come from state control, but from the individual initiative to meet the demands of the consumer.

There was glaring irony to this statement. The atmosphere of "Science" recalled the order and cleanliness of those institutions which Spook mocked in the press, those "aluminum glass-fronted shopping arcades that echo as you walk down them."[104] Maby recognized the ironic facets of his treatise, and qualified them by distinguishing between his internal business expectations and the image presented to a pleasure-seeking shopping public:

> It is perchance, almost ironic that, despite our sensible search for increased efficiency, our business is that of operating the most externally presented to be casual, friendly, laid back and atmospherically pleasant form of retailing which

[103] Spook Erection Manual, D/168.
[104] "Spook Spiel," *World's Fair*, 17 August 1974, 8.

> must, by its very nature and in order to maintain its attraction, display a somewhat gaudy, bawdy, brash, loud, rough and even scruffy and couldn't care less image but that does not stop us from ensuring that beneath this facade it is a slick, smooth, well-oiled and efficient machine providing an excellent service.[105]

Maby believed he had found the key to maintaining market atmosphere in an age of modern retail. The key was abandoning the naive presumption that markets could survive by grace of their historic roots: a business-minded individual had to actively mediate the trader-customer interface. Maby's business model encapsulated the salient ethos of enterprise culture, that was at "once progressive, industrious, and innovative, connoting both individualist endeavor and collective outcomes."[106] Local government's self-serving motives did not fit with this task, nor did the impersonal scale of superstores or bargain outlets. In the Spook Erection brand, market atmosphere could be *created* out of the regimented protocol of modern entrepreneurial leadership.

In his manual, Nigel Maby was never coy or shrinking about the realities of market trading. His first main subsection "Roses have Thorns," mused that "highly romantically, it would be nice to believe that either markets could be easy-going and carefree places or that a business could be a very friendly affair, run on very trusting and casual family like business lines."[107] The romance of the market was solely for the benefit of shopping families; he drew a line under this ideal when it came to business practices. Reading Maby's manual in dialogue with his press persona reveals the contingent nature of "atmosphere" on the private market: on the one hand, it was a remnant of an idealized economic culture that could be wielded against

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[105] Spook Erection Manual, D/169-170.
[106] Della-Giusta and King, "Enterprise Culture," 645.
[107] Spook Erection Manual, A/21.

local government and planners. On the other hand, it was a lucrative attraction that needed to be tightly controlled in order to appeal to a perceived demand. The patter, the individual characters, even the ability for the market to cohere a community were means to a profit-making end. One of the arguments that public markets made as they weathered economic turmoil in the twentieth century and defended themselves against private market intrusions was that markets were not meant to turn a large profit. They modestly contributed to the rates and provided a democratic site for the buying and selling of goods. The Spook Erection model - focused on profit, working around local authorities, and filling perceived gaps in the retail market - turned this formulation on its head. Under Nigel Maby's care, the atmosphere of the market was incidental rather than intrinsic.

The controversies and triumphs of Nigel Maby were an inescapable aspect of the market trade in the 1970s. In 1979, John Coates, the General Secretary of the NMTF, reflected on this ubiquity in a multi-part feature on the meteoric rise of Nigel Maby. This was a fitting capstone to a business figure who had lived and died by press promotion in both the national and trade circuits. The tone of the piece was similar to the editorial and self-penned works examined above. Coates described the modestly dressed millionaire who urged him to "call me Nigel." This self-reliant entrepreneur had created his own business world, where everything from promotions to stall construction was kept in-house. Yet Maby was more than a profit-driven businessman. He adopted a quasi-nineteenth-century paternalist role: he helped some of his traders learn to drive and aided others with down payments on cars and homes. During the week he spent in Maby's company, Coates could not decide if the man was a "realist" or an "idealist." Was the realism of the business bottom-line compatible with the community spirit that Spook seemed to foster on his markets?

Maby would answer that the social and capitalist aspects of entrepreneurial leadership were compatible.[108] The private market was still based on the freedom of the vendor, the agency of the consumer, and the interpersonal ties this market relationship created.[109] Large-scale operations like Ingliston or Melton Mowbray market catered to family shopping on a Sunday, a day historically bereft of individual choice. The trader who stood these markets was the master of his or her business success: the product line and quality of "the pitch"—not the safety net of municipal trading—guaranteed a successful market future. And the lynchpin of this relationship was the operator: Maby railed against the antiquated oligarchy of local government and believed that he was single-handedly pulling market trading into the retailing future.

It would be too determinist to draw a line between the philosophy of Nigel Maby and the "enterprise culture" project in the mid-1980s.[110] However, Maby's self-styled entrepreneurial ethos emerged out of a particular economic and political moment in the early to mid-1970s, when neoliberal ideals were creeping into local and central government thinking. In 1976, Margaret Thatcher reminded her Conservative allies that free enterprise constituted the consumer "constantly signaling his wishes and his preferences... the shopkeeper has to provide value for money or else yield to someone who can." She believed that the worst-case scenario was for the state to interfere with this relationship.[111] In the case of Maby, we see how a physical market place made tangible these free enterprise values. He believed that nepotistic trading laws and

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[108] Schumpeter makes the distinction social gains (i.e. the will to found a private kingdom, the will to conquer, and the joy of creating) and economic gains in the psychology of the entrepreneur. Schumpeter, *Theory of Economic Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Economic Studies 46, 1934), 93-94.
[109] This suggests some of the moral arguments that would crystalize in Thatcher's late government, especially around Brian Griffiths and the morality of the market.
[110] Although Keith Joseph and the IEA had bandied about "enterprise" prior to this point, the first use of the term "enterprise culture" as a political project was in Lord Young's 1985 Conservative Party Conference speech "Britain Resurgent." Peter Sedgwick, "Enterprise" in *Dictionary of Ethics, Theology and Society,* eds. Paul A.B. Clarke and Andrew Linzey (London: Rutledge, 1996), 288.
[111] Margaret Thatcher, "The Path to Profitability." Speech to the Junior Carlton Club Political Council, 4 May 1976.

antiquated market rules were a dangerous obstruction between the innovation of the market trader and the desires of the consumer. Maby's ideal consumer yearned for the simplicity, affordability, and personal touch offered by the private market, and his ideal trader knew that competition and self-improvement would meet that demand. The key to keeping that customer was to meld atmosphere with aggressive business tactics. In so doing, Maby walked a tight line between "retrograde" and "modern," or as Coates characterized his approach, between "idealism" and "realism."

Conclusion

John Coates concluded that comparing private markets to council markets was akin to comparing "lager to beer": each institution had its benefits and its adherents, but ultimately, they served different tastes.[112] The refrain was similar to that of Malcolm Price, Leeds Market Manager and president-elect of the Institute of Market Officers. Also interviewed in the Coates article, Price reminded the public that council markets were expected to work under a "fair and democratic system" that served the community. This meant extending compassion and humility towards traders, rather than removing them after a single tardiness or absence. This meant providing a wide variety of goods to the public, rather than allowing a group of traders of the same "line" to compete against one another and saturate the market. This meant appearing as an impartial supporter of both the municipal market and ratepaying shopkeepers, rather than initiating a media campaign that valorized the market as the city's retailing "choice." And perhaps most crucially, this meant accepting that the market was a communal amenity of the city that needed

[112] "Lager and Beer..." *World's Fair*, 17 November 1979, 34.

to be managed conservatively, rather than a privately held scheme that could cycle through boom and bust periods.[113]

Although Coates and Price both concluded that the public market and the private market were different beasts, these institutions' entwined histories over the 1970s suggested otherwise. When councils sold their market rights or took a *laissez-faire* approach to Sunday trading, these decisions were precipitated by the models and pressures of the private sector. The popularity of competitive market trading forced local government to look beyond the traditional uses of the market (relief of the rates), and their responsibilities (protecting ancient rights, employees' working hours, and the sanctity of the Sabbath), and open this institution to the demands of contemporary shoppers, many of them young families. Thus, the legal, jurisdictional, and material functions of the public market were irrevocably linked to the presence of private Sunday competitors in the 1970s.

In addition, the ethos, rationale, and justification of private operators like Nigel Maby sprung from local government's perceived mismanagement of municipal retail assets. According to private operators, councils' over-involvement in shopping center schemes, their support of the shopkeeping class, and their antiquated trading laws hindered the growth of market culture. This was to the detriment of the general public, who deserved the atmosphere and opportunities of a bustling, competitive market. It was already difficult for local government to endear itself to the British public: In 1974, Robin McCall of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities declared "We cannot expect to have the image of the West End actress. We will never be popular in what we are trying to do. The test is whether we do it."[114] Private markets appearing in town squares

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[113] "View from the local authority standpoint," *World's Fair,* 17 November 1979, 12.
[114] "Beginning of the end for local government?" *The Times*, 1 April 1974, 14.

or hovering on urban green belts posed the question, "can someone other than the city council *do it better* [my emphasis]?"

The parties that stood to lose if markets fell to the private enterprise, however, were not merely local authorities and those who had a traditional stake in keeping the market a public asset. Informal, occasional retailing was a direct attack on the ratepaying citizenship rights afforded to stable shopkeepers. If private markets could take advantage of busy shopping days to off-set any fines they accrued before moving on to fertile new territory, their presence put the long-term economic health of provincial town and city shopping at risk. In Bristol, Bathgate, and Warwick, shopkeeping interests saw private markets not as a complimentary shopping outlet that brought custom into the city, but a fierce competitor that threatened not only their bottom line, but entrenched relationship between business interests and local authorities.

Nigel Maby was the exemplar of this retailing opportunism; his Spook Erection markets made inroads by targeting the weak-points in the relationship between the local state, shopkeeping interest, and consumer demand. In his disdain for planning and shops legislation, Maby caught both the mood against institutional overreach and also the *ennui* around modernist renewal, particularly the proliferation of standardized town and city shopping centers. When Maby appealed to the rogue independence that had long characterized the market trading profession, he was calling on the retail entrepreneur to meet the public demand for atmospheric shopping choices outside the landscape of "concrete jungles." The following chapter, then, will turn to a second strand of this debate around retail markets stood in the changing economic landscape of provincial Britain: did these built structures merit protection as sites of public heritage in Britain's faltering towns and cities?

Chapter 6: Commercial Heritage as Democratic Action: The "Save the Market" Campaigns in Bradford and Chesterfield, 1969-1976

Introduction

In March 1973, Jennifer Jenkins penned a letter to the *Derbyshire Times (DT)*. Jenkins wrote not as the wife of one of Britain's most recognizable politicians,[1] but as the Chairman of the Consumers' Association, the Secretary of the Ancient Monuments Society, and a Chesterfield native (currently living in exile in London). Jenkins was appalled at the recent news that Chesterfield's historic market place, granted a market charter in the thirteenth century, would soon give way to an enclosed shopping precinct. She reminded the readers of the *DT*:

> Chesterfield is not merely a shopping magnet for the surrounding district, but more importantly, a historic town dating from Roman times. Its residents have always had a particularly vital and active local life... it is clear that the 32,000 signatories of the petition [to Save the Market] feel a similar sense of shock at the prospect of their town's center becoming another developer's stereotype.[2]

Jenkins's letter elucidated the stakes of the proposed redevelopment of Chesterfield Market: the privatization of a nominally public space, the severing of historical continuities, and the undercutting of participatory democracy in the name of development. Chesterfield was not alone in this fight. Elsewhere in her letter, Jenkins referenced the battles to save Covent Garden and Piccadilly Circus as proof that "people do not want their familiar centers to be torn down and replaced by the standard developments being built everywhere from Central Africa to North

[1] Roy Jenkins was then between stints as Labour Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Home Secretary.
[2] Letter to the editor, *Derbyshire Times* (hereafter LE, *DT*) Jennifer Jenkins, 30 March 1973.

America." For developers with increasingly international property portfolios, the familiarity of everyday, traditional shopping was an untenable emotional tie to otherwise valuable town or city center land. But for citizens like Jenkins, local shopping practices were what infused otherwise homogenous urban spaces with deeply felt value.

This chapter spotlights local heritage campaigns to "Save the Market" in two communities left outside of a capital city or national paradigm: Jennifer Jenkins's market town of Chesterfield and the medium-sized industrial city of Bradford. The main actors in each campaign—civic amenity and heritage societies, ratepayer associations, chambers of trade and commerce, and women's groups—defended the retail market as "public" in a fiscal, spatial, and historical sense. This shopping institution was kept up by local rates, its revenue relieved the rates of the town and city residents, it occupied public space in the heart of the town or the city, and its provenance in medieval charters made it a central feature of "public" history. The fact that markets traversed these registers made them vehicles for intersectional—yet often factional—amenity and heritage activism.

The associational networks of this activism form this chapter's source base: I draw from correspondence, pamphlets, and expert testimony held in the archives of Bradford's Kirkgate Market Action Committee (KMAC) and the Chesterfield Civic and Heritage Societies, as well as samples from the large volume of local "letters to the editor" that weighed in on market redevelopment in both places. While political scientists and media scholars have rightly qualified letters to the editor as a self-selective and mediated forum controlled by "gatekeepers of the public sphere," they are nevertheless a vital resource for historians interested in studying how political debate coalesced around narratives of the affective self and collective action (neatly

exemplified in the aforementioned Jennifer Jenkins statement).[3] In balancing the organizational aspects of heritage activism with lived, personal attitudes towards preservation and redevelopment voiced by residents, this chapter transforms the market into one physical nexus, wherein local politics and publics collided and permutated in early 1970s provincial Britain.

The dual economic and political "crises" of the 1970s have received academic revision over the past five years. Two edited volumes have focused our attention to the rhetorical meaning of "crisis" as a narrative descriptor in the Thatcherite project and to the diverse cultural potentials of the 1970s, respectively.[4] The goal of this chapter—following the themes established in the preceding chapter on private markets— is more in line with recent analyses of "popular individualism" in the 1970s, described as the ascendency of the "ordinary" as a mode of political testimony and popular self-making.[5] I argue that "ordinariness" has a particular use for histories of political culture in 1970s provincial Britain. The middle-class campaigns and community actions groups that flourished in the decade were suspicious of the top-down decision-making, whether it emanated from their city halls or from Westminster. These activists turned, instead, to the networks forged in everyday spaces like neighborhoods, educational establishments, and local professional organizations to forward political claims that were salient not only to their day-to-day material interests, but also to the coherence of their particular lived environments.[6] Because these networks and their causes could be so varied and fleeting, their lasting importance is often misunderstood or written out of metropolitan-focused or national stories. Thinking

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[3] Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, "Letters to the Editor as a Forum for public deliberation: modes of publicity and democratic debate," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 18 (2001), 304.

[4] Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders, eds., *Making Thatcher's Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Lawrence Black et al, eds., *Reassessing 1970s Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

[5] Emily Robinson et al, "Telling Stories about Post-war Britain: Popular Individualism and the 'Crisis' of the 1970s," *Twentieth Century British History* 28, no. 2 (2017), 279-80.

[6] For a contemporary account, see Roger King and Neill Nugent, eds., *Respectable Rebels: Middle Class Campaigns in Britain* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1979); For a recent historical study, see David Ellis, "On taking (back) control: lessons from Community Action in 1970s Britain," *Renewal* 25 (2017), 53-61.

comparatively about their political genealogies and ultimate goals adds depth and contingency to over-arching histories of protest and crisis in the 1970s. I argue that citizens came to community action through different channels and thought strategically and instrumentally about the creative ways in which they might regain control over the ordinary spaces and institutions that mattered in their lives.

Resisting demolition and redevelopment decisions was one way these citizen groups put their critiques into action. Planners, preservationists, and historians of the built environment pinpoint this moment in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a "sea change" in the British conservation movement, when the tide shifted from the unquestioned good of comprehensive planning and modernist urban renewal to the economic and cultural worth of preservation.[7] The passage of the Civic Amenities Act (1967) and new Town and Country Planning Acts (1968/69) broadened the power of local authorities to include more public participation in the planning process, introduced "spot listing" to save historic sites from demolition, and enabled the designation of "conservation areas" rather than single building listings. However, the changing mechanics of listing are only part of the story of this era's heritage movement. Planning scholar Peter Larkham has argued that the post-1967 definition of "character" in conservation areas made objective claims to preservation illusive.[8] The southern and southeastern English focus of many civic and heritage societies meant that "character" was often defined in terms of rural or village charm, not the industrial or semi-industrial quality that defined communities like Chesterfield or Bradford. These regional foci of heritage societies, the typology of "historic"

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[7] Sophie Andreae, "From comprehensive development to conservation areas," in *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Modern Heritage in Britain,* ed. Michael Hunter (London: Sutton Publishing, 1996), 142; John Pendlebury and Tim Townshend, "The conservation of historic areas and public participation," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 5 (1999), 72; Pendlebury, *Conservation in the Age of Consensus* (London: Routledge, 2008), 6; Miles Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation* (London: Routledge, 2013), 403.
[8] Peter Larkham, "The place of urban conservation in the UK reconstruction plans of 1942-1952," *Planning Perspectives* 18, no. 3 (2003), 311.

centers disseminated by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG),[9] and the lingering sense that conservation was a socially elitist practice[10] compounded to make "character" an attribute imbued with class and taste connotations.

In many ways, the "heritage industry" debate in the later 1970s and 1980s only reinforced this elitist or regionally circumscribed sense of preserving and interpreting the past. Starting with the landmark Victoria and Albert Museum exhibition "Destruction of the Country House" (1974-5), scholars have pointed to a decade when national heritage became tightly allied with the Tory Party and a conservative view of history.[11] While this work has been critical to historians' understandings of why the British past is a cultural touchstone of Thatcherism, by focusing on "the nation" as a constructed, consumable product of the political right, this vision of heritage falls into the trap set by the growth of preservation legislation in the 1960s: it limits the political and scalar potentials of a shared past to a program of metropolitan elites, rather than a participatory movement across spaces of civil society. In *Theatres of Memory* (1994), Raphael Samuel highlighted the folly of such a circumscription, calling on historians and cultural critics to see heritage as perpetually "metamorphosing," open to different political modes and historical claims.[12] While visionary in its social and political imaginings of heritage, Samuel's implicit

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[9] Colin Buchanan and Partners, *Bath, a Study in Conservation* (London: Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1968); Viscount Esher, *York, Study in Conservation* (London: Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1968); D Insall and Partners, *Chester* (London: Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1968); GS Burrows, *Chichester, a study in Conservation* (London: Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1968); Roy Worksett, *The Character of Towns* (London: The Architectural Press, 1969); John Delafons, *Politics and Preservation: A Policy History of the Built Heritage, 1882-1996* (London: Routledge, 1996), 98.

[10] David Eversley, "Conservation for the minority?" *Built Environment*, January 1974, 14-15; Timothy Cantell, "Why conserve?" *The Planner* 61 (January 1975), 6-10; Pendlebury and Townsend, "The conservation of English cultural built heritage: a force for social inclusion?" *International Journal of Heritage Studie*s 10 (2004), 11-31.

[11] Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Metheun, 1987); Patrick Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain* (London: Verso, 1985); Neal Ascherson, "Why heritage is right-wing," *The Observer*, 8 November 1987; Pendlebury, "Conservation, Conservatives and consensus: the success of conservation under the Thatcher and Major governments, 1979-1997," *Planning Theory and Practice* 1 (2000), 31-52.

[12] Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso, 2012), 303.

London focus largely reinscribes heritage's geographic boundaries: the Leftist, "middle-class radicals" who campaigned to save Covent Garden, resurrect the Globe, or stop the London Ringways still spoke from a metropolitan place-position. Their associational culture does not align neatly with provincial town and city activism, which often defined its preservationist claims in opposition to the specter of "London" and its images of materialist property developers and an out-of-touch central government.

In its focus on regional actors, my work is indebted to scholarship emerging from histories of the built environment and critical geography that foreground the complex local, national, and international political coalitions that emerged from heritage and preservation campaigns in 1960s and 1970s.[13] A new generation of scholars has brought the breadth of Samuel's "heritage as politics" argument to bear on diverse urban and town environments, situating preservation campaigns as one incubator of "active citizenship" in postwar associational life.[14] This chapter makes the case for thinking comparatively across these particularities of place and the publics that claimed their ownership in heritage and civic activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. By using a ubiquitous feature in the economic and cultural fabric of provincial Britain—the retail market—I demonstrate how differences in strategy and in

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[13] Rebecca Madgin, "Reconceptualising the historic urban environment: conservation and regeneration in Castlefield, Manchester, 1960-2009," *Planning Perspectives* 25 (2010), 29-48; Andrew G. McClelland, "A 'ghastly interregnum': the struggle for architectural heritage conservation in Belfast before 1972," *Urban History* 45, no. 1 (2018), 150-172; Erika Hanna, *Modern Dublin: Urban Change and the Irish Past, 1957-1973* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Kurt Iveson, "Building a city for 'The People': the politics of alliance-building in the Sydney Green Ban Movement," *Antipode* 46 (2014), 992-1013.

[14] Helen McCarthy and Pat Thane, "The politics of association in industrial society," *Twentieth Century British History* 22, no. 2 (2011), 227. In 1976, 85 per cent of the civic societies in Britain had been founded since 1957. The largest single reason for their establishment was a major local planning development issue. Anthony Barker, *The Local Amenity Movement* (London: Civic Trust, 1976), 7 & 21. On the archival wealth of civic societies, see Lucy Hewitt and John Pendlebury, "Local associations and participation in place: change and continuity in the relationship between state and civil society in twentieth-century Britain," *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 1 (2014), 25-44.

timing across the Bradford and Chesterfield coalitions influenced the relative success of preservation campaigns.

Chesterfield's and Bradford's encounters with urban redevelopment have attracted limited scholarly attention from planning experts and social historians. Chesterfield's redevelopment saga was a brief case study in Colin Amery and Dan Cruickshank's *The Rape of Britain* (1975), and the town's contentious relationship with modernization continued to attract attention from critical planning and geography scholars through the 1980s.[15] In Bradford, the historiography is more recent, but also more limited. Simon Gunn's study of Bradford's modernist redevelopment was an important corrective to postwar urban history that tended to center on London and the new towns, as well as a vital synergy of architectural and social history.[16] Yet Gunn's endpoint with modernism's "fall" in the late 1960s and early 1970s does not account for the contentious battle to save Victorian Bradford in the mid-1970s. The scholarship on both Chesterfield and Bradford captures the broad terms of the debates in both communities, but the focus on comprehensive planning and urban renewal as ideological programs has tended to efface the vibrant and participatory coalitions that emerged at the intersection of oppositional politics and heritage enthusiasm.

This chapter follows the volatile fortunes of the "Save the Market" campaigns in Bradford and Chesterfield, tracing them from initial formation to ultimate significance. The first section will briefly summarize the pre-1970s roots of market-based heritage campaigns, fought without preservation legislation. Yet between 1969 and 1976, legislative changes around listing

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[15] Colin Amery and Dan Cruickshank, *The Rape of Britain* (London: Paul Elek, 1975), 58; Alison Ravetz, *Remaking Cities* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 104-8; John Short, *The Urban Arena: Capital, State and Community in Contemporary Britain* (London: Palgrave, 1984), 145-46.

[16] Simon Gunn, "The Rise and Fall of British Urban Modernism: Planning Bradford, circa 1945-1970," *The Journal of British Studies* 49, no. 3 (2010), 849-69.

and planning participation, local government scandals, and economic fortunes structured not only the national conversation about heritage, but the arguments levied by local activists, like those in Chesterfield and Bradford. The second section will lay out this timeline and its key actors. The third section will focus on three thematic claims shared by Bradford and Chesterfield activists. The first of these claims was fiscal: the retail market relieved rates and was a small business hub; therefore, its preservation was integral to the local economy. The second was political: the retail market was publicly owned asset, making its potential sale and redevelopment a flashpoint of ratepayer activism against undemocratic local government. The final was preservationist: markets incubated a vision of provincial heritage in the Midlands and West Yorkshire that was adjacent to, rather than emblematic of, the more visible industrial manufacturing heritage of these locales. The heritage campaigns in Bradford and Chesterfield inflected the market's cross-historical qualities to different degrees, each grappling with the market as both a material and immaterial institution worth preserving. The fourth section will assess both the systemic and tactical reasons for Bradford and Chesterfield markets' divergent fortunes. The final section reads the preservationist proposal for Chesterfield's market hall and market place, developed by the architectural firm Feilden+Mawson, focusing specifically on how their survey process and socio-economic rationale cultivated the market place's inherent "publicness." After the Feilden+Mawson designed town center opened in 1981, Chesterfield Civic Society chairman Michael Brayshaw warned that there was a "real danger of the story of the fight to save Chesterfield Market Place being rewritten" as the triumph of architects and politicians, rather than activists and amenity societies.[17] Brayshaw's comments speak to a lived,

[17] Derbyshire Record Office (hereafter DRO), Matlock, Papers of the Chesterfield Civic Society, D6488/2/4, Michael Brayshaw, "The redevelopment of Chesterfield Market Place," paper given to the Rushcliffe Civic Centre for "Conservation and planning - today and tomorrow" conference, 14 June 1986.

emotional divide between "the people" and "the professionals" within anti-development urban social movements; this chapter will explore how this dichotomy played out in the defense of urban retail space, and how the lived heritage of public commerce fueled preservation campaigns in late 1960s and early 1970s provincial England.

Earlier Battles

Prior to the rise of civic amenity advocacy and the conservation areas in the 1960s and 1970s, the most vocal defenders of town and city marketplaces were the traders themselves. The battle over Nottingham's market place—detailed in chapter one—pitted the will of the "people" (supported by traders) against a set of local government "autocrats" who would destroy the city's commercial heart to boost their own egos.[18] Amidst the destruction and immediate rebuilding period of the Second World War, the ideal of the "people's market" remained particularly evocative. Market traders likened markets to the open spaces, commons, village greens, and maypoles of yesterday; Traditional marketplaces in provincial cities and towns were the character-filled, timeless spaces that underpinned local communities; neither Hitler not the postwar planners could destroy their bonds.[19]

These cross-historical references continued into the 1950s and 1960s. The spate of new commercial development projects made open or underdeveloped town and city center land a

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18. "People's Heritage," *World's Fair* 25 June 1927, 15. See A. Peter Fawcett, "A tale of two cities: Sheffield and Nottingham - architecture and the provincial city in inter-war Britain," *Planning Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2000), 25-54; *The Daily Telegraph* called a move a "historic link broken," while the Nottingham Market defense fund campaign used slogans like "What would Robin Hood say?" "Don't sell your birthright for a new exchange." "Nottingham Market Place," *The Daily Telegraph,* 22 November 1928, 15 and "Nottingham Market Defence Fund's Campaign," *World's Fair* 20 August 1927, 20. Edmund Vale, in his "North Country" contribution to Batsford's *Face of Britain* Series, lamented the "ancient and thriving market" removal at the hands of "commercial wranglers, demagogues, and busybodies…puffed up with vanity." Edmund Vale, *North Country* (London: Batsford, 1937).
19. J.S. Fisher, "The Dissolution of a Market," *World's Fair* 21 October 1939, 21; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 17 March 1945, 7; "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 28 August 1948, 8.

valuable commodity. In response, market traders dug into the annals of their civic and royal history to defend their business rights. In 1953, the Worcester Market Traders' Association opposed their Council and spoke directly to the Queen, urging her to invoke the terms of their 1554 Royal Market charter, which dictated that the city had to provide market facilities.[20] This heritage was manifested in the physical documentation of the market charter, but also in the nebulous protection of market town "character" or "atmosphere." In 1959, Loughborough's traders reminded the Leicestershire County Council that "Loughborough is traditionally a market town and to rob it of its open-air market would take away much of its character, and cause inconvenience to many people who use its facilities."[21] Worcester's and Loughborough's traders brought civic history—the contract between authority, traders, and shoppers—to bear on their present business concerns. While the vocabulary of "romance," "quaintness," "past ages," and "birthright" pitted the market against shopping development shortcomings of the present, this language could only carry protest movements so far. As chapter four detailed, markets were overwhelmingly owned by local councils and sited on valuable land, therefore at the mercy of physical planning and urban redevelopment proposals.

What traders ultimately needed were allies *outside* the market business to rally popular support and government intervention during the development craze of the 1960s. This came first in the form of local pressure and second in the form of Whitehall response. In the early 1960s, civic societies in Banbury, Mansfield, and Exeter fought to retain the traditional marketplaces in

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20. "Worcester Market Traders' Petition," *World's Fair,* 21 November 1953, 17. This narrative was replicated in Loughborough, Blackburn, and Leicester. The National Archives (hereafter TNA) Housing and Local Government 79/1301. Letter from Loughborough Market Traders to Clerk of the County Council, 26 May 1959; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 29 July 1961, 25 and "Market Medley," *World's Fair,* 20 January 1962, 25.
21. Letter from Loughborough Market traders to Clerk of Leicestershire County Council. This view was upheld when the Local Inspector reviewed the town's plan.

their communities.[22] These groups, like local market traders associations, championed the local, living heritage of the market as "a great amenity for thousands of customers, an asset for the whole city" which should not be sold "in order to swell the private profits of a handful of unknown people either in Exeter or in London."[23] Grassroots efforts found Whitehall validation in 1967, when the Civic Amenities Act brought local government planning policy in line with a townscape-inflected appreciation for local, living heritage. For example, after working on the Act, Roy Worksett heralded the marketplace as a feature of the "living environment," where people took great pleasure in knowing their shopping linked them with the past.[24] Likewise, the MHLG had previously recognized the market place as the "meeting place" or the social and economic core of local communities.[25] In 1967, the MHLG went further to argue that sites like Circenster or Blandford Market Places were the "clearest expression of [the town's] character and identity" and "historic" in a sense that transcended the individual building listing model.[26] Over the 1960s, both grassroots activism and preservation legislation gradually came to reflect and take on the long-voiced concerns of market traders.

These developments suggest a growing consensus around the integral role of traditional marketplaces in the economic and socio-spatial cultures of British towns and cities. Yet as previous chapters have argued, markets were unstable sites in the construction of local "publics." This was no less true in the development of local heritage. The civic society campaigns in Banbury, Mansfield, and Exeter suggest that market preservation could rally middle-class

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[22] "'Retain Market': Civic Society's Plea," *World's Fair,* 13 January 1962, 25; "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair,* 21 April 1962, 21; London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA) 4460/01/10/009, Records of the Victorian Society, Exeter Civic Society Newsletter, December 1962.
23. LMA 4460/01/10/009, Exeter Civic Society Newsletter, December 1962.
24. Worksett, 46.
[25] See Ministry of Housing and Local Government and Ministry of Transport, *Town Centres: Approach to Renewal* (London: HMSO, 1962), 2; Ibid., *Town Centres: Current Practice* (London: HMSO, 1963).
26. Ibid., *Historic Towns: Preservation and Change* (London: HMSO, 1967), 23-25.

activism (or more cynically, Nimbyism) around the local environment.[27] The National Trust's initial market preservation interventions in Chipping Camden, King's Lynn, Norwich, and Salisbury spoke to the early and enthusiastic protection of retail heritage in market towns and cathedral cities of the southern heartlands.[28] Yet many architects, writers, and social commentators saw markets as quintessential features of northern, industrial Britain. Market halls as the "great feature of northern cities" and their open-air cousins to be the products of a "more robust age."[29] There was a disconnect between the "top-down" protection being given to markets as historic sites, and the "bottom-up" consensus around their regional and civic meanings in urban morphology and townscapes.

At Risk: Bradford and Chesterfield's Market Areas in the Mid-Twentieth Century

Kirkgate Market, built in 1878, had been the subject of preservation versus redevelopment debates since the interwar period. The Victorian hall was first slated for demolition in 1936, when estate agent Sam Chippendale "came within one vote" of developing the site. This initial setback proved to be merely a blip in the otherwise successful career of Chippendale and his firm, Arndale. In 1969—after a series of soap-operatic twists and turns involving notorious

27. Y. Rydin, "Public Participation in Planning," in *British Planning: 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy,* ed. B. Cullingworth (London: Athlone Press, 1999), 267.
28. "Here, There, and Everywhere," *World's Fair* 11 March 1944, 7; "King's Lynn preserved," *The Architects' Journal,* 18 November 1964, 1154; "News - King's Lynn Study and plan for town's historic core," *The Architects' Journal,* 18 November 1964, 1160-1161; "Paving the Way," *Civic Trust News,* March 1976, 4; "Max Lock's plan for Salisbury," *The Architects' Journal,* 14 August 1963, 309-311; Tony Aldous, *Battle for the Environment* (London: Fontana, 1972), 147-148.
[29] Derek Linstrum, "Grateful for the dragons," *Yorkshire Post,* 21 May 1973; John Braine, quoted in "Leeds," *World's Fair,* 18 February 1961, 29. For more on the regionalism of markets, see TNA HLG 90/400 Provision of Retail Markets. Fruit and Vegetables (Marketing and Distribution) Organisation. Second Report, 28 April 1949; Ian Nairn, "Townscape: Lancashire Mill Towns," *The Architectural Review* (July 1962), 47-50; "Editorial – Incentive," *Yorkshire Evening Post,* 6 April 1967; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford (hereafter WYAS Bradford), Papers concerning campaign to save Kirkgate Market, Bradford from demolition, 73D90/1/3, Letter from David Lloyd to The Town Clerk of Bradford, April 1970; "Merit of the market," *Bradford Telegraph and Argus* (hereafter *T&A),* 20 May 1970; JH Kirk et al, *Retail Stall Markets in Great Britain* (Ashford: Wye College Marketing Dept., 1972), 62; "Market Medley – Markets and market halls," *World's Fair,* 25 January 1975, 16.

architect and local government briber John Poulson[30]—Bradford Council granted Town and City Properties (a subsidiary of Arndale) the contract for market redevelopment. Arndale's proposed complex promised multiple levels of shopping, dining, exhibition space, a hotel, and over 400 parking spaces. The new market would be built beside the old Victorian hall, which would be pulled down after construction ended to ensure uninterrupted market trading.[31]

Bradford's market trading and wider business community were the first to oppose the proposed redevelopment. Archie Edgar, Secretary of the Bradford Market Tenants' Association, argued that Kirkgate's independent businesses benefited council and citizen alike: the £60,000 annual revenue generated by the market subsidized the local government's "follies," while cafés, bargain shopping, and personable stall holders were an "essential element in the life and character of the city."[32] The local Chamber of Trade similarly opposed the Council's myopic dealings. As large-ownership outfits consolidated control over Bradford's Central Business District and supermarkets capitalized on rising car ownership in the suburbs, independent retailers in the city center were desperate to maintain the magnetic shopping draw provided by Kirkgate.[33] Finally, the newly organized Bradford Ratepayers' Association represented residents' interests in the argument for the market as a local economic engine. They chastised the Council

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[30] Although the links between Town and City and Poulson were tenuous, in 1962 Sam Chippendale did give Poulson 13,500 shares in the company. WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/3, Kirkgate Market Action Committee to the editor of *T&A,* 1 July 1973.
[31] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Bradford City Council, Application for the confirmation of the City of Bradford (Kirkgate and Westgate) compulsory purchase order 1970, 5.
[32] J. Sanderson, "Letter to the editor - Wanton and reckless," *T&A,* 19 November 1970; Denys Thornton, "Market can come down, rules Minister," *T&A,* 14 July 1970; "Protest over £20 rent in new market," *T&A,* 18 May 1970; WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Archie Edgar, Evidence at Public Inquiry, 5. WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Letter from Kirkgate Market Action Committee to the Minister of Housing and Local Government, 8 June 1970; WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Archie Robert Edgar (Secretary, Market Tenants' Association) evidence.
[33] Bradford Chamber of Trade had 800 trader members and 2,000 associated members, all of them being retailers. WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Application for compulsory purchase order, 11; C. Richardson, *A Geography of Bradford* (Bradford: University of Bradford, 1976), 142-43.

for "dispensing with an asset" owned by the taxpayers and vital to funding public services, all in exchange for a private, £3.7 million development.[34]

In the fall of 1970, this language was put into action when the Ratepayers' Association called for a public inquiry into the Kirkgate Market redevelopment proposal, specifically the Council's compulsory purchase order for a number of businesses within the Kirkgate clearance area.[35] Although public opinion—marked by a 30,000-strong petition—was on the side of these citizen-activists, the legal chances were stacked against the objectors from the start. Planning permission had been granted to Arndale in May 1970, and market tenants and their business and resident allies were not the owners of the land up for compulsory purchase.[36] The government inspector and the Secretary of State for the Environment recommended compulsory purchase for Kirkgate in December 1970, all but ensuring that the site would be redeveloped along the lines of the Bradford Council-Arndale plan.

In many ways, the 1960s fate of Chesterfield's market ran parallel to that of Bradford's. In 1962, the Council designated the market place as a Central Development Area (CDA), envisioning the open trading area and the 1857-built Victorian hall to be replaced with an enclosed building.[37] By the time Chesterfield Council partnered with Hammerson property developers on the CDA contract in 1967, 5 years of delay had further run down the area and reinforced its "obsolescence" and "blight." With a group of Labour modernizers at the helm, Chesterfield Council and Hammerson released their final CDA scheme to the city in the fall of

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[34] J.R. Hope, "Letter to the editor - Questioning wisdom of losing this "plum,'" *T&A*, 19 November 1970.
[35] Denys Thornton, "Tangle sets the mind boggling," *T&A* 16 November 1970.
[36] Thornton, "Tangle Sets the Mind Boggling."
[37] DRO D6449/UL, Borough of Chesterfield. Redevelopment of central area explanatory statement, 1962.

1972: a 5-acre megastructure of two shopping malls and 630 parking places that shrunk Chesterfield's open market to a circumscribed corner of the precinct-dominated center.[38]

The defenders of Chesterfield Market benefited from two crucial government initiatives unavailable to their Bradford predecessors. One was a new Town and Amenity Bill, which closed loopholes that allowed listed and unlisted buildings to be demolished on local authorities' watches (as was the case in Bradford). This national initiative was echoed on the international stage: in 1972, the European Architectural Heritage Year (EAHY) began as a three-year process of "focusing the attention on the need to preserve and enhance architectural heritage."[39] Chesterfield Civic Society saw an "amusing piece of double think" in Chesterfield's concurrent EAHY activity and their dogged desire to redevelop the market place, while letters to a Hammerson executive and to Prince Philip (both members of the EAHY council, the latter as its UK president) urged a reappraisal of the market's architectural and historic heritage.[40]

As Chesterfield's amenity societies and professional associations shored up public support for their market campaign, Bradford's protesters limped towards the end of their fight. As the new Bradford Arndale shopping center neared completion in May 1973, Secretary of State for the Environment Geoffrey Ripon made a snap decision to spot-list the doomed Kirkgate Market.[41] This renewed pressure from the Kirkgate Market Action Committee (KMAC), a group made up of college and university lecturers, heritage enthusiasts, and local councilors. However,

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[38] *Civic Trust News* 59 (January/February 1977), 13.

[39] "European Architectural Heritage Year," *The Architects' Journal,* 9 August 1972, 298.

[40] DRO D6449, Chesterfield Civic Society, Chairman's report and newsletter, September 1975; DRO D6488/2/14, Letter from Chesterfield Heritage Society to AO Kelting, joint managing director, Hammerson and member of executive council EAHY 1975, 6 May 1973 and Letter from Chesterfield Heritage Society to HRH Prince Philip, November 1973.

[41] Denys Thornton, "Ministry now says Mechanics' and market 'of interest'," *T&A,* 24 May 1973.

this flurry of action proved to be Kirkgate's dying gasp rather than the start of a new campaign: Bradford Council pressed ahead and set the market demolition order for November 1973.[42]

As Kirkgate demolition began, Chesterfield was fighting to stave off a similar fate. Yet both local and national events in April 1974 pushed the preservationist argument in a new direction. After Labour returned to national power in early 1974, the ratepayer refrain about over-investment was echoed by an unlikely source: Hammerson. Chancellor Denis Healey's new budget introduced a steep hike in business rates and a new finance bill, prompting the property developers to declare it would be "imprudent, indeed irresponsible" to invest in a large-scale project—estimated at £6 million by early 1974.[43] In addition to this capital crunch at the top, there were corresponding financial concerns among Chesterfield's citizens. Oil Crisis inflation, local government reorganization, and the expansion of council services had increased the rates disproportionately in the north of England.[44] In the end, it was Chesterfield Market's coherency of historic and picturesque buildings that proved to be its saving grace. In August, the Peacock Inn—a fifteenth-century inn on the south side of the market place—was spot-listed after the Town and Country Amenity Bill came into law. Chesterfield Borough Council, under the new listing legislation, would need to start another inquiry process into the demolition of the Peacock. The saga dragged on until April 1975, when the delay of the project, the prospect of another battle with the town's heritage and amenity societies, and a faltering national economy officially

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[42] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/2, Letter from Kirkgate Market Action Committee to Secretary of State for the Environment, 9 June 1973; In 1973, the KMAC polled 500 Bradfordians and found almost 80 per cent of them in favour of preservation. Demolition of listed buildings was not rare, but the advent of Listed Building Consent in the late 1960s had cut the number of listed building demolitions by 25 per cent. Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement,* 295.

[43] "Strong chance of rethink on town centre," *DT,* 12 April 1974; For more on the property crash in 1973-1974, see Peter Scott, *The Property Masters: A History of the British Commercial Property Sector* (London: E & FN Spon, 1996), 194-200.

[44] Neill Nugent, "The Ratepayers" in King and Nugent, eds., *Respectable Rebels*, 30.

severed the relationship between Hammerson and the Council, ostensibly ending Chesterfield's postwar pursuit of comprehensive development.[45]

The trajectory from market redevelopment reveal to either demolition (in the case of Bradford) or reprieve (in the case of Chesterfield) underscores the pace and polyvocality of planning legislation and politics in late 1960s and early 1970s Britain. The slightly later timing of the Chesterfield campaign undoubtedly played a role in the market's reprieve, but it would be determinist and teleological to privilege planning and preservation chronologies over the interpersonal and intersectional networks that worked within and alongside these legislative developments. In both Bradford and Chesterfield, the historic and contemporary form and function of the retail market spurred activism from a diverse field of citizens and politicians. As the next section shows, delving deeper into the relationship between associational life and the particularities of the market as urban place shifts the focus of the preservation campaigns from final outcomes to the contingent nature of urban social movements.

Asset Management: The Retail Market as Public Space

Bradford's and Chesterfield's market tenants, small business owners, and shoppers opposed the respective market schemes for a host of reasons, but one of the most trenchant appeals in both locales was to the public purse. By the early 1970s, anti-development critics could point to high-profile city center redevelopment in cities like Birmingham, Sheffield, and Blackburn, projects which some decried as "white elephants" where only national stores could afford rents.[46] The letters to the editor page in the *DT* became a sounding board for citizens across the country who relayed their own local markets" histories as cautionary tales against overdevelopment. When

[45] John Smith, "Hammerson Scheme Out? Phased plan likely for town-centre rebuilding," *DT,* 4 April 1975.
[46] G Bradley (Bournemouth), LE, *T&A,* 13 May 1970.

open markets transformed into indoor shopping precincts, these letters claimed, the change not only created commercial voids in the center, but also pushed much-needed custom to other towns where character-filled—and affordable—open markets still existed.[47] In the lived experience of these letter writers, a large town like Chesterfield only maintained its "edge" over nearby centers in Sheffield, Barnsley, and Rotherham because of its increasingly unique open-air market.[48]

This fiscal argument linked the concerns of shoppers with the concerns of traders. In Bradford, for example, market tenants were unimpressed after touring Arndale-redeveloped markets in Nelson and Bolton, more certain than ever that Kirkgate was a Victorian hall worth preserving. Traders and shoppers shared a fundamental belief that a retail market was a low-cost, low-revenue form of shopping that was threatened by property developers' concept of profit. Archie Edgar, President of the Kirkgate Market Tenants' Association, championed the retail market's irreplaceable value for a city like Bradford, where the prevailing low wage level meant that "the market style of shopping has more appeal for the less well-off."[49]

These sentiments were echoed in Chesterfield's defense. Allowing Hammerson to develop the market would also mean higher rents for market stallholders and trickle-down effects on their customers, often those working-class residents, who suffered from nearby industrial redundancies, or their wives, who had to work with smaller household budgets and higher market prices.[50] At the heart of the disagreement between those who wished to modernize the market and those who wished to retain its present atmosphere was this question of real versus prospective shopping trends: should retail planning attempt to pull back affluent customers who

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[47] V. Palmer, LE, *DT,* 16 March 1973; Geoffrey King (Tunbridge, Kent), LE, *DT,* 16 March 1973; Mrs Wright (Mansfield), LE, *DT,* 8 March 1974; Dorothy Bell (Penrith), LE, *DT,* 24 May 1974.
[48] David and Shirley Fitzpatrick, "Chesterfield: lessons in destruction," *Built Environment,* December 1974, 632.
[49] WYAS Bradford, Albert A. Swindlehurst, *Bradford in 1970*.
[50] Roger Mason, LE, *DT,* 12 January 1973; Marian Billinge, LE, *DT,* 2 March 1973.

had strayed to larger shopping areas, or should it cater to those locals who depended on easy access to affordable everyday goods?[51] The retail market—where the state had historically guaranteed quality goods at competitive prices—was thus the site where the financial concerns of the shopper and the small shopkeeper or market tenant collided. In its immediacy and its localness, the threat to both Bradford and Chesterfield market scaled down Britain's "national" crises over inflation and the potential limit to economic growth.

The financial objections to the private-public development partnerships in Bradford and Chesterfield also stemmed from a deeper distrust of local government policy in the early 1970s. How could the market, an institution nominally owned by the ratepayers of Bradford, be entrusted to outside firms with no opportunity for debate? In Bradford, the group at the helm of this subterfuge was Development Committee, who had neither put the market issue to public debate nor allowed the press or public to be present when they agreed on the Arndale contract.[52] Bradford Council's previous dealings with John Poulson exacerbated this distrust of elected leaders; one Kirkgate supporter likened the controversy to Nixon's Watergate and deemed historic buildings to be some of Poulson's most visible victims.[53] Kirkgate's defenders played up the site's collective "good" against the financial and political machinations of a Council where "all shades of political opinion are deluded by the chimera of progress."[54]

As the Kirkgate cause became a rallying cry against over-development, it created strange bedfellows in Bradford's local government. Although the Tories had controlled Bradford Council since 1967, their tacit support of Labour-initiated development schemes raised the ire of

[51] Rachel Rush, LE, *DT,* 16 March 1973.
[52] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/5, Copy of letter to the *Sunday Times*, 27 May 1973; WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Application for compulsory purchase order, 15.
[53] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/2, Letter from John Gascoigne to the editor of *The Observer*, 17 June 1973.
[54] Graham Carey, "Time to call a public meeting about market," *T&A,* 13 May 1970.

populist, fiscally prudent Conservatives. Independent Conservative Jim Merrick opposed the fact that the press and public had not been party to the Development Committee's decision in 1969, and ultimately faulted the Council for entering into such a high-cost scheme where Bradford's assets would be redirected towards a private development company.[55] In public, Merrick painted Bradford's declinism in broader strokes, equating the city's falling birth-rate to a "city dying from bankruptcy."[56] Merrick is better remembered as the founder of the Yorkshire Campaign to Stop Immigration in June 1970, a parallel cause that curiously had no direct overlap with his fight to preserve Bradford's built heritage. Yet Merrick's explicit critiques, along with his broader political background, suggests how ratepayer activism positioned a populist-tinged local citizenship against the misguided policies of the Council. The retail market—a civic asset which belonging to just such an imagined "people"—helped focus these debates in place.

Echoing Merrick's sentiments on the Bradford Left was Christopher Vincenzi, a lawyer with links to local Quaker and trade union circles, as well as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Elected as a Labour Councilor in late 1970, Vincenzi was part of the generation of younger local Labour politicians whose radical politics stood in opposition to the Wilson national establishment.[57] Vincenzi threw himself into the battle for local participatory democracy: he joined and eventually fronted the KMAC, with whom he battled the Council's Kirkgate-ambivalent Labour Group on behalf of the city's pro-Kirkgate Labour Party.[58] Kirkgate Market's meaning to the urban Left (Vincenzi) and the anti-immigrant, populist Right (Merrick)

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[55] WYAS Bradford, BBD1/7/T14925, Letter from Councilor Jim Merrick to the Members of the Council, 10 October 1969.
[56] Merrick, "Letter to the editor," *T&A,* 22 June 1970.
[57] Stewart Lansley et al., *Councils in Conflict: The Rise and Fall of the Municipal Left* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 5 & 9-10.
[58] "Council group snubs party over market," *T&A,* 7 October 1970.

is testament both to the market's public capacity and to the splintering of traditional political platforms in late 1960s and early 1970s Britain.

The critique of an overly commercial and unnecessarily obtuse Council was likewise central to the Chesterfield campaign. Hammerson might have been the London-based villains who saw the market place as a mere "financial reward," but Chesterfield Council was the enabler in this perverse "fling."[59] Yet while Bradford's KMAC and Councilors like Merrick had fixated on the misguided policies that transcended party politics, Chesterfield's campaign was much more partisan. Echoing the intra-Labour critiques of Vincenzi in Bradford, Chesterfield Heritage Society President Graham Robinson claimed that the Chesterfield Labour Group, in eliminating the "common people" from the planning process, was not only going against the national Labour Party platform, but was endangering the market as the citizenry's birthright since its 1204 charter.[60] Robinson pounced on the paradox at the heart of Chesterfield's Labour leadership, that a supposedly "socialist" party had sided with private developers and ignored democratic process, and harnessed the market's historical appeal as the ideal vehicle for a campaign against the materialist, short-sighted policies wrought by a political party who claimed legitimacy by representing "the people." As in Bradford, the Chesterfield platforms built on the market issue gained their legitimacy from a belief that the urban or town development ethos risked severing the bond of consent between governors and governed.

The serving of a writ to Chesterfield Council on April 1, 1974, was the symbolic height of this ratepayer citizenship. Graham Robinson, market trader Roy Davidson, and Bill Kennerley exploited an obscure element of the Local Government Act of 1933 in which ratepayers might appeal to the courts for a statutory declaration that their Council was mishandling the public

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[59] Roger Mason, LE, *DT,* 12 January 1973. Elizabeth Broomhead, LE, *DT,* 21 June 1974.
[60] T.G. Robinson, LE, *DT,* 19 February 1973.

purse or local public assets. The idea of the writ was floated to the Chesterfield Heritage Society by Christopher Booker and Bennie Gray, freelance journalists investigating council-developer dealings, mostly in London.[61] Chesterfield's writ servers accused the Council and Hammerson of entering into a relationship that was not in the financial interests of the town's ratepayers and was therefore unlawful because it would lead to a "deficiency in the council's accounts."[62] Although the writ was withdrawn ten days later, this tactic of ratepayer activism jump-started a new phase in the fight to save Chesterfield Market. A fresh petition, a public march on the Town Hall, and renewed national publicity pushed Chesterfield further into the preservation limelight.[63]

Groups like the Bradford Ratepayers Association or individuals like Graham Robinson fed the civic narrative that British retail markets were run by local councils and their market committees on behalf of the ratepayers. Residents who lived within the bounds of the town or city and paid into its public services benefited from the market's cluster of competitive businesses and its modest relief of the local rates. The entry of the private developer into this political-economic relationship, therefore, raised larger ideological questions over the role of local government as independent capitalist operators beyond the check of local ratepayers. Citizens campaigned to save local markets not only because they cornerstones of the local commerce, but because they suggested a form of civic belonging that transcended the machinations of contemporary councils.

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[61] Booker and Gray had been covering the fights to save both Covent Garden and Tolmers Square from the Greater London Council and Camden Council, respectively. DRO D6488/2/4, Brayshaw, "The redevelopment of Chesterfield Market Place"; Nick Wates, *The Battle for Tolmers Square* (London: Routledge, 1976), 105-106.
[62] John Smith, "Writ served over plan for town centre," *DT*, 5 April 1974.
[63] Christopher Booker and Bennie Gray, "Ripping out a town's heart against the citizens' wishes," *The Observer,* 31 March 1974; "Campaign for town heritage," *The Guardian,* 2 April 1974; Brian Carter and Dan Cruikshank, "Chesterfield reprieved?" *The Architects' Journal,* 24 April 1974, 876; Peter Smith, "Chesterfield and Rotherham," *Built Environment,* June 1974, 276.

At their ideological cores, then, the campaigns to save Bradford's and Chesterfield's markets were battles over the right to define local historical value and character. In Bradford, the Kirkgate Market Action Committee (KMAC)—contemporaries of the more famous Covent Garden Community Association—used the language of heritage to argue for participatory, citizen-centric notions of planning. With its ties to the Complementary Studies department at the Bradford College of Art[64] and with Christopher Vincenzi acting as a bridge to Council politics, the KMAC consolidated different registers of the urban Left in provincial Britain. Headed initially by Graham Carey, a veteran of neighboring heritage societies and a lecturer at a local teacher training college, they argued that preservation could not only save Kirkgate as a building, but Bradford as a democracy. Carey's letters to the MHLG,[65] *The Times*,[66] and the citizenry of Bradford[67]—not to mention his frequent letters to the editor of the *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*—made explicit connections between the lack of political transparency and the dearth of heritage listing in Bradford. In his estimation, "if statutory listing and architectural merit can be judged without reference to the affections of at least 30,000 persons then the appropriate Civil Servants need to be replaced by ones who are more aware that there is a connection between life and art."[68]

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[64] Albert Hunt's Bradford Art College Theatre Group—devoted to alternative and activist theatre—was founded in 1968. This organization drew much of its intellectual ethos and personnel from the college's Complementary Studies programme. Lecturer and KMAC secretary John Gascoigne would take an active role in community organizing and oral history projects in Bradford. Albert Hunt, *Hopes for Great Happenings* (London: Eyre Metheun, 1976), 69-70 and 78-9.

[65] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/1, Graham Carey to Anthony Dale (Chief Investigator, Historic Buildings Section), 26 August 1970.

[66] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/1, Graham Carey, "Non-Conservation: Non-Democracy," Letter to the editor of *The Times*, nd.

[67] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/1, "Open Letter to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Councillors and Officials of Bradford Corporation," nd.

[68] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/1, "Non-Conservation: Non-Democracy."

In KMAC ephemera and in testimony to the public inquiry, Carey celebrated the generational and stylistic linkage the market provided, particularly as it served as a foil to comprehensive development's sterile "isolation in time." This line of argument echoed the Civic Amenities' conception of "character," which the Council refused to recognize and thus to protect in legislation.[69] As Carey developed an argument for the affective local character of the market, he recruited regional and national experts to speak to the architectural merit of Kirkgate. Derek Linstrum (Senior Lecturer, Leeds School of Architecture) and Derek William Buckler (preservationist architect, Manchester) called Bradford "undoubtedly the finest" of the northern market halls, referring both to the regional importance of its architects (Lockwood and Mason) and to its ability to cohere entire parts of Victorian Bradford. Buckler agreed with Linstrum and even went a step further, drawing up a renovation plan to resolve the market's structural issues while preserving its historic character.[70]

Bolstering the local expertise of Linstrum and Buckler were the national champions of nineteenth-century architecture, John Betjeman and the Victorian Society. Initially, the Victorian Society did not recognize Kirkgate as one of the best markets in Yorkshire, although they came to appreciate its "atmosphere."[71] Far more than his Victorian Society cohort, Betjeman openly embraced the place-based, emotional case for Kirkgate: in his mind, "the other parts of [Bradford] are a bit like you see anywhere, whereas Kirkgate is Bradford."[72] Betjeman urged town fathers to heed the mistakes made in towns like Birmingham and not to destroy Bradford's "robust and human-scale" Victorian architecture for modernist "slabs and cubes" that

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[69] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Vote Kirkgate!, nd; WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Graham Carey evidence to public inquiry, 2.
[70] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2, Derek Linstrum testimony; "Same Exterior, renovated interior. 'Old and new' alternative market plan," *T&A,* 23 October 1970.
[71] LMA 4460/01/35/003, Letter from David Lloyd to Jane Fawcett, 18 June 1970.
[72] "Lovely Kirkgate Market part of city's heart, says Sir John," *T&A*, 14 November 1970.

dehumanized people (Figure 6.1).[73] Betjeman echoed a refrain that had been growing in certain Bradford circles for a decade: that modernist renewal had destroyed the buildings that made Bradford legible to its residents and unique as a coherent townscape.[74] Kirkgate's physical anchoring of Bradford's Victorian commercial and architectural core was a final bulwark against the complete modernist transformation of the city.

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[73] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/4, Undated newspaper clipping, letter received by *T&A*.
[74] Gunn, "Rise and Fall," 864; Yorkshire Film Archive (hereafter YFA), film no. 1696, "The glory that was Bradford," 1967.

Figure 6.1. Hand-crafted poster from KMAC Campaign. WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/2.

Above all other national, regional, and civic voices on preservation and heritage, J.B. Priestley spoke—albeit, indirectly—with the most resonance on the plight of Kirkgate Market. During the summer of 1973, Bradford Council made the curious decision to bestow Priestley with the title of "Freeman of the City." This honor would coincide with the Council's decision to push ahead with market demolition, despite the DoE's decision to spot-list the nineteenth century

building. The KMAC and related groups pounced on this ironic moment in Bradford's civic history, organizing a two-part community forum and film screening for their "city with a great future behind it."[75] The film that the KMAC chose to cap this event was the Gracie Fields-Priestley vehicle discussed in chapter one, *Look Up and Laugh*. In the press and publicity for the KMAC forum, the context and production of the film becomes, itself, a part of this long battle for the collective history of Bradford: "the affair started" when Littlewoods moved to buy Kirkgate in the 1930s, precipitating not only Bradford's long struggle with "the greed of the developers and the stupidity and self-interest of the councilors," but also Priestley's crucial role as a moral critic of these unholy alliance between capital and the state. The KMAC claimed that Priestley corroborated the story that *Look Up and Laugh* was taken from Bradford's real-life struggles with property developers in the 1930s, a fact that the citizen activists could proffer as evidence of the long-standing struggle between development interests and built heritage in the city.[76] While Priestley himself did not attend these community events and only offered limited direct support in the press, the KMAC's use of his interwar film added another layer to the "historical" meaning of Kirkgate. Not only was the physical market structure a reminder of "progressive" Bradford at the turn-of-the-century,[77] but the provenance of *Look Up and Laugh* was an example of the potential of re-purposed heritage to enact delayed social change. It would take over thirty years for Priestley's work of everyday commerce to resonance politically in the anti-development mood of the 1970s. Cloaking themselves in Priestley's legacy, the KMAC

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[75] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/7, General Studies Department – Bradford College of Art and Technology, Proposal for an event to be held at the Bradford Playhouse on Sun., 9th Sept.
[76] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/3, Letter from John Gascoigne to Ian Nairn, 18 August 1973; WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/5, Copy of letter to the *Sunday Times*, dated 27 May 1973.
[77] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/3/4, *T&A,* 18 July 1973.

vowed to save not only the market as a building, but the market as a metaphor for provincial Bradford's vital character.

Like the KMAC in Bradford, the Chesterfield Heritage Society helped define why the market's "historic" qualities were worthy of protecting in light of the mounting backlash against comprehensive renewal. Graham Robinson leveraged the language of deep, ancient England connoted by open market commerce. The romance of the market's "sights, smells, and sounds," essentially "unchanged since the Magna Carta," was a capacious, transitive, and malleable celebration of local history.[78] This rallying cry was diametrically opposed to Chesterfield's Labour leader, Jock Anderson (a "Napoleon" or "Stalin" figure to some), whose mantra—"if you conserve too much, you get ruins, and if you get ruins, there is no-one in them"—underpinned his neophilic attitudes.[79]

Cestrefeldians living in Cambridge, West Lothian, and even Seneca Falls, NY, decried this "monstrous act of vandalism," the "proposed rape of Chesterfield Market Place" that would "tear down the past and replace it with buildings of rather dubious character."[80] The destruction of not only the market hall but also the open market place was a key difference between the Bradford and the Chesterfield cases.[81] To its Chesterfield defenders, the market *place* transcended economic and architectural worth: it had been the town's meeting area since the reign of King John, where the populace might "trade, celebrate, loaf, harangue, or even riot." [82] Knights, orators, electioneers, and Salvation Army workers had all crossed the market's cobbles,

[78] "Save the market campaign hots up."
[79] "Town project could add 4p in £ on rates," *DT,* 19 February 1973; Anderson also feared Chesterfield would be a "torpid backwater" if they did not redevelop. "Notes by the way – The backwoodsmen sharpen their axes," *DT,* 11 May 1973.
[80] Patrick Thomas (Cambridge), LE, *DT,* 19 January 1973; Margaret De V Wills (Whitburn, West Lothian), LE, *DT, 16* March 1973; Mrs Patricia Preece (Seneca Falls), LE, *DT,* 23 March 1973.
[81] Many Chesterfield residents who defended the market place actually welcomed the destruction of the market hall. Hardwick, LE, *DT,* 12 April 1974; David Powell, LE, *DT,* 3 May 1974.
[82] T.G. Robinson, LE, *DT,* 16 February 1973; Simon Ward, LE, *DT,* 24 May 1974.

each contributing a new historical layer to the town's political culture.[83] Whereas Kirkgate's defenders ultimately tried to use the site's Victorian architectural merit as its possible saving grace, Chesterfield's activists seized on the market place's ancient provenance and its constantly evolving historic character. This focus on intangible rather than tangible heritage would prove beneficial for the "Save the Market" campaign in the Derbyshire town.

The *DT* letters section became a forum for lively debate over whether or not shopping space constituted built heritage. The newspaper editors often featured pro-development dissenting letters to ferment discussion and disagreement; in April 1974, Margaret Ferns's rejoinder that Chesterfield should "get on making this town a beautiful town" drew a line between the modern shopping amenities of Doncaster, Sheffield, or Mansfield and appropriate heritage leisure supported by stately homes like Hardwick Hall or Bolsover Castle.[84] However, the vast majority of published correspondence spoke of heritage not as a matter of architectural significance or aristocratic association, but as a feature of quotidian regional identity. The belief that Chesterfield Market was "natural social point," with its "quaint irregularities," "individuality," and "ancient heritage" pushed against the narrative that developers should and could improve the commercial character of market towns. Chesterfield's market place was heritage because it had survived the era of urban renewal that had transformed Birmingham's and Sheffield's retail markets into "graffito-lined concrete jungles."[85] In Chesterfield, heritage was not a hermetically sealed time capsule of England's past, but the product of daily or weekly commerce and sociability in town's retail core.

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[83] DRO, Papers of the Chesterfield Architectural Heritage Society, D6488/2/3, "Supporting papers on the redevelopment of Chesterfield."
[84] Margaret Ferns LE, *DT,* 12 and 26 April 1974.
[85] Turner LE, *DT,* 19 April 1974.

Cestrefeldian women's organizations proved to be some of the most vocal and vital supporters of this usable, everyday past that was practiced at the market. Eighty members of Brampton's Women's Guild voted to save Chesterfield Market—not along partisan lines but as "townswomen."[86] Women's Institutes likewise threw their support behind the cause, fearing that:

> The market place is in danger of being lost forever in the interest of private profit...We believe that market squares, village greens, common land and footpaths belong to the people and that right—fought for and won at no little cost by our forebears—cannot be taken away without proof that these ancient rights have no longer a valid purpose.[87]

Compared to the exclusively male leadership of the Bradford campaign, the alliance of women's groups with ratepayers and preservationists opened the Chesterfield campaign to the intersection of localized social identities. As the managers of their household budgets, Chesterfield's women addressed the Council's poor financial dealings in terms of their own economic logic. As opposed to the KMAC's political pointedness and arguments for architectural merit, Chesterfield activists used the unbuilt features of market places to argue for their intersectional, cross-historical value and their relevance to rural, village, and town heritage.

Divergent Tactics, Different Outcomes

How, then, did Chesterfield's heritage-based, anti-development campaign succeed while Bradford's failed? Timing is one of the most telling differences. Kirkgate's defenders fought without the 1974 Amenities Act and the impending EAHY on their side; each of these developments was a concerted political effort to mitigate local authorities' destruction of

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[86] Mary Robinson and Effie E Porter, LE, *DT,* 9 March 1973.
[87] V.L. Miles, LE, *DT*, 13 April 1973.

conservation areas. When Secretary Rippon spot-listed Kirkgate Market in May 1973, there was little recourse for turning listing into preservation, so demolition followed apace. Conversely, when the Peacock Inn was spot-listed only 15 months later, the reorganization of local government and the teeth of the 1974 Act provided the planning and preservation apparatus that could save Chesterfield Market. There were also differences in economic timing: Hammerson pulled out of Chesterfield due to a national budget unfavorable to property development, while much of the debate and decision-making in Bradford took place pre-Oil Crisis, during the era of shopping development boom. Though it may seem cynical to attribute preservationist triumphs to the economic downturn in Britain during the early 1970s, planning historians have noted that these constraints must be recognized alongside the social movement angle.[88]

Focusing on both localities allows us to see how the particularities of place as well as of time conditioned public receptiveness to development versus preservation. As Simon Gunn has shown, Bradford was a well-worn testing ground for "functionalist modernism" since the first wave of postwar development plans. The slow-down of the local woolen and worsted industries and the outsourcing of manufacturing to peripheral sites only exacerbated the sense of the city center as a Victorian holdover in need of redevelopment. Chesterfield's claim to a more cross-historical "market town" character, however, was a salient line of defense. While the town supported a group of manufacturing and engineering firms—along with mining communities further afield—the open market retained pride of place as a public economic stage where consumer and trader had met face-to-face for almost 800 years. Hammerson's proposal cut to the mythical heart of Chesterfield in a much more destructive manner than Arndale's in a waning urban-industrial stronghold. While Bradford had defenders of nineteenth-century urbanism like

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[88] Pendlebury, *Conservation*, 63. For the mid-1960s analogue, see Otto Saumarez Smith, "Central Government and Town-Centre Redevelopment in Britain, 1959-1966," *The Historical Journal* 58 no. 1 (2015), 243.

John Betjeman, Ian Nairn, and native son J.B. Priestley on its side, Chesterfield had the romance of pre-modern commerce. Comparing Bradford and Chesterfield reminds us that blanket applications of "heritage industry" or "conservation" do not go far enough to explain the local cultures that underpin the preservation of socio-economic place.

Beyond these structural pre-conditions, political tactics and tone further distinguished the Bradford and Chesterfield "Save the Market" campaigns. In Bradford, the anger at the Development Committee and the lack of consultation or democratic process spoke to a general distrust in the political system. Working in the wake of the Skeffington Report on public participation and planning, the Redcliffe Maud Report on local government, and the Poulson Affair, the KMAC and their allies saw corruption across the political spectrum. In Chesterfield, the Hammerson scheme was laid squarely at Labour's feet, with the local party becoming a stand-in for fears about the Left's capitulation to capitalist developers in the name of "progress."[89] The Tories were then able to ally with civic and amenity societies as the defenders of Chesterfield's historic character and sensitive development. Whereas Bradford's public silencing was endemic of local government corruption, Chesterfield's market activists characterized Labour Group's control of the town as an irony at the heart of the social democratic party.

Bradford, with its arts college and radical theatre cultures, was a fertile ground for more general conversations about the potential for direct democratic action to change the direction of urban governance. Issues around Bradford's environment and the role of urban planning and citizen participation, for example, took center stage at the 1970 Bradford Arts Festival. Managed decline (euphemistically referred to as the debate between "quality" and "size") was the topic of

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[89] Smith, "Chesterfield and Rotherham," 276; Jeanette Bramley, LE, *DT*, 13 July 1973; "Town centre scheme to go ahead," *DT,* 10 May 1974; Pro Bono Publico, LE, *DT*, 10 May 1974.

discussions between Bradford University political scientists and representatives of Bradford's Development Committee.[90] At the same Festival, there was a "Teach In" on the future of Bradford, prompting questions about Bradford's potential return to pre-industrial obscurity, or more ominously, whether the "history of Notting Hill and Moss Side, Haarlem [sic], and Watts" was Bradford's fate in the 1970s and beyond. Other than Councilor Merrick's 1969 nativist tinged comments about the city's decline, these coded references to Bradford's growing non-white population—making only passing connections between race and decline—are the only instances where Bradford politicians activists concerned with planning and participation were talking about the changing ethno-racial makeup of the city in the same breath as more power and oversight for citizen residents. Bradford's leftist activists were able, for the most part, to compartmentalize their understanding of "community" from the social debate about Bradford's growing diversity and its impact on housing and amenities. This mode of thinking is testament not only to the tension between race and class in postwar urban politics, but also to the continuing inability of heritage-focused planning debates to account for multicultural realities.

As the arm of these amenity activists most directly involved with the fate of Kirkgate Market, the KMAC had initially played a vital role in connecting this New Left political culture to the coalition of market traders, ratepayers, and small shopkeepers. Graham Carey (Convener of the KMAC, lecturer at Bingley College of Education, member of the Aire Valley Motorway Action Group), Christopher Vincenzi (Chairman of the KMAC, Labour councilor, and member of the CND) and John Gascoigne (secretary of the KMAC, lecturer at the College of Art, and colleague of Albert Hunt) forged the associational connections between the urban New Left and amenity and heritage activism. And while Bradford was exceptional in its brief attraction of both

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[90] "Quality, not size what city needs," *T&A,* 25 February 1970.

right-wing and radical branches of 1970s urban social movements,[91] this solidarity was fragile. Consider the final act of Kirkgate's activists, a "send off" during the last day of trading. This "ceremonial two fingered gesture to the powers that be" appeared to have been the idea of interests in the KMAC, Bradford community radio, and the radical theatre traditions of Albert Hunt, and the Bradford Complementary Studies experimental theatre arm.[92] Led by the Welfare State Group,[93] thirty-three young people enacted a funeral march from City Hall to the market, where they staged a sit-in and sang "Auld Lang Syne" and "We Shall Not Be Moved" (Figure 6.2).[94] The market tenants, going about their business closing up stalls on the last day of trading, were not overly impressed with these tactics.[95] Speaking a few years after the demolition of the market and the opening of the new building, Christopher Vincenzi remarked, "we were concerned with the social and aesthetic side of the building, whereas the traders were concerned with the economic, the financial."[96] While Kirkgate's public revenue, ownership, and history had originally attracted a cross-section of Bradford's political class from fiscally conservative right to counterculture left, the tenuous cooperation of this movement plagued the market cause through its last days in 1973.

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[91] On the comparative ideology of local right and left-wing politics in the 1970s, see Stuart Lowe, *Urban Social Movements: The City After Castells* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), 118-51.
[92] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/2, Letter from Steve Harris (Bradford Community Radio) to John Gascoigne, 22 September 1973. In the letter, Harris recommends John Betjeman, J.B. Priestley, and performance poet Jeff Nuttall (also a lecturer at the Bradford School of Art) should take part in this event, suggesting pro-Kirkgate Market activists optimism for continuing to link establishment heritage thinkers with radical artists and activists.
[93] The Welfare State theatre group, founded by John Fox, had some overlap with the Albert Hunt's Bradford College of Art group, including their collaboration on *The Russian Revolution* street performance in 1968. Hunt, *Hopes*, 68-9.
[94] "33 arrests during Kirkgate protest," *T&A*, 5 November 1973.
[95] WYAS Bradford, 73D90/1/4, "Quick knees-up- and traders grunt 'Goodbye'," *T&A* clipping, n.d.
[96] YFA, film no 1714, "New Plans, Old Loves," 1974.

Figure 6.2. Requiem for Kirkgate Market, Tony Coult and Baz Kershaw (eds.), *Engineers of the Imagination* (London, 1983), 2.

Compared to Bradford, Chesterfield's campaign was an exercise in moderate, inter-sectional protection of public space. A vocal contingent of Chesterfield women and middle-class professionals defended the intrinsic heritage of the market, drawing from a well of political, civic, and architectural knowledge in order to strengthen Chesterfield's national and international relevance. This coalition proved to be much longer lasting than Bradford's, in part because economic conditions turned in conservation's favor, but also because the politics of the cause appealed to a broad spectrum of opinion. Retail markets attracted a range of support by virtue of the architectural distinction they embodied, the economic solidarities they enabled, and the civic stakeholding they engendered. Yet "public" outrage was not identical across Bradford and Chesterfield. This final section will turn to the mid-1970s preservation plan for Chesterfield Market, and the mode through which Cestrefeldians became active incubators of local history and participation in the market's renewal.

Preserving Publicness: Bernard Feilden and Chesterfield Townscape

Hammerson's departure brought an end to 1960s comprehensive planning in Chesterfield, but debate remained over who would design and construct a sensitive renewal of the market area. The constrained national economic climate necessitated a phased scheme that would at least partially conserve the buildings surrounding the market place.[97] In early 1976, Chesterfield Council and the Department of the Environment approached conservation architect Bernard Feilden of the Norwich-based firm Feilden+Mawson to consult on the new survey of the town and its historic built fabric. A firm committed to conservation and townscape principles, Feilden+Mawson sought to balance "fabric and function", or, the built environment that they could control and citizens' uses of these places and spaces in everyday life.[98]

As part of their Central Area study, the consultant architects distributed 350 questionnaires to primary and secondary schools, churches, senior clubs, women's organizations, and miners' organizations. The firm found that the majority of respondents were sympathetic to the conservation ethos, with buildings like the Town Hall, the Crooked Spire of the Church of St Mary and All Saints, and especially the market serving as key focal points in the visual and narrative map that Cestrefeldians made for themselves (Figure 6.3). In addition to this citizen outreach, Feilden+Mawson consulted with the Civic and Heritage Societies from the initial stages of their survey, a gesture that members of these societies called a "breath of fresh air" after years of impasse with Hammerson.[99] For Feilden+Mawson, heritage design and building preservation facilitated conversations between past and present, individual and community, and the multitudes of publics who comprised local civil society.

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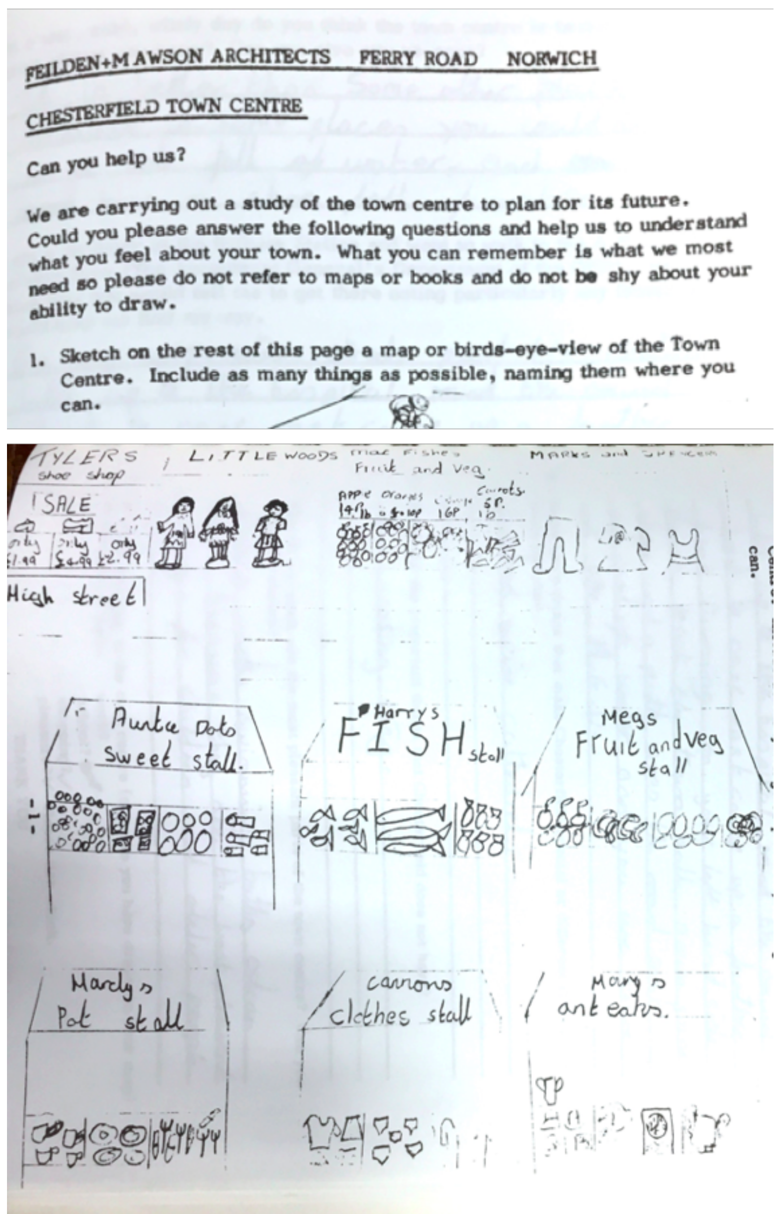
[97] "Go-ahead for yet another town centre plan," *DT*, 11 April 1975.
[98] Chesterfield Borough Council, *Chesterfield: Central Area Study* (Chesterfield, 1976), 3.1. For more on Townscape, see Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London: The Architectural Press, 1961).
[99] DRO D6488/2/5, "Saving the market: 1973-75."


FEILDEN+MAWSON ARCHITECTS FERRY ROAD NORWICH

CHESTERFIELD TOWN CENTRE

Can you help us?

We are carrying out a study of the town centre to plan for its future. Could you please answer the following questions and help us to understand what you feel about your town. What you can remember is what we most need so please do not refer to maps or books and do not be shy about your ability to draw.

1. Sketch on the rest of this page a map or birds-eye-view of the Town Centre. Include as many things as possible, naming them where you can.

Figure 6.3. Primary school responses to Feilden+Mawson questionnaire. *Chesterfield Central Area Study* (1976).

The final Central Area study, published in May 1976, bridged Chesterfield's unique character with pressing socio-economic concerns. Feilden+Mawson recognized the narrative of "dying," "decline," and "obsolescence" that permeated public opinion in Chesterfield, not just in terms of industry, but also in terms of retail competition.[100] The realignment of shopping

[100] "Market place 'could become a twilight zone'," *DT,* 30 January 1976; "A dying town?" *DT,* 30 April 1976.

catchment to redeveloped Sheffield, Nottingham, Mansfield, Sutton, and Worksop was matched with fears about Chesterfield becoming a dormitory town for larger cities.[101] Rather than challenging regional shopping competitors at their own game ("resisting outsider commercial pressure"), Feilden+Mawson broke with Hammerson's logic to argue that preservation made economic and business sense. Renovation of the market hall and its surrounding area would cost 30 per cent less than demolition and rebuilding, and in so doing would preserve the outline of Chesterfield's recognizable character.[102] Retention and selective improvement were the antidotes to what ailed Chesterfield in its current climate: the facts that the "unique market" was the largest in the country and "attracted people from many miles around" were the cornerstones of a new shopping plan.[103] Furthermore, the underused spaces in the market hall could provide an art gallery or library space, a social hub that could bring "evening life" back to the market place.[104] In Feilden+Mawson's estimation, the market hall and market place provided two concurrent linking functions: they connected people to a coherent past as they connected people in sociable space.

From their survey techniques to their written report to their final product (completed in 1981), Feilden+Mawson privileged how the Cestrefeldian moved through and conceived of space, which in turn revealed how the market was a cornerstone in the physical and experiential map of the town. The market, they argued, was a focal point in the sensory landscape of the town and an "urban area in the best sense: a building of human scale strongly linked to human activity."[105] This "uniqueness" also had a commercial valence. Feilden+Mawson put into

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[101] Chesterfield Borough Council, *Chesterfield: Central Area Study*, 2.1
[102] "Preservation in revised town plan," *DT,* 11 June 1976.
[103] Chesterfield Borough Council, *Chesterfield: Central Area Study,* 4.4.
[104] Chesterfield Borough Council, *Chesterfield: Central Area Study,* 4.2-4.3.
[105] Chesterfield Borough Council, *Chesterfield: Central Area Study,* 4.4

practice the economic argument that activists and preservationists had been developing for years: as other regional markets succumbed to the precinct or Arndale model, the potential value of Chesterfield's traditional market increased. Feilden+Mawson translated the "at risk" heritage of the market to the "in demand" character of atmospheric shopping places. The future prosperity of the town lay in its ancient assets, perhaps none more invaluable than the open market place.

Conclusion

The strategies and recommendations of the Feilden+Mawson Chesterfield proposal corroborate Raphael Samuel's analysis of heritage in recession: as local economies and the public sector collapsed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, conservation became the new preferred mode to tackle urban blight.[106] This chapter has explored the different origins and permutations of this renewal policy, and how the politics of place shaped local preservationist activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I have argued that the specifics of site matter when we discuss how citizens chose to champion heritage as a form of "active" citizenship in the postwar period. The British retail market was a literal meeting point in countless cities and towns, and its role as a palimpsest of different epochs meant that it had a remarkable ability to cultivate multi-dimensional forms of civic belonging. The markets in Bradford and Chesterfield tapped into economic arguments by virtue of their affordability, fueled anti-political establishment moods through their "collective" function, and embodied a transcendent form of local commercial history.

The heritage politics of the "Save the Market" campaign, therefore, must be contextualized as part of the early 1970s juncture in social democracy, when "popular

[106] Samuel, *Theatres of Memory,* 292.

individualism" was not yet a forefather of Thatcherism, but a diffuse mode of articulating and enacting citizenship.[107] In Bradford and Chesterfield, actions such as letter writing, writ serving, public marching, and collaborative planning tied subjective ideas of "belonging" to local economic places, as retailers and consumers linked with politicians, students, and Victorian architecture enthusiasts to defend "traditional" forms of shopping.

The power of Kirkgate and Chesterfield markets to gather these political alliances and to speak across registers of local, national, and international commercial and architectural "value" reminds us that British retail heritage is an invaluable, if understudied, node in cultural and economic histories of place. Historians working on Germany have started to interrogate this phenomenon with the nostalgia for corner stores,[108] while scholars in the USA see similar modes emerging in the romance of "downtown" as a shopping landscape of the past.[109] This chapter has argued that the British traditional retail market helped local communities imagine retail and consumption as an asset run for the benefit of "the people," and that retail market heritage was predicated on recovering a historic, commercial "public" to challenge the promise of public-private development. The social history of the Chesterfield campaign—told in conjunction with the unsuccessful Bradford struggle only 70 miles away—reveals that this brand of heritage did not emerge from an undifferentiated national and political field, but is the uneven, participatory process of local stakeholders challenging the deficiencies of the present by constructing a particular narrative of the past.

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[107] See Emily Robinson et al, "Telling Stories about Post-war Britain."
[108] Jan Logemann, "Remembering 'Aunt Emma': small retailing between nostalgia and a conflicted past," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 5, no. 2 (2013), 151-171.
[109] Vicki Howard, *From Main Street to Mall: The Rise and Fall of the American Department Store* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 211-220; Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 255-311.

Conclusion/Coda

This dissertation has used the market as an index for tracing the changing terms of "belonging" to local economic cultures in twentieth-century Britain. More specifically, I have argued that markets manifested "publicness" in two modes: as a socio-economic ideal and as a socio-spatial reality. Chartered markets remained—despite the influx of private capital and property investors—a publicly owned asset within the portfolio of the local state. In Part One of the dissertation, I established how retailers who survived on the fringes of the urban economy argued that the "value" of a retail market resided in its ability to bind historical eras *and* serve the immediate economic needs of ordinary people. Itinerant traders and small stallholders used the network of *The World's Fair* and local associational institutions not only to form their own commercial "public" but also to stake a claim to the larger public culture of the towns and cities through which they moved. Yet, as Chambers of Trade and Commerce and the retail press increasingly associated "transience" with migrants from Europe and the Empire, and as they policed "belonging" along lines of locality, markets became dangerously liminal spaces in the eyes of the state and the commercial establishment. Political and trade associational bodies used claims of poor hygiene, untraceable goods, and, finally, during the Second World War, "black market" activity to denigrate markets as beneath the standards of British economic life, therefore marking their users as "outside" the social body of town, city, and nation.

With the recasting of the British state after the Second World War, the retail market helped mediate the relationship between public provisioning and private affluence. In Part Two, I excavate how borough estate agents, local authorities, and citizen associations argued for the

continuing relevance of retail markets as part of public provisioning in towns such as Swansea, Harlow, and Seacroft. And it was not merely civic representatives or working-class consumers who defended the socio-economic vitality of markets: select property developers sought to build on their entrenched shopping goodwill as a means of retaining the sociable function of shopping in new-build shopping centers and precincts. The salience and success of markets in New Towns, new estates, and rebuilt town and city cores suggest where the local state could still maintain a foothold in the middle of post-war Britain's consumer culture; retail markets incubated a pre-war sensibility of "civic life" and revealed the necessity of maintaining popular, low-cost, resilient forms of retailing in an age of affluence.

In the early to mid-1970s, the rationale to keep markets "public" in their ownership, funding structure, and oversight was undermined in two distinct—yet interrelated—ways. Part Three explores the rise of "private" markets, on the one hand, and the growing strength of grassroots heritage campaigning, on the other. Private market operators like Nigel Maby argued against public monopolies on market ownership because this model was un-democratic, costly, and ultimately stifled the enterprise and risk-taking that were supposedly hallmarks of small-scale entrepreneurship. Heritage campaigns were likewise concerned that the will of the "people" had been lost in the post-war retail market. Echoing the language of J.B. Priestley and activist market traders in the 1920s and 1930s, campaigns in towns and cities like Bradford and Chesterfield argued that to "save" markets from private developers was to defend public life and local democratic institutions from the unholy alliance between state and capital.

The inherent public role that market halls, open-air markets, and street markets played in civic *space* meant that these debates over their past, present, and future were constantly cast in socio-spatial terms. In Part One, I argue that retail markets supported a sense of spatial

community that was concurrently fixed and mobile: inter-war memoirists recalled markets as spaces where a "world of goods" were bought and sold by a diverse group of traders; they were sites of mixing that anchored the lived cosmopolitanism of provincial Britain. At the level of administration and oversight, local and national governments struggled to regulate the market as both a physically stable and a socially fluid institution.

With the rebuilding and reconfiguring of many town and city cores following the physical destruction of the Second World War, the physical centrality of the market in civic space took on a heightened sense of urgency. Part Two used periodicals like *The Architects' Journal* and *The Architectural Review* to trace the ideological and practical debates as to whether markets should be kept at the core of towns and cities, and whether their sociability function would ultimately pay economic dividends. In sites like Harlow and Leicester, Frederick Gibberd and Konrad Smigielski saw these ends as ultimately intertwined: traditional English marketplaces performed similar functions as the continental piazza or the post-war Scandinavian precinct: they reminded shoppers and traders that modern commerce, no matter how atomized, had public and historic origins in civic space.

In the 1970s, however, the spatial politics of markets moved away from the boardrooms of planning departments and property developers and into the realm of "outsider" business ventures and ratepayer activism. Private markets on under-used rural or semi-industrial land challenged the local state's unilateral control over when and where market trading could take place. Heritage movements, by focusing on the selling of public land to private interests, questioned for whom and for what nominally "common" property was used in late modern Britain. Citizen-activists evoked a transhistorical "right to the city" that was forged at the public

market. Markets, in other words, by virtue of their dual retailing informality and place rootedness, revealed the limits of modernizing commercial space in post-war Britain.

As sites of economic opportunity and social mixing, markets continue to serve a vital role as urban incubators in contemporary global cities. As Daniel Hiebert, Jan Rath, and Steven Vertovec have recently argued, in an age of "technological complexity and high entry barriers for many occupations and forms of entrepreneurship, a wide range of people can participate in street markets, as sellers and buyers."[1] Retail markets—whether they are the street markets of Amsterdam, the post-socialist bazaars of eastern Europe, the repurposed Brutalist buildings in Lagos, the diasporic Chinese markets in Vancouver, or the female-dominated markets in Cuzco—have become metonymies for the informal retail economy in hyper-diverse developed and developing cities.[2] The market as an improvised, grassroots retail form, then, has the potential to link the informal economies of the Global North and South, with scholars of migration mining the human relationships and economic networks that sustain small-scale buying and selling in cities around the globe.[3]

While retail markets, as anthropologically rich sites of inquiry, reveal much about the resilience of "authentic" face-to-face retail cultures, they also suggest how easily this affective register can be co-opted to serve large-scale development ends. The future of markets as public

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[1] Daniel Hiebert et al., "Urban markets and diversity: towards a research agenda," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 1 (2015), 6.

[2] Ibid.; Gertrud Hüweimeier, "Postsocialist Bazaars: Diversity, Solidarity, and Conflict in the Marketplace," *Laboratorium* 5, no. 1 (2013), 52-72; Olabisi Sherifat Yusuff, "The Dynamics of Strategic Entry and Motivations of Yoruba Female Textile Traders in the Balogun Market, Lagos State, Nigeria" *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 18, no. 2 (2013); Yolande Pottie-Sherman and Daniel Hiebert, "Authenticity with a bang: Exploring suburban culture and migration through the new phenomenon of the Richmond Night Market" *Urban Studies* 52, no. 3 (2015); Linda J Seligmann, *Peruvian Street Lives: Culture, Power and Economy among Market Women of Cuzco* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

[3] See Karen Tranberg Hansen et al, *Street Economies, Politics, and Urban Social Movements in the Global South* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2013); Sharon Zukin et al (eds.), *Global Cities, Local Streets: Everyday Diversity from New York to Shanghai* (London: Routledge, 2016); Clifton Evers and Kristen Seale, (eds.), *Informal Urban Street Markets: International Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2014).

spaces is co-terminus with issues of privatization, gentrification, and glocalization. In the U.S., for example, street markets and covered market halls often occupy areas of cities that were decimated by white flight and maintained by racial and ethnic-minority businesses; reconciling this history of diversity with contemporary patterns of white, middle-class "return to the city" regeneration raises larger questions about the social ends served by small enterprise.[4] In addition, as the demand for high-end, cosmopolitan market halls outstrips the space in "traditional" market buildings, adaptive reuse has brought these institutions into disused warehouse districts and other sites of de-industrialization.[5] By letting the collectivism of market-style shopping replace the collectivism that had previously populated these spaces—manual and industrial labor—retail markets have uncomfortably become handmaids in the erasure of working-class histories from contemporary urban place-making. And beyond the U.S., the popularity of street markets and market halls focus this question of which classes, which neighborhoods, and which communities benefit when "authenticity" and "atmosphere" become dissociated from the vendors and their commodities to serve place-branding and global tourism networks.[6]

As a de-industrializing nation with a growing reliance on service and tourism, Britain is caught up in these global urban regeneration trends. Much of the scholarship and press attention

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[4] Mike Davis, "Fortress LA" in *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 2006); Brian Doucet and Edske Smit, "Building an urban 'renaissance': fragmented services and the production of inequality in Greater Downtown Detroit," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 31, no. 4 (2016), 635-657; Jill R. Schuler et al, "Neighborhood Gentrification: A Discriminant Analysis of a Historic District in Cleveland, Ohio" *Urban Geography* 13, no. 1 (1992), 49-67.

[5] Dan Immergluck, "Large-scale redevelopment initiatives, housing values, and gentrification. The case of the Atlanta Beltline" *Urban Studies* 46 (2009), 1725-1747; Kevin Ward, "'Creating a Personality for Downtown': Business Improvement Districts in Milwaukee" *Urban Geography* 28, no. 8 (2007): 781-808.

[6] Monica Gilli and Sonia Ferrari, "Tourism in multi-ethnic districts: the case of Porta Palazzo market in Torino" *Leisure Studies* 37, no. 2 (2018), 146-157; JM Garcia-Fuentes et al, "Reinventing Edible Identities: Catalan Cuisine and Barcelona's Market Halls" in *Edible Identities: Exploring Food as Cultural Heritage* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2014): 159-174; Maša Mikola, "On Being and Becoming in Melbourne's Marketplaces," in Evers and Seale (eds.), *Informal Urban Street Markets*; Ayaka Kikuchi and Chris Ryan, "Street markets as tourist attractions – Victoria Market, Auckland, New Zealand" *International Journal of Tourism Research* 9, no. 4 (2007): 297-300; MY Wu et al, "Shopping experiences: international tourists in Beijing's silk market" *Tourism Management* 41 (2014): 96-106.

in this field has focused on London, where the growth of the City as a global financial hub and soaring land costs has put pressure on "underdeveloped" areas of the city. As this dissertation has argued, occasional and informal retail markets are often hallmark features of "underdeveloped" urban areas, and London is no exception: street markets in Shepherd's Bush, Berwick Street, and Chrisp Street have all been targeted in the past two years for major mixed-used property development projects.[7] Campaigns to save the Elephant and Castle stallholders and the Latin Village market in Seven Sisters have been largely led by London's Latinx migrants, with the United Nations stepping in to warn that the latter proposal would have a deleterious impact on the dynamic cultural life of the diverse people in the area."[8] As the profile of London's cosmopolitan "food hall" markets like Borough and Spitalfields continues to rise, the future for the city's "traditional markets"[9] hangs in the balance: with negligible built heritage to recommend their preservation, the defense of markets in London's migrant and socially mixed peripheral neighborhoods must make the case that London's multiculturalism is a structure of feeling for living, not for monetizing. One of the key premises of this dissertation, however, is that we cannot explore the histories of Britain's retail-led regeneration by looking exclusively at London or taking London as a norm. As a truly "global" capital city, this twentieth-century

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[7] Sara Gonzalez, *Contested Markets, Contested Cities* (London: Routledge, 2018); Susanna Rustin, "Soho's last stand? Inside the battle to keep Berwick Street market independent," *The Guardian,* 25 July 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/jul/25/saving-soho-battle-keep-berwick-street-market-independent (accessed 23 March 2018); Oli Mould, "Gutsy, organized Londoners have learned to stop gentrification in its tracks – here's how, " *The Conversation,* 1 March 2018 https://theconversation.com/gutsy-organised-londoners-have-learned-to-stop-gentrification-in-its-tracks-heres-how-92147 (accessed 23 March 2018).

[8] "London market closure plan threatens 'dynamic cultural centre' – UN rights experts," 27 July 2017 http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21911&LangID=E (accessed 23 March 2018).

[9] Geographers Sara Gonzalez and Paul Waley define "traditional markets" as those indoor and outdoor markets selling food, household goods, and clothing and targeted towards low-income citizens who rely on their affordability, rather than their "authenticity." Sarah Gonzalez and Paul Waley, "Traditional Retail Markets: The New Gentrification Frontier?" *Antipode* 45, no. 4 (2013), 965.

metropolis had different types of assets, social movements, and histories with which to recast its commercial identity.

In the context of neoliberal austerity, cash-strapped local councils *outside* of London—often still the owners of markets charters and the public bodies tasked with their running—must find new ways of making these commercial ventures pay maximum dividends. This often means outsourcing the task of operating markets to European bodies: in 2008-2009, the Communities and Local Government Committee recommended that local authorities pursue more long-term contracts with private operators like the French group Geraud, a tactic that has already been taken up by Liverpool and Hulme in England and Cwmbran in Wales, among others.[10] The fiscal sense of privately operated markets, a movement I argue started with an earlier crisis in local government finances in the early 1970s, has only accelerated as the central state has squeezed local government funds.

Unlike the street markets of London, the often-architecturally-significant Victorian market halls in the towns and cities of the Midlands, the Northwest, Yorkshire, and the Northeast give councils and developers an architectural shell in which to rebrand the "character" and "value" of their urban cores. In Altrincham, for example, gourmet place-making entrepreneurs Nick Johnson and Jenny Thompson now run the Manchester-area town's listed nineteenth-century market as a gourmet food hall. The "foodie-fication" of central town space has caused controversy in nearby Stockport, where a Liberal Democrat council has proposed to relocate market traders from the 1861 hall in order to develop a similar gourmet destination. Independent stallholders selling cheap goods raise that specter of "obsolescence and unprofitability" that Phil Hubbard has deemed a central fear of retail-led regenerators; these developers and investors seek

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[10] Communities and Local Government Committee, "Market Failure?: Can the traditional market survive? Ninth Report of Session 2008-2009," (London: HMSO, 2009), 39.

to vacate messy, human uses of high streets and markets in order to fetishize their architectural "distinctiveness" for new consumers.[11]

The experience of markets in Altrincham and Stockport are part of a contemporary history that began with the themes explored in Part Three of this dissertation: from Thatcherism to New Labour, Westminster's approach to urban regeneration has increasingly moved away from coordinated public investment to smaller private-public partnerships. As enterprise culture infiltrates the logics of services and government spending, big business becomes an active player in the decision-making around retail revitalization.[12] Although the coalition government's Localism Act of 2011, in particular the introduction of "Assets of Community Value," has engaged community groups in this process of planning and preservation decision-making, there are still multiple ways in which "the market" determines the stakeholders and direction of revitalization. The coalition government's "City Deals" program, the National Lottery's Great Places Scheme and Coastal Communities Fund, and Historic England's Heritage Action Zones all encourage "bidding," "deal-pitching," and "unlocking economic potential" as key tactics and goals for local government policy. As Peter O'Brien, Andy Pike, and Jane Willis have argued, this form of transactionalism that depends on organized and savvy local actors often reaffirms existing socio-economic and political disparities in power across the United Kingdom.[13] These funding streams have already led to new directions for markets in Cardigan, Coventry, Gravesend, Hull, and Scarborough, initiatives that focus on making these spaces multi-use and preparing the local community for economic resiliency. The trickle-down effects for stallholders

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[11] Phil Hubbard, *The Battle for the High Street: Retail Gentrification, Class and Disgust* (London: Palgrave, 2017), 63.
[12] Ian Cook, "Private sector involvement in urban governance: The case of Business Improvement Districts and Town Centre Management partnerships in England," *Geoforum* 40 (2009): 930-940.
[13] Peter O'Brien and Andy Pike, "City Deals, Decentralisation and the Governance of Local Infrastructure Funding and Financing in the UK," *National Institute Economic Review,* 233 (2015); Jane Willis, "Emerging geographies of English localism: The case of neighbourhood planning," *Political Geography* 53 (2016): 43-53.

and the impact on systems of governance and perceived purpose, however, are still to be felt in these struggling corners of provincial Britain.

As local markets are caught up in the competitive field of national (and supra-national[14]) branding and bidding, there are a few examples where these institutions are playing central roles in oppositional economic localism. Since its Turner Prize win in 2015, the Granby Four Streets Community Land Trust in Toxteth, Liverpool, has become a beacon of collective land ownership as a method of solving the British housing crisis in a humane, sustainable, and aesthetically beautiful manner.[15] The Granby Four Streets projects has argued that regenerating is not limited to housing: the popular Granby Four Street Market at the heart of the community echoes the ideas of the "domestic commons" in corresponding "retail commons" space, largely sustained by the women and ethnic-minority residents who have taken the lead in revitalizing Toxteth.

A similar story is playing out in nearby Preston, forty miles north of Liverpool. In what Aditya Chakrabortty has called an act of "guerilla localism" and what Jeremy Corbyn has deemed "inspiring innovation," Preston Labour-Cooperative councilor Matthew Brown has spearheaded a plan to keep local public services truly "local."[16] This initiative involves lobbying local housing associations, schools, universities, and other public-private institutions to privilege local Preston firms to fulfill their contracts. One of the feature projects of the "Preston Model" is

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[14] Gravesend Market has topped up its market redevelopment funding with a grant from the European Union. This grant is part of the ongoing "Growth of the Visitor Economy through TRADitional Markets and Employment Skills [GoTrade], which joins markets in southeast England the northwest France in an effort to "rebrand traditional shopping spaces in an age of online shopping and cheaper foreign alternatives." https://interreg5a-fce.eu/en/projects/approved-projects/view/13/

[15] Matthew Thompson, "Between Boundaries: From Commoning and Guerrilla Gardening to Community Land Trust Development in Liverpool," *Antipode* 47, no. 4 (2015): 1021-1042. The history of the community land movement in late modern Britain is under-studied, but Peter Weiler, "Labour and the Land: The Making of the Community Land Act, 1976," *Contemporary British History* 27, no. 4 (2013): 389-420 has made an important intervention in its left-leaning recent past.

[16] Aditya Chakrabortty, "In 2011 Preston hit rock bottom. Then it took back control," *The Guardian,* 31 January 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/31/preston-hit-rock-bottom-took-back-control (accessed 23 March 2018).

the Victorian market hall, a canopied indoor-outdoor space that Ian Nairn once called "almost unique in England" and which has been recently refurbished by a Preston-based living-wage construction firm.[17] Markets, like the community-run version in Toxteth or the unabashedly local redeveloped version in Preston, point towards an alternative future for traditional retail outlets, a future ideologically opposed to the idea that the free market serves economic resiliency better than the power of "the public." Yet the future of this people-powered retail market is still uncertain. As this dissertation has argued, the fragility of this commercial collectivity can partially be historicized through the fractious debates about which "people" "public" markets served, and how this conversation was rooted in the changing political economy, built environment, and economic culture of twentieth-century British towns and cities.

By way of conclusion, I will return to an area introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation: The East End of Glasgow. Since the 1920s—when Jimmy Maxton celebrated the area's barrow traders as "getting back to simple forms of trading," and Margaret McIver built the Barrows Market empire as a refuge for those itinerants who could not afford to buy their own premises—the history of the East End has been synonymous with Glasgow's economic decline. The Barrows Market, in particular, became synonymous with informality and cut-price shopping, impervious to the effects of consumerist affluence and urban development projects, while serving a public who were invisible to these top-down ways of seeing.[18]

In today's Glasgow, political-economic debate has once again focused on the potential to coordinate revitalization in the East End of the city. The Calton Barras Action Plan (2012) and the Glasgow City Region City Deal (2014) have both channeled expertise and funding into the

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[17] Ian Nairn, "Townscape: Lancashire Mill Towns," *The Architectural Review* (July 1962), 48.
[18] Sarah Mass, "Cost-benefit break down: unplannable spaces in 1970s Glasgow," *Urban History* (forthcoming, 2018).

socio-economic deprivation and environmental decline of the traditional markets area of the city. Not only is the current plan meant to improve the transportation networks, green spaces, and job opportunities in the area, but it is also meant to attract a new type of commerce to the Calton area. This means ultimately altering the character and use of the market; instead of the second-hand goods and bric-a-brac that have characterized the Barrows for nearly a century, focus will turn to music and arts venues, gallery space, and shipping containers to be transformed into a "technical academy, business space and creative room."[19] As the "gig" economy in Glasgow shifts from itinerant trading to the creative industries, planners, councilors and citizen-artists largely agree that the Barrows must change accordingly.

The renewed attention on the Barrows and its wider environs as a "problem area" to be solved by the new creative and service economies once again raises the question, "Who is commercial regeneration for?" With the nearby University of Strathclyde playing a key role in "bringing enhanced entrepreneurial and educational aspects"[20] to the area and developing the Collegelands university student accommodation complex as a "new business and mixed used neighbourhood reconnecting this part of the East End to the City Centre," one could infer that this regeneration is made by and for the young people who attend university in the city. The itinerant culture of the area around the Barrows, then, is no longer defined by the stallholders who thrived in the cleared lots or demolition areas, but by the creative class of students, artists, start-ups, and tourists who flock to Glasgow as Britain's new post-industrial creative hub.

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[19] Rachel Loxton, "How a £6.3m investment is transforming the Barras," *Glasgow Evening Times,* 10 June 2015, http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13332365.How_a___6_3m_investment_is_transforming_the_Barras/ (accessed 23 March 2018).
[20] Cristian Suau, "The Barras Art and Design project: Students plan a new lease of life for a city gap site at the Barras, Glasgow" https://www.strath.ac.uk/engineering/architecture/news/anewleaseoflifeforacitygapsite/ (accessed 18 March 2018).

The most recent proposal to bring cosmopolitan, small-scale commerce back to the city has focused on the city's disused cattle and meat market, discussed in chapter one of this dissertation in the context of Glasgow Council's 1928 proposal to monetize an under-used municipal asset by maximizing its retail potential. Ninety years later, those sheds that sheltered cattle on their way from the country into the abattoir still hold that promise of adaptive multi-use: a new "Meatmarket" neighborhood. With a focus on pedestrian and cycling ways, dense tenement-style housing, and a mix of public open spaces and opportunities for private commercial enterprise, Glasgow City Council's Meatmarket Masterplan focuses on reintegrating this mixed industrial-commercial area into a sustainable residential-retail hub.

These types of plans, however, are not without their critics. There is still significant debate about how to best use the market sheds themselves, which is a brownfield area that has put off developers for over a decade. When the Masterplan was posted on the architectural magazine *Urban Realm*'s website in late 2017, the document sparked debate that echoed the struggles detailed in this dissertation. Can local authorities, planners, and developers ultimately harness the potential of public space from above, or will social habits and *habitus* ultimately shape citizens' attachments to their built environment? Who is the audience for retail-led redevelopment initiatives, and do these shoppers, sellers, and residents have a voice in the process? One commenter on *Urban Realm* hoped that the Masterplan would demolish the "piece of crap shed" and replace the site with a "modern civic square" to house an organic food market. These visions were echoed by another user who thought a roving farmers' market like the "Mercado San Miguel in Madrid" would be the perfect independent business model that Calton so desperately needed. Another commenting faction scoffed at these "twee farmer's market" ideas reminiscent of continental urbanism, reminding the idealists that the East End of Glasgow

was “not Madrid” and that those supposedly idyllic community markets were filled with tourists anyway.[21] The topic of market gentrification is still very much “live” in the debate over who owns, who matters, and who profits from British retail-led development.

As a contemporary historian, I argue that the claiming of a “right” to the urban commons is not an issue unique to Britain’s post-2008 austerity economy, nor did it emerge out of the “creative class” and the return to urban living in the early 2000s.[22] Rather, what I have deemed the “battle” for British marketplaces took place during the fifty years between the end of the First World War and the election of Margaret Thatcher. During this period of commercial realignment, urban destruction, and hopeful rebuilding, the retail market remained a core feature of emplaced civic identity. Through its methods and case studies, this dissertation has argued that this ability to “remain” was not passive, but was produced by everyday stallholders, select planners and politicians, heritage activists, and ratepayers who used the creative tension between urban “pasts” and urban “futures” to carve out space for retail markets in the everyday economic cultures of provincial Britain.

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[21] Various comments, “Glasgow fleshes out Bellgrove Meat Market masterplan,” *Urban Realm,* 15 December 2017 http://www.urbanrealm.com/news/7163/Glasgow_fleshes_out_Bellgrove_Meat_Market_masterplan.html (accessed 18 March 2018).

[22] Fran Tonkiss, “Austerity urbanism and the makeshift city,” *City* 17, no. 3 (2013): 312-324; Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class and How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

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