

## Introduction: European Markets as Makers of Cities

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Food markets as a new form of architecture and town planning were established in urban Europe in the early nineteenth century and spread over the continent thanks to the proliferation of iron and glass markets in the second half of the century, managing to become one of the most obvious expressions of municipal pride, architectural innovation, urban renovation and the new commercial structures of capitalist cities. However, in the twentieth century many of them began to decline, some of them falling under the pickaxe and surviving only in people's memory. Contrarily, many others are still standing, their old structures defying new commercial structures. Their history—in many cities still in the making—remains for the most part to be written. This book is an attempt to take a step forward in this direction.

### **A Privileged Observatory of the City**

While there is a notable consensus on markets as a force shaping European cities since mediaeval times, in contemporary cities historiographical attention has focused more on commercial structures characterised by absolute novelty: arcades, nineteenth-century department stores and twentieth-century shopping centres, structures that strictly speaking have nothing to do with food. Once the first stage in the construction of nineteenth-century markets of metal and some of concrete was over, i.e., in the first half of the twentieth century, markets were promptly associated with old-fashioned structures which sooner or later would have to disappear. Experience, however, has proven their ability to survive in a number of European cities in comparison with the surprisingly rapid cycles of growth and obsolescence of new commercial formats.

Most of the essays assembled here address a historical period that spans the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth century, the golden age of European covered markets, which, in many senses, should be seen as a 'transitional' period. From an urban point of view, these covered markets could be considered an intermediate step between the outdoor marketplace (or marketplaces), the core of pre-industrial cities, and today's pedestrian commercial areas or modern shopping centres on the outskirts of cities; in other words, a transition between a street sociability and a sociability welcomed by the interior of these structures. From an architectural point of view, the wide

nineteenth-century ‘iron umbrellas’ with their beautifully designed permanent stalls were the middle ground between the awnings and foldable tables of the ephemeral stalls in the open air or under the partial shelter of arcades, and the serialised display and purchase structures of the self-service modern supermarkets. From an economic point of view, covered markets replaced the direct exchange between producer and market buyer only to be replaced, in turn, by mediated purchases through specialised urban shops, wholesale companies, franchises or great food distribution chains.<sup>1</sup>

As we shall see, and several of these essays reveal this clearly, neither all European countries nor all cities underwent this transitional process simultaneously. Two of the hypotheses that this book hopes to confirm are that a Europe of markets emerged at different speeds and that the spreading of covered markets had diverse effects in different European spheres and was shaped by four overlapping generations. Otherwise, each country had some regions where the impact of the new buildings was greater than others, or certain cities, like London, where retail covered markets had little bearing, in spite of the huge size of the metropolis. Broadly speaking, markets first appeared in those countries that embraced modernity, the same countries where their cycle first came to a close. Be that as it may, in some European countries the period of their functioning is far from over and markets continue to be living structures that face up with dignity to the new forms of distribution that are timidly being introduced.

Speaking of markets, we must make a methodological comment, for the term encompasses many meanings. The fact is that it fictitiously unifies very different things, ranging from strictly architectural phenomena (the very building that welcomes ‘market’ activity) to the actual buying and selling of foodstuffs or the role of such activity in the more general system of urban supplies, and so on and so forth. The polysemy of the word has its advantages. As a result of its many meanings, the market offers numerous possibilities of analysis. This makes it a privileged observatory for architecture, for the city and the society of its age.

A non-exhaustive description would prove that when we speak of the introduction of covered markets in European cities we could indeed be referring to a number of different situations. Covered markets did not only entail a transformation in the traditional open-air market and a functional reorganisation of streets (traffic-wise and as regards recommendations for

1. Harold Carter, *An Introduction to Urban Historical Geography*, Arnold, London, 1983, chap. 8, p. 157-162.

new uses) but also in the field of moral values (restraining people's behaviour in markets, to avoid the havoc caused by the lack of food supplies at the end of the *ancien régime*, for instance). Food was distributed in new ways and the volume of sales in covered markets in comparison with traditional groceries, the changes in the consumer patterns of city dwellers and the connection between higher standards of living and diet, the fall in food prices and better food supplies were all factors that had a strong economic impact. Covered markets also exerted political and administrative influence, strengthening or weakening the public management of urban supplies as opposed to private administration, constituting a significant source of income in an age of chronic municipal deficit. Transformed into dominant social centres, they granted visibility to women as buyers and sellers in public space, imbuing it with new character. The new structures played a polarising role in neighbourhoods, channelling daily shopping experiences and retail sales. As regards the architectural changes they entailed, we shall discuss the new building types, their functional layout, their constructional innovations and their visual impact as public edifices. Last but not least, we shall consider their territorial impact, in other words, the selective role of cities with new markets and their links with other industrialised cities, agricultural economies and railway networks.

All these issues have been suggested to the authors of the essays compiled in this book, who have focused their attention on specific aspects among these possibilities. The chief purpose of this compilation is to present the first comparative view of a subject that, despite its obviousness, has been overlooked in most studies of contemporary urban history.

### **Traditional Markets and the Emergence of Covered Markets: France and the United Kingdom**

A key element in urban revival during the Middle Ages, markets did indeed mark the beginning and end of the economic flows that shaped cities and favoured their subsequent development. As such, they became the true heart and basis of city life, its actual potentiality.

If one feature were to define European cities since the late Middle Ages this would certainly be the privilege of being able to hold a fair or a market. In his classic thesis, Henri Pirenne attributed the revival of mediæval cities to the reappearance of the merchant class and the revitalisation of the great long-distance routes for sumptuary trade.<sup>2</sup> Today, however, it

2. Henri Pirenne, *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and the Revival of Trade* (1927). English version of *Les Villes du Moyen Âge. Essai d'histoire économique et sociale*, Maurice Lamertin, Brussels, 1927.

is thought that this process was not promoted ‘from above’, by the broad horizons of international trade, but ‘from below’, by rural produce, and that since the year 1000 the extended growth cycle of mediaeval Europe was a result of small-scale trade channelled by local markets.<sup>3</sup> The dynamics unleashed led to a rise in large-scale trade and the subsequent development of capitalism. In point of fact, mediaeval cities grew around local marketplaces, especially those selling foodstuffs. The fundamental singularity of the newly formed European society was a result of the progressive growth of trade exchange to encompass rural produce, which had not occurred to the same extent in other historic periods. This primeval generation of local markets can be traced in the actual shaping of mediaeval cities and has been established in numerous studies.<sup>4</sup> The shape of markets basically corresponded to the shape of cities and their multiple unbuilt areas—plazas, small squares, streets, crossroads and arcades.

The articulation of municipal governments began in the thirteenth century and was consolidated over the following centuries. The first issue they addressed was precisely the economic administration of cities, an area in which the regulation of markets proved essential, appointing civil servants to undertake the task.<sup>5</sup> Later on, the growth in population and in commercial activity in larger cities made it necessary for sales outlets to be diversified, according to produce, in different areas. Markets branched out into the streets and squares structuring urban life. In small towns, the marketplace and adjoining streets were suffice to contain trade, whereas the increase in commercial activity in larger cities led to the creation of specialised sales areas for specific foodstuffs. The commercial fabric was further enhanced by market activity and craftsmen’s shops that invaded public space. For five centuries, municipal governments would persistently strive to guarantee the social and political health of their communities, regulating the ethics of

3. Guy Bois, *The Transformation of the Year One Thousand. The Village of Lournand, from Antiquity to Feudalism*, Manchester University Press, 1992. English version (translated by Jean Birrell) of *La Mutation de l’an Mil. Lournand, village mâconnais, de l’Antiquité au féodalisme*, Arthème Fayard, Paris, 1989.

4. See François-Louis Ganshof, *Étude sur le développement des villes entre Loire et Rhin au Moyen Âge*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, and Éditions de la Librairie encyclopédique, Brussels, Genval, 1943. See also Michael Robert Gunter Conzen, ‘Alnwick, Northumberland: A Study in Town-Plan Analysis,’ *Institute of British Geographers Publication*, no. 27, George Philip, London, 1960; and Pierre Lavedan, *L’Urbanisme au Moyen Âge* [Town Planning in the Middle Ages], Arts et métiers graphiques, Paris, 1974.

5. New governments in towns in the Iberian Peninsula appointed commissioners following the Muslim model, which was much more advanced. The Spanish and Catalan names of the position, *almotacén* and *al-mostassaf* respectively, come from the Arabic designation *al-muthasáb*.

exchange, ensuring the provisioning of cities and the organisation of marketplaces, mediating in conflicts, controlling retailers and hoarders, keeping an eye on weights and measures and on the profits made by middlemen—in short, assuring the survival of the old mediaeval ‘fair price’ doctrine. The chain of changes that succeeded one another in Europe as from the second half of the eighteenth century had a visible effect on the shape and organisation of markets. However, the inrush of new liberalising economic criteria did not bring the regulating measures of municipal governments or the legacy of the ‘moral economy’ to an end, as is revealed by Helen Tangires in her study of the first covered markets in the United States.<sup>6</sup> The intensive renewal of market systems that characterised the nineteenth century took place on these threads of continuity. Perhaps this explains why in times of crises they are considered anachronistic residues of the past.

It would be a mistake to think that the idea of a covered market was totally foreign to pre-industrial European cities, or that all market experiences can be summed up in the category of outdoor markets in squares and streets. Architectural handbooks and nineteenth-century designs were inspired by the covered markets of mediaeval times and even by Greek and Roman cities, and referred to their urban dimension as a way of justifying the transcendence of the new models architects hoped to build, thereby ‘legitimizing’ them in the past.<sup>7</sup> Ever since the Middle Ages, certain products, usually those of greater value or those that stood a higher chance of deteriorating as a result of exposure to the elements, had been accommodated in covered open structures that were much plainer than the large guilds in the municipal buildings used as trading houses, or the stock markets trading in cloth or other manufactured products (the best examples of which are found in the large structures erected in Flemish towns). Certain sections

6. Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2003. Tangires speaks of the ‘persistence of the moral economy despite the disruptive effects of capitalist market economy in nineteenth-century America. The moral economy reflected the local government’s effort to maintain the social and political health of its community by regulating the ethics of trade in life’s necessities,’ p. 17. On the mediaeval doctrine of fair price in connection with Spanish cities, see for instance Concepción de Castro, *El pan de Madrid. El abasto de las ciudades españolas del Antiguo Régimen*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1987, p. 19-20. On markets in pre-industrial European cities, see Donatella Calabi, *The Market and the City. Square, Street and Architecture in Early Modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Hampshire, 2004. English version of *Il mercato e la città. Piazze, strade, architetture d’Europa in età moderna*, Saggi Marsilio, Venice, 1993.

7. See Esteban Castañer’s contribution to this book, *Iron Markets in Spain (1830-1930)*, and also the revision of historical *halles* in Aymar Verdier and François Cattois, ‘Halles, marchés et greniers d’abondance,’ in *Architecture civile et domestique au Moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, V. Didrou, Paris, 1855-1857, p. 167-172.

of outdoor markets included enclosed areas that had been built by the municipality as communal granaries, corn exchanges or covered pavilions for butchers and fishmongers, some of which were large solid buildings such as the meat market built in Ghent in the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> In many cases, the market and the town hall were so closely related that they couldn't be distinguished. As a result, we come across a first type of market of mixed use, rectangular in shape with arcades on the ground floor and totally open to the market square it stood in, the space where the most perishable goods such as butter, eggs and fowl were kept and where municipal employees collected payment of sales rights. The upper floor was occupied by the grand hall where council meetings were held, and by other municipal quarters. Illustrious examples of mixed-use markets are the monumental Halles in Bruges, built between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, the ground floor of which welcomed butchers, haberdashers and spice dealers, the Palazzo del Broletto in Como, and the extraordinary Palazzo della Ragione in Padua, with arcades on the ground floor that look on to the Piazza delle Erbe. More modest, the numerous market houses we find in many British market cities and which continued to be built until the mid-nineteenth century, belonged to the same basic type.

A second less sizeable but much more common model had an elongated ground plan. Easily accessible, this model included the simple colonnaded British sheds and the French *halles*, both of which were initially wooden structures covered by large sloping roofs. All these rectangular shapes adapted perfectly to the elongated squares and market streets of many mediaeval urban fabrics. The Renaissance loggias, built in the form of lightweight arcades resting on columns, were basically of the same type, as exemplified by the fishmongers designed by Vasari for the Mercato Vecchio and the Mercato Nuovo in Florence in the sixteenth century, and by fishmongers and butchers in cities of the French Midi like the Poissonnerie Neuve in Marseilles (1674). The third type of market had a cloistered layout: porticoes and arcades around a central area in the open air welcomed shops. As we discover in Renaissance treatises, this clearly Roman type (see, for instance, the markets in Timgad and Leptis Magna) was perhaps the most popular in Latin countries. The many mediaeval arcaded squares and Castilian main squares (not only conceived as markets) of the Modern Era, and others not originally

8. An interesting description of the genesis of Western markets can be found in Nikolaus Pevsner, *History of Building Types*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1976. See also Spiro Kostof, *The City Assembled. The Elements of Urban Form through History*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1992, p. 92-102.



*The Fish Market*, 1807, painting by Nicholas Condé. The new enclosed Pannier Market in Plymouth

designed as markets although subsequently adapted to this function, like the *baracconi* surrounding Turin's Piazza Carlina in the late seventeenth century, those at Les Innocents market in Paris or those in the square at Covent Garden would adapt to this formal structure.<sup>9</sup>

9. On the *baracconi* at Piazza Carlina, see 'Dai "baracconi" di Amedeo di Castelmonte all'Utopia di un grande progetto ottocentesco,' in Luisa Barosso, Maria Ida Cametti, Maurizio Lucat, Silvia

These structures, however, do not cover all types of pre-industrial markets. As Małgorzata Omilanowska has pointed out, most cities in Central, Eastern and Balkan Europe had a long tradition of contacts with the East, especially with the Ottoman Empire, that encouraged the building of bazaars and grain exchanges (*kahnes* or *funduk*) particularly in the regions forming a part of the empire. The great cities in the Russian Empire built shopping complexes in the shape of colonnaded structures, *torgovie riadi*, some of which made use of iron. These markets co-existed with those built in the late nineteenth century, so it is not by chance that we discover cities in which the Western European tradition of building pre-industrial markets and guildhalls around the Town Hall was enhanced by others derived from different geopolitical situations, thereby generating a wide range of market types in one and the same geographic area, and even in one and the same city.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the traditional open-air market became a source of great tension, particularly in Great Britain and France. As regards supply, the farming revolution and improvements in regional transport and international trade (modernised road links, newly built channels and ports) brought a greater number and variety of farm produce to urban markets. Furthermore, the demographic explosion entailed an unforeseen demand of food and many other manufactured products such as clothes, household items and other domestic objects for sale in markets. All this meant greater congestion and overcrowding in market streets and squares, lack of hygiene and increasing difficulty for buying and selling foodstuffs.

Markets, however, were the main source of social tension and George Rudé has highlighted the subsistence riots that broke out, especially in British and French market towns. It is well known that the main motive of the riots that triggered the French revolutionary movement of 1789 was

Mantovani and Luciano Re, *Mercati coperti a Torino. Progetti, realizzazioni e tecnologie ottocentesche*, Celid, Turin, 2000, p. 29-39. The three types of markets are examined in Durand's 1801 study *Parallèle*: Corbeil market, as an example of mixed-use structures, Amiens market and Brussels' Poissonerie, as model cloistered structures (besides large squares or piazzas and open-air bazaars), and Florence market and Marseilles' Poissonerie, to illustrate elongated colonnaded ground plans. See Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, 'Places modernes, Halles, Marchés, Bazars,' in *Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes*, École Polytechnique, Paris (Imprimerie de Gillé fils), 1800. Pamphlet, published by Princeton Architectural Press, ca. 1982, includes an introduction by Anthony Vidler, a translation into English by Marthe Rowen of the introduction to Jacques-Guillaume Legrand's *Essai sur l'histoire generale de l'architecture* (the essay was included in 'some copies' of the first edition), and an English translation of Durand's preface.



dearth and shortage of bread,<sup>10</sup> the consumption product that took up most of the family budget of the popular classes. Thompson considered the subsistence riots associated with farm crises, often tolerated by municipal magistrates, inextricable from the moral economy of the poor, an indirect way of avoiding dishonest practices in commerce and of reducing the price of food.<sup>11</sup> Many of the first European markets emerged after political uprisings associated with protests against the high cost of food, as Montserrat Miller reminds us in the case of Barcelona and Hannelore Paffik-Huber describes in the case of Berlin. Besides being a prime source of disagreements among the poor, urban markets were privileged spaces for pedlars, petty thefts, swearing and the occasionally 'disorderly' recreation of an uncontrollable crowd, as proven by bullfighting or cockfighting spectacles.<sup>12</sup> In the eighteenth century the space of the traditional outdoor market became the object of intense scrutiny as a result of the new enlightened perception of public space. As Schmiechen and Carls have explained in the case of Great Britain, the traditional practices of open-air markets that encouraged immorality and blasphemy, the improper use of taverns, furtive sales and non-payment of municipal sales taxes—all that which made the market into 'a place of disorder and chaos and a magnet for the worst elements in society' and an ungovernable street culture—had to be eliminated.<sup>13</sup> In the case of France, Foucault referred years ago to the notion of 'transparency', to Rousseau's dream of a social space that would be at once visible and legible in each of its parts, that would avoid dark zones, enclaves of privileges or disorder, that would avoid all obstructions to the gaze.<sup>14</sup> Markets were thus enclosed in order to free the streets and squares

10. George Rudé, *Paris and London in the 18th Century. Studies in Popular Protest*, W. Collins & Sons, London, 1970.

11. Edward Palmer Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,' *Past and Present*, no. 50 (February 1971) p. 76-136. For a quantitative assessment of social upheavals in England, see Roger Wells, 'Counting Riots in Eighteenth-Century England,' *Bulletin for the Society of the Study of Labour History*, no. 37 (1987).

12. An excellent outline of all these tensions can be found in James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1999, p. 10-16. For details of the *Bullangues* and Barcelona riots in the decade of 1830 and first years of 1840, prior to the setting up of La Boqueria and Santa Caterina market halls, see Montserrat Miller's essay in this volume.

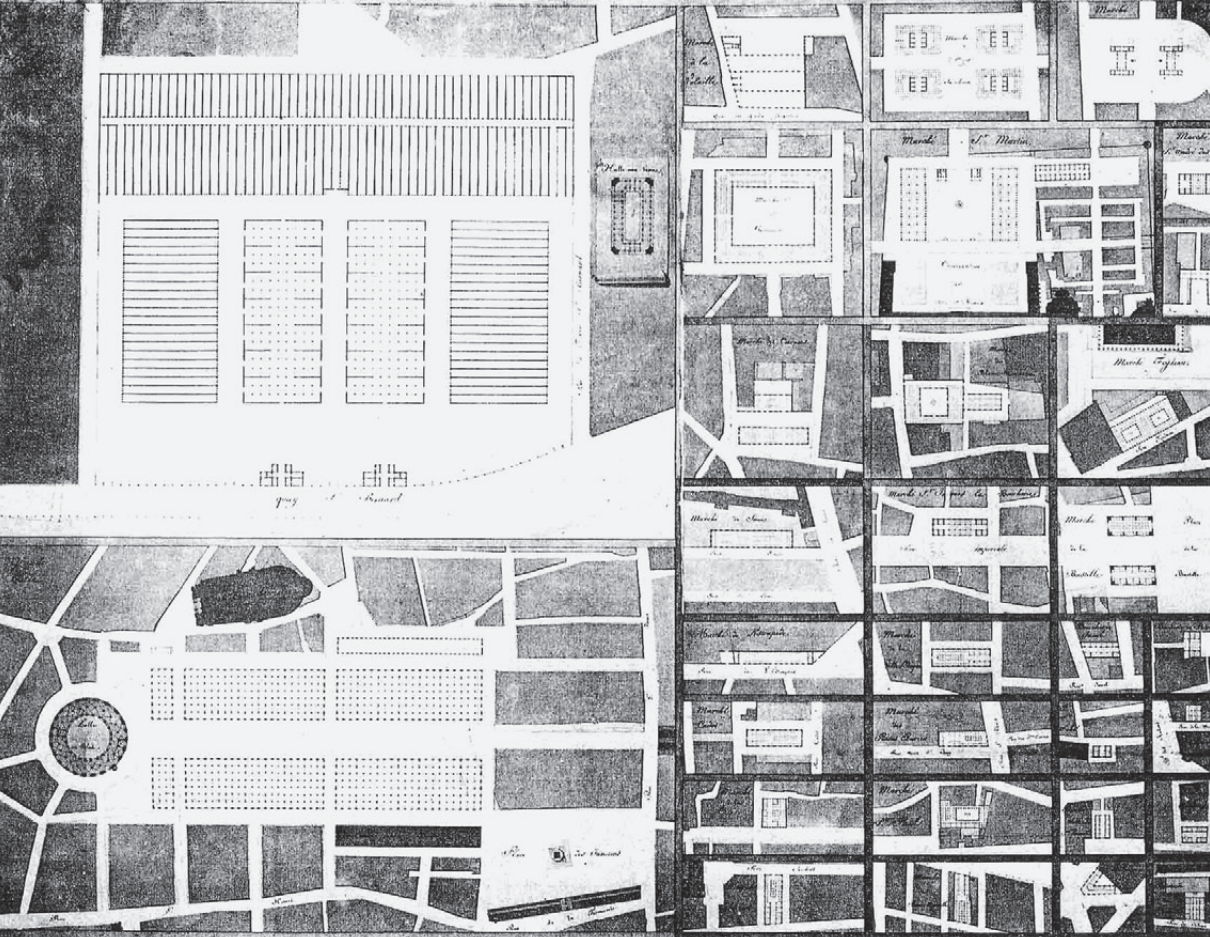
13. James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 16, 19.

14. In his analysis of eighteenth-century philosophies, Foucault speaks of networks of discourse flooded with light, of the kind cast by the French Revolution on the social space to banish the dark areas, hidden from view. In such networks, 'human beings won't even be able to behave badly, because they will feel so bathed and immersed in an absolute field of visibility in which the opinion

from the invasion of buyers and sellers, to get obstacles out of the way and out of sight, in accordance with this ideal of transparency. Inside the new covered markets stalls were neatly set out, circulation was facilitated and hygiene was guaranteed, all in the name of the openness to the gaze and to control (as in other institutions like prisons and hospitals). These ideas, the end of feudal privileges and the availability of urban soil after the triumph of the revolution paved the way for the subsequent Napoleonic reorganisation of the Parisian market system. According to the new conception of public space that gradually emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century, streets and markets had to be improved following more 'rational' and 'informed' bourgeois models of respectability and order, so as to correct disorganised behaviour, establishing more drastic divisions between public and private space and specifying street uses in much greater detail. Separating the market from the street was merely a complementary measure to the transformation of the latter into a controlled space, subject to surveillance by an enlarged police force. The new streets were numbered, lit, surfaced using the latest techniques and provided with pavements that allowed road traffic to be strictly separated from pedestrian traffic, free from pedlars.

The market separated from the street, the insularisation of the market in a plot of land that was not necessarily totally covered was the first important conceptual step towards the invention of the covered market as an architectural type. The enclosed markets built in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in the United Kingdom, and many of the Parisian markets of the same period, evince the will to secure appropriate spaces in central areas of the city that would not only allow the authorities to fence the enclosure but also differentiate between the entrance of people and carriages, and set up pavilions where the sale of various types of farm products could be classified. A significant number of these markets had to negotiate their difficult insertion in the urban fabric, so it comes as no surprise to see those built before 1820 erected on plots of land between party walls, set in the façades of urban blocks or forming arcades, as exemplified by

of others, the gaze of others, the discourse of others will prevent them from doing what is bad or injurious.' 'The Eye of Power.' Originally published in French as 'L'Oeil du Pouvoir. Entretien avec Michel Foucault,' as a preface to Jeremy Bentham, *Le Panoptique* (Pierre Belfond, Paris, 1977, p. 17 and ff.). The truth is that two issues are discussed here, the gaze and the internalisation of the gaze. In his work, Bentham proposed panopticism, according to which power would be exerted through surveillance and the dominating gaze. See Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, Miran Bozovic (ed.), Verso, London, 1995, p. 29-95.



*Collection des marchés de Paris avec projets, 1813. Louis Bruyère*

British markets of the time and many markets included in Bruyère's survey *Parallèle* in 1813.<sup>15</sup>

The covered market did not only emerge as a result of this new conception of public space but was also connected to the idea of 'facility'. The first conceptualisation of markets as facilities arose in France in connection with the appearance of a new form of 'urban knowledge', modern town planning theories and practices in the second half of the eighteenth

15. Louis Bruyère, *Collection des marchés de Paris avec projets*, École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, Manuscript, fol. 486, 127 prints.

century. Voltaire's reflections on the subject of the design competition for the Louis XV Square in 1749 anticipated some of the key arguments. The beautification of the city was supposed to imply less the aesthetic of the new constructions and more the development of a system of conveniences based on a network of abundant, safe and easy communications and on the homogeneous distribution of markets, avenues, theatres and churches.<sup>16</sup> These ideas, developed in the sphere of architecture by Laugier and Patte, were enhanced by the progressive medicalisation of urban space, the theory and practice of the administration or 'police', the new cartographic tools provided by geometric plans, the systematic alignments and the extension of the economic gaze to territory put into practice by civil engineers. All this eventually shaped a corpus of town planning theory that took off with the revolutionary break.<sup>17</sup>

In 1790 France abolished all feudal rights connected to markets, which became the exclusive responsibility of local town halls. The expropriation of assets belonging to the church and the émigré nobility gave the new markets an opportunity of occupying confiscated plots of land. The centralised organisation of the state, under the supervision of the Civil Buildings' Council, favoured the adoption of a homogeneous technique for managing and assigning land uses and a programmed method for assessing needs, for distributing and building spaces that signalled institutional and technical modernity, thereby giving rise to the so-called *city of facilities*.<sup>18</sup> Market

16. Voltaire, 'Des embellissements de Paris,' 1749, in *Les oeuvres complètes de Voltaire* 31A, 1749, I, The Voltaire Foundation, Oxford, 1992. Online: *Mélanges II* (1738-1753, Tome 23): <http://www.voltaire-integral.com/Html/23/30Embellissements.html>, accessed May 2010: 'Paris serait encore très incommode et très irrégulier quand cette place serait faite; il faut des marchés publics, des fontaines qui donnent en effet de l'eau, des carrefours réguliers, des salles de spectacle; il faut élargir les rues étroites et infectes, découvrir les monuments qu'on ne voit point, et en élever qu'on puisse voir. ... Nous rougissons, avec raison, de voir les marchés publics établis dans les rues étroites, étaler la malpropreté, répandre l'infection, et causer des désordres continuels, ... Il est temps que ceux qui sont à la tête de la plus opulente capitale de l'Europe la rendent la plus commode et la plus magnifique.' Also, in 'Des embellissements de la vill de Cachemire,' 1750: 'C'était une pitié de n'avoir aucun de ces grands bazars, c'est-à-dire de ces marchés et de ces magasins publics entourés de colonnes, et servant à la fois à l'utilité et à l'ornement.'

17. See a summary in Francisco Javier Monclús, 'Teorías arquitectónicas y discursos urbanísticos. De las operaciones de "embellecimiento" a la reforma global de la ciudad en el siglo XVIII,' *Ciudad y Territorio* (Madrid), I, 79, 1989, p. 25-40. On French town planning of this period, see Bruno Fortier, 'Espace et planification urbaine (1760-1820),' in *Prendre la ville, esquisse d'une histoire de l'urbanisme d'état*, Éditions Anthropos, Paris, 1977, and 'Storia e pianificazione urbana: gli anni 1800,' in Paolo Morachiello, Georges Teyssot, *Le macchina imperfetta. Architettura, programma, istituzioni, nel XIX secolo*, Officina Edizioni, Rome, 1980, p. 27-54.

18. This vision of facilities was studied in depth in the seventies by French architectural and planning historians under the influence of Foucault. See Michel Foucault et al. (eds.), *Les machines à guérir. Aux origines de l'hôpital moderne*, Pierre Mardaga, Liège and Brussels, 1978. [Originally published

spaces and buildings, grain exchanges and slaughterhouses were registered as facilities, alongside prefectures, hospitals, state-run schools, law establishments, prisons, police stations, playhouses, variety halls and museums understood as public services. This idea of the market as a facility is implicit in Durand's *Parallèle* of 1801 and in his *Précis de leçons d'architecture* of 1817. Where it appears more clearly, however, is in the aforementioned *Parallèle* that the civil engineer Bruyère dedicated to the markets of Paris and which embraced the small markets constrained by the needs of the urban fabric, and the free-standing structures designed by the Empire, relating each market to a specific area of influence in the city. This idea of homogeneously distributed cities of facilities appeared in the new Napoleonic 'national cities': founding a city meant providing it with a range of facilities, among which markets played a key role. The new free-standing covered markets that were erected had to be dotted around the urban landscape and assigned to specific areas,<sup>19</sup> such as those also designed by Bruyère for the newly-founded city of Comacchio in the Adriatic (1805), in Ville de Napoléon (La Roche-sur-Yon, 1804) and in Napoléonville, designed by architect Guy de Gisors (Pontivy, 1805).

### **Diffusion and Establishment: Four Generations of Markets**

As a result of the increase in exchange and communications throughout the nineteenth century, markets were gradually integrated in broader distribution networks and began to play a key role in the economy (which was only just becoming a discipline with laws of its own). The requirements of performance, efficiency and satisfaction of needs wove a web of practices, rules and laws that would influence the actual shape of the buildings. The idea of separating the market from street life was gradually imposed and the

by Institut de l'environnement, Paris, 1976]. The key essay is by Georges Teyssot, 'Città-servizi. La produzione dei "bâtiments civils" in Francia (1795-1848),' *Casabella*, 424, 1977, p. 56-65. See also Georges Teyssot, 'Heterotopia e storia degli spazi' in Georges Teyssot (ed.), *Il dispositivo Foucault*, CLUVA, Venice, 1977; 'Il sistema dei Bâtiments civils in Francia e la pianificazione di Le Mans (1795-1848)' in Paolo Morachiello and Georges Teyssot, *Le macchine imperfette. Architettura, programma, istituzioni, nel XIX secolo*, op. cit., p. 81-128. In *Les villes dans la France moderne (1740-1840)*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1988, p. 255-265, late urban historian Bernard Lepetit analysed the impact of facilities on the urban network, taking into consideration the designs examined by the Civil Buildings' Council. See also Bruno Fortier, 'Logiques de l'équipement,' *Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité*, 45, 1978, p. 79-94.

19. See Paolo Morachiello and Georges Teyssot, 'Città di stato. La colonizzazione del territorio nel primo impero,' *Lotus International*, III, 24, 1979, p. 24-39; François Laisney, 'Quartier des Halles: décadence et reconstruction dans les villes françaises: le cas de la Roche-sur-Yon,' in Gilles Bienvenue and Geraldine Texier-Rideau (eds.), *Autour de la ville de Napoléon*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, Rennes, 2006, p. 277-287.

first large, totally roofed free-standing buildings appeared. These structures adopted a functional logic that was reflected in their internal organisation: ‘the sales cell, geometrically identical for all, ... the space of circulation, that must be as consistent and operative as possible, the sales area and the general layout, that responds to the desire to classify and control.’<sup>20</sup> The idea was also to ensure public space, markets in particular, had improved hygienic conditions and higher degrees of respectability: the market thereby became a facility and a school for manners, an ideal that pervaded Europe throughout the century.<sup>21</sup>

And yet it was not propagated homogeneously in all countries or cities. In fact, even in those countries where the ideal was more widespread, such as Great Britain, a number of towns—particularly those smaller in size—were left without covered markets. The nineteenth century was the golden age of British markets. Schmiechen and Carls have documented the construction of 480 new markets between the years 1801 and 1900, 81.2 per cent of the total number examined. In comparative terms, the fifty previous years (1751-1800) only represented 11 per cent of the total number of markets (almost all of which were traditional market houses of mixed use), and the fifty following years (1901-1950) represented an even smaller proportion (7.8 per cent). The phenomenon of British markets, therefore, was almost exclusive to the nineteenth century, in particular to a period of intensive construction between 1821 and 1890, dominated by the new type of large free-standing and completely covered market: almost two thirds of the total number of such structures were erected during these seventy years, including some of the most original from a constructional point of view. So, by 1850 the United Kingdom was the first European country to welcome the new type of structure, which was soon consolidated. Although no covered retail market selling food was built in London, the city was equipped with

20. Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris. L'histoire d'un lieu, les péripéties d'une reconstruction, la succession des projets, l'architecture des monuments, l'enjeu d'une 'cité'*, L'Equerre, Paris, 1980, p. 32.

21. James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 47: ‘The emerging “enlightened” view of urban life held that the street and the open marketplace, which had long been the turf of the lower classes, ... should be reshaped according to “rational” and “educated” middle-class models of respectability, social order and civic virtue. [The new public market halls were planned as features] of everyday life which went beyond commerce into the realm of human behaviour and social values. If buying and selling were to be conducted in a respectable orderly fashion, then people needed to be educated in the appropriate virtues; it was believed that the proper spatial arrangement and visual language of the market environment would serve as instructors in such moral lessons.’ See also Victoria E. Thompson, ‘Urban Renovation, Moral Regeneration: Domesticating the Halles in Second Empire Paris,’ *French Historical Studies*, 20 (Winter 1997), p. 87-109.

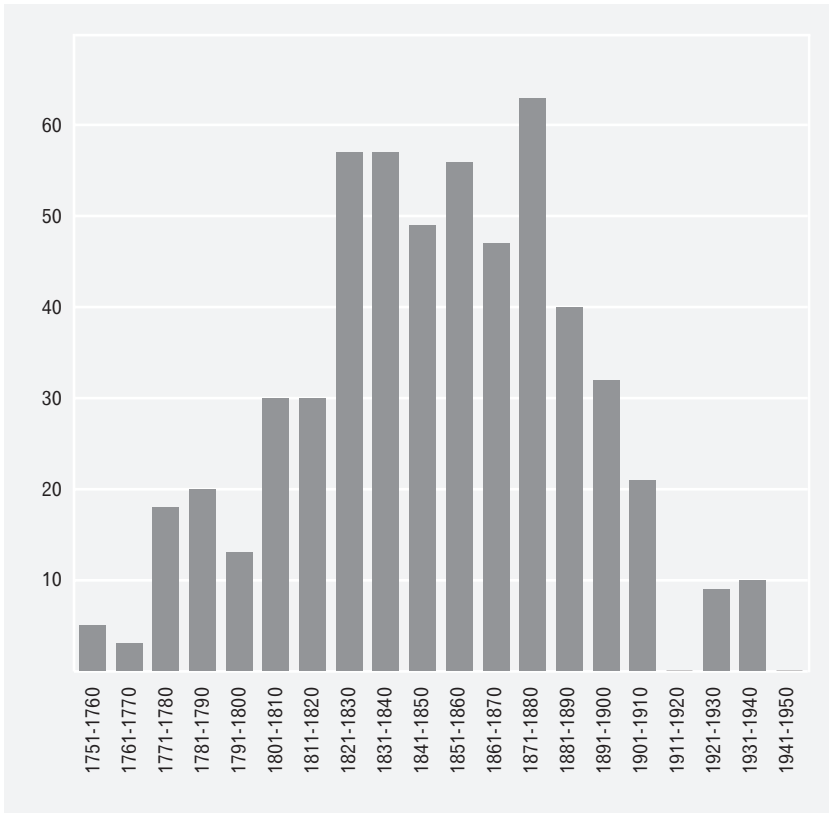


Chart of the construction of markets in Great Britain, according to James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, 1751-1950

an impressive system of wholesale markets, many of which were genuinely innovative in architectural terms, such as those designed by Charles Fowler around 1830. France was the second European reference. In the first half of the nineteenth century (1801-1851) the Civil Buildings' Council revised 253 projects for new markets, extensions and alterations to existing markets (277 if we include slaughterhouses). These projects affected 122 cities among the 309 studied by Bernard Lepetit.<sup>22</sup> As a result, 40 per cent of French cities were equipped with a first network of covered markets. However, not all of these were actually built, and those that were erected were not as impressive

22. See Georges Teyssot, 'Il sistema dei Bâtiments civils in Francia e la pianificazione di Le Mans (1795-1848)' in Paolo Morachiello, Georges Teyssot, *Le macchine imperfette. Architettura, programma, istituzioni, nel XIX secolo*, op. cit., and Bernard Lepetit, *Les villes dans la France moderne (1740-1840)*, op. cit.

or as original as British markets of the first half of the century. And yet the impression is that France comfortably regained lost ground with respect to Britain during the second half of the century. Unlike London, nineteenth-century Paris was not only the centre of reference for wholesale markets in France and many other European countries, but also for retail markets. Eight retail covered markets had been built since the mid-eighteenth century, although the idea of providing Paris with a coherent homogeneous system of such structures arose at the time of the Empire, in 1808: 'It is essential that public markets begin to provide solid shelter to stallholders, customers and purveyors in a regular fashion, that they be greater in number, larger and healthier ... and be established as far away as possible from private houses,' declared Frochot, the Prefect of the Seine.<sup>23</sup> The true driving force behind the markets of Paris, those *Louvres du peuple*, emerged in 1811, at the end of the Napoleonic Empire. Four large free-standing covered markets were built: Saint-Martin, Saint-Germain, Saint-Jean and Les Carmes, in addition to Saint-Honoré, built in 1810 during Frochot's term of office, and to the wonderful cast-iron dome of the corn market, La Halle au Blé, built between 1802 and 1811. Although a number of projects were also designed for the central markets at Les Halles, these did not materialise.<sup>24</sup> Bruyère's compilation of 1813 reveals that the ensemble of Parisian markets was conceived as a genuine system, presided over by the project for the central markets at Les Halles, very close in organisational terms to those that would eventually be built in the eighteen fifties.

Outside of France only a small number of roofed markets were erected during the first half of the nineteenth century. Under French influence, a deliberate policy for building regional markets in Savoy gave rise to a fair number of *ali*, such as the large-sized markets of Novara, Alessandria and Asti, inspired by the Neo-classical French *halles*. As Filippo De Pieri has pointed out in his survey of Italian markets, Turin, the capital of the Duchy of Savoy, was equipped with a network of covered markets and slaughterhouses in the first half of the century. Other Italian regions also built *ali*, fishmongers and fish markets in the Neo-classical tradition.<sup>25</sup>

23. 'Il faut que des marchés publics de forme régulière, plus nombreux, plus étendus, plus salubres, réunissent désormais sous des abris solides et les vendeurs et les acheteurs et les approvisionnements ... soient reportés le plus loin possible de la masse des habitacions.'

24. Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris. L'histoire d'un lieu, les péripéties d'une reconstruction, la succession des projets, l'architecture des monuments, l'enjeu d'une 'cité'*, op. cit., chap. 4, p. 42.

25. See *Le 'ali' del mercato in provincia di Cuneo*, Città di Bra, Bra, 1992, and Mariacristina Gori, 'L'architettura dei mercati in Romagna fra Settecento e primo Novecento,' *Romagna Arte e*



During the era of French rule over Lorraine, two markets were erected in the German city of Metz (1831, 1834). The influence of Parisian Neo-classical markets extended to Spain, as illustrated by the markets of La Encarnación in Seville, San Ildefonso in Madrid and Santa Caterina in Barcelona, all of which were designed at the onset of the liberal regime in the decade of 1830, although traditional markets would continue to be built for some time. Broadly speaking, we could say that during the first half of the nineteenth century very few European countries were able to follow the example of British and French markets, except perhaps for Belgium: Brussels boasted a fruit and vegetable market on Rue de la Caille, the Poissonnerie and the large Sainte Madeleine market of mixed use opened in 1848, which aroused the interest of market propaganda organs in the second half of the century. Other fish markets with metal structures resembling the one in Brussels were built in Antwerp and Ghent, and another market was erected around 1850 in Malinas.<sup>26</sup> Iron was also partially used in market halls and grain exchanges built in the German cities of Hamburg and Munich.

The great age of covered metal structures in virtually all European countries was reflected in a wide range of publications that promoted detailed knowledge of the situation in Britain and France.<sup>27</sup> Paris was unquestionably the epicentre, with her modern Halles Centrales of the eighteen fifties (not to mention the huge number of district markets that followed). We can, therefore, speak of a second generation of markets characterised by iron structures that first appeared in France but would not really take on in other large cities on the Continent until the decade of 1860. In addition to the market halls erected in the United Kingdom during this period (despite the slackening after 1880), such buildings also began to be welcomed in Latin countries and in Western Europe. No large covered market appeared in Austria until 1865, where Vienna marked the trend and where the debate on the city's markets had been sparked in the eighteen fifties. In Italy the first great iron markets were built around the same time, such as those in Turin and the first two to be erected in Milan. The inauguration of

*Storia*, 60, 2000, p. 131-154. In Padua, Japelli designed a wonderful Neo-Greek meat market, built in 1821.

26. Among the first references to Belgian markets, see H. Tellkamp, 'Reisenotizen über Markthallen in England,' in *Rombert's Zeitschrift für praktische Baukunst*, 1857, p. 214-226. See also 'Le marché aux légumes dit Baille de fer à Malines,' *Revue générale de l'architecture*, series I, 1856.

27. The most complete compilation, that includes an extensive bibliography, is found in Georg Osthoff and Eduard Schmitt, 'Markthallen und Marktplätze,' in *Handbuch der Architektur. Gebäude für die Zwecke der Landwirtschaft und der Lebensmittelversorgung*, Alfred Kröner, Leipzig, IV, 1909 (3rd edition), p. 295-429.

the original market system in Florence was slightly later, between 1869 and 1876. The year 1869 also marked the celebrations of Bucharest as capital of the new state with an early project for market halls, the Halele Centrale, designed by a French firm, and the very same year the Zurich Fleischmarkthalle was inaugurated. In Spain the idea of building metal markets began to be debated in Madrid towards the late sixties and also involved French designs. The following decade, that of 1870, witnessed the construction of markets in other large cities such as Barcelona. Esteban Castañer has documented some ninety markets erected in Spain between 1870 and 1920, although a few more were built in fact. In Germany, after the construction of the first metal markets in Hamburg and Munich, Stuttgart market was inaugurated in 1865, and in 1867 a short-lived private market opened in Berlin. Frankfurt did not open a market until 1879 and other large German cities would follow suit between the years 1885 and 1908. A total number of twenty-one cities equipped themselves with covered markets, and in his 1908 manual, Schmitt mentioned around forty. While some towns like Strasbourg, Cologne and Dresden erected two or more market halls, more often than not only one such structure was built, even in densely populated cities. The case of Berlin's complete market system was quite exceptional, in point of fact it was only a model for a small number of large Central European cities like Budapest.

Unlike the case of Belgium, most markets in large Dutch cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam were open-air structures. In the former, only the egg market was a covered building, and in the latter only the cattle and fish markets were roofed.<sup>28</sup> The first Scandinavian markets were the one at the port of Bergen and the Fiskehallen in Gothenburg, both built in the mid-eighteen seventies, but the majority, including Östermalm market in Stockholm and the one at the quay of Helsinki, did not open until the end of the following decade and therefore could well be included in the next generation of such buildings. The same goes for the markets in Prague (the first of which was dated 1893) and for the other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. A parallel process took place in the Russian Empire and in Balkan Europe: commercial structures of oriental tradition were preserved and renovated alongside the metal covered markets imported from Western Europe. The city of St Petersburg, for instance, which had always looked to the West, began to erect her first metal markets as early as 1863, and the

28. Department of Commerce and Labor, *Municipal Markets and Slaughterhouses in Europe*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1910, p. 49-53.

Nikiforov opened in Moscow in 1877, although the large *torgovie riadi* built en masse throughout the nineteenth century became the prevalent model in the capital and in other large Russian cities such as Odessa. Broadly speaking, outside the British Isles and Latin Europe, between 1850 and 1900 only capital cities, large commercial towns and a few regional capitals inaugurated markets, most of which were metal constructions. The establishment of an urban network of covered markets, i.e., the coordination between a central market and district markets spread over the city, was restricted almost exclusively to large towns in France, Italy and Spain, and to very specific cases in other European cities such as Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Bucharest and Budapest. To be precise, however, by the year 1900 few of these cities could boast a complete and finished market system like those of Paris and Berlin, and were still equipped with unfinished structures located in relatively central spots that had previously been the site of open-air markets.

When the building of markets declined considerably in pioneering countries, particularly in Great Britain, it began to take off in other peripheral European cities. Indeed, we could speak of a third generation of markets emerging around the turn of the century, once the first market network of Budapest had been completed in 1897. Between then and the onset of the Second World War, a number of cities hitherto foreign to covered markets, chiefly in Central, Eastern and Baltic-Scandinavian countries, began to welcome the new structures. During this period, metal markets spread to several medium-sized and even small towns in Latin countries, and a number of the markets belonging to the original market systems in aforementioned cities were completed. The markets in this generation, particularly those built during the years between the two world wars, were characterised by the use of reinforced concrete, as best illustrated by central markets. Many of these new designs can be found in Germany and Latin countries.

The information that Omilanowska presents in this book on the countries in the former Communist bloc reveals the vitality of roofed markets in large European cities on the outer European periphery, in Eastern and Central Eastern Europe up until World War Two. Budapest completed her late market plan with the building of one central market and five district markets in 1897, but many other cities in Central and Eastern Europe and in Scandinavia continued to build market halls after having begun one such construction in the late nineteenth century. Three markets had been erected in Prague by 1908, and four had been built in Helsinki shortly before the onset of the World War One. During the same period, three district markets

and one central market had been constructed in Warsaw, and Gdansk also completed a number. Several Polish cities under German influence such as Breslau (Wrocław) erected a couple of covered markets, and many other towns inaugurated their first market halls during the same years: Vilnius (that followed the Warsaw model), Riga (that built a huge central market in the nineteen twenties), Katowice, Chorzów, Kiev, Odessa, Sofía, Ploiesti, Ljubljana and also Turku, Tampere and Oulu in Scandinavian Europe.<sup>29</sup> As a result of the market-building process extending to countries hitherto foreign to the phenomenon, and of the ongoing construction of district markets since the mid-nineteenth century in Western European countries, by the onset of World War Two at least a score of large cities in Continental Europe had relatively structured market systems. Many towns in Latin Europe, both large and middle-sized, continued to construct and inaugurate new markets during the first half of the twentieth century.

Finally, we could speak of a fourth generation of markets that appeared at the same time as many others in key countries such as the United Kingdom, France and Germany, but also in the economically booming Scandinavian states, were neglected. Numerous fourth-generation markets developed in the countries where the introduction of modern food chains and supermarkets had been delayed. The market system in the European periphery, above all in Eastern Europe and certain Mediterranean countries, was eventually completed and new market halls set up in newly developed urban areas, abandoning once and for all iron and glass structures. Many cities under the Communist sphere of influence erected small covered structures in new housing estates, as in the case of Hungary. In Spain, new markets were also built in large cities and small provincial towns.

### **Territorial Impact**

The territorial logic of the diffusion of markets has been studied in some countries, although we would need to become familiar with more cases in order to draw solid conclusions. Only Scotland and the east of England were excluded from the areas in the United Kingdom that introduced covered markets. Those that were most influenced by the phenomenon were no doubt the industrial cities in the north and the West Country, areas of great urban and industrial growth that generated a huge demand for food for the working classes and with an intensive agricultural and livestock output

29. See the essay by Malgorzata Omilanowska in Allan Siegel and Gabriella Uhl (eds.), *Vásáracsarnok-Market Hall*, Ernst Múzeum, Budapest, 2005.

based on meat, dairy products and vegetables. Bernard Lepetit has carried out a detailed analysis of France in the early nineteenth century with a logic that values the *chef-lieu* of the territorial administrative structure imposed by the French Revolution, whether they be department or district capitals. The map of Spain, with her most industrialised cities and regions—Catalonia, the Basque Country and Asturias—and her intensive farming areas—Valencia and Murcia—resembled that of Britain. The construction of the railway network became a driving force that brought new horizons to small market towns, hitherto confined to local or regional supply areas. At this regional level, the railway played quite a selective role in Britain, as the number of small markets with a short range of influence that dated back to the pre-industrial age was considerably reduced, while a few others saw how their area of food supply was hugely increased when they became important railway junctions.<sup>30</sup>

The compilation of case studies in this book also enables us to confirm the importance of state capitals when it came to setting out on the construction of covered markets and introducing innovative structures. Leaving to one side the atypical case of Britain, in practically all European countries the building of covered markets began in the capitals: such was the situation in Spain, in the first capital cities in unified Italy after 1861, in Belgium, Austria, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Finland, Sweden, Russia and Holland. Among the continental countries we have been able to examine in the preparation of this book, only Germany (besides Norway and the Swiss Confederation) was an exception, albeit a relative exception, for after the failed experience of a private company the Berlin administration itself decided to undertake the construction of covered markets and developed a system that couldn't be compared to that of any other German city. As Filippo de Pieri has revealed, many of the impulses or constraints of the Italian case were related to the change of capitals in the cities of Turin, Florence and Rome that followed the process of Unification. The significant weight of Bucharest and Budapest in the history of the markets in their respective countries cannot be understood without bearing in mind the function of the new capitals. Another impression we get after consulting sources of the period and the studies compiled here is that outside of pioneering countries like France and the United Kingdom, and of some in southern Europe (singularly Spain), covered markets were built in towns

30. James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 158-159, 163-166.

of substantial size, large cities or those with minimum critical masses. As pointed out by Omilanowska, while it is true that there are numerous examples of medium-sized and small provincial cities that built market halls in Central, Eastern-Scandinavian and Balkan Europe, more often than not these were the exception rather than the rule.

While we are lacking comprehensive details to determine the intra-urban spreading of different markets in the age of metal construction, it seems safe to say that two very different models introduced markets into European cities. Totally advanced in Britain on account of their early appearance and dimensions they were not, however, conceived as neighbourhood or district facilities, i.e., they were not spread homogeneously around cities. After a first stage at approximately the turn of the century, when attempts were made at decentralisation and market halls were erected in new growth areas in large cities, the centrality of the main market was once again reinforced and new built structures were also erected in central areas, usually very close to the main market. According to Schmiechen and Carls, the only exception to this monocentric 'British model' was the city of Hull.<sup>31</sup> A few large continental cities, however, adopted the city-as-facility model, i.e., the Parisian model of a central market and neighbourhood or district markets. By 1850 this distinction could be observed in the United Kingdom and in France (1.76 markets per city in the UK and 2.07 per city in France), and would become even more marked when the Parisian model spread to other large cities, where it was considered an implicit reference for choosing the location of new smaller metallic markets that would supply the new growth areas. Many large regional French capitals built more than one iron market, as did large Spanish cities like Barcelona and Madrid, and more modestly, Valencia, Oviedo, San Sebastian and Valladolid. In the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, the cases of Vienna and Budapest, despite being quite exceptional in their national contexts, are highly illustrative of this multinuclear model. Such was the case of Bucharest, that erected six markets in the city based on the polycentric population and outdoor market structure of the pre-industrial city.<sup>32</sup> This was also the case of St Petersburg and, later on and more essentially, of Warsaw, Helsinki, Dresden, Prague and Gdańsk. The best example of the application of this 'continental model' (that could not be generalised to all

31. *Ibid.*, p. 22, 28 and 92.

32. We would like to thank Andrei Russo, whose short academic work 'The Evolution of the Market System in the City of Bucharest' has proved very useful.

continental contexts, only to a few large cities, especially in the Latin area) was no doubt Berlin, whose market system was late in comparison with other European capitals but very powerful in its standing as a coordinated group of district markets under the direction of one central market, isotropically distributed throughout the city (the markets were named according to the number of the district they served).

This logic of the homogeneous distribution of market halls in many large continental cities in Latin countries, and a few in Central European towns, was implicit in their designs for urban extension as early as 1850. In Barcelona it was reflected in the rules of the competition announced to enlarge the city in 1859 (markets ‘in proportion to the population that will occupy each of the areas into which the city will naturally be divided up’) and very clearly in the design submitted by Ildefons Cerdà, whose enlargement proposed a uniform distribution of a total of eleven markets presided over by El Born central market. It can also be traced in Alessandro Antonelli’s projected enlargement of Turin of 1852<sup>33</sup> and in Giuseppe Poggi’s 1865 plan for the city of Florence. The model had appeared much earlier in American cities. In the eighteen thirties New York, which had just over 200,000 inhabitants, boasted thirteen covered markets spread around the city.<sup>34</sup>

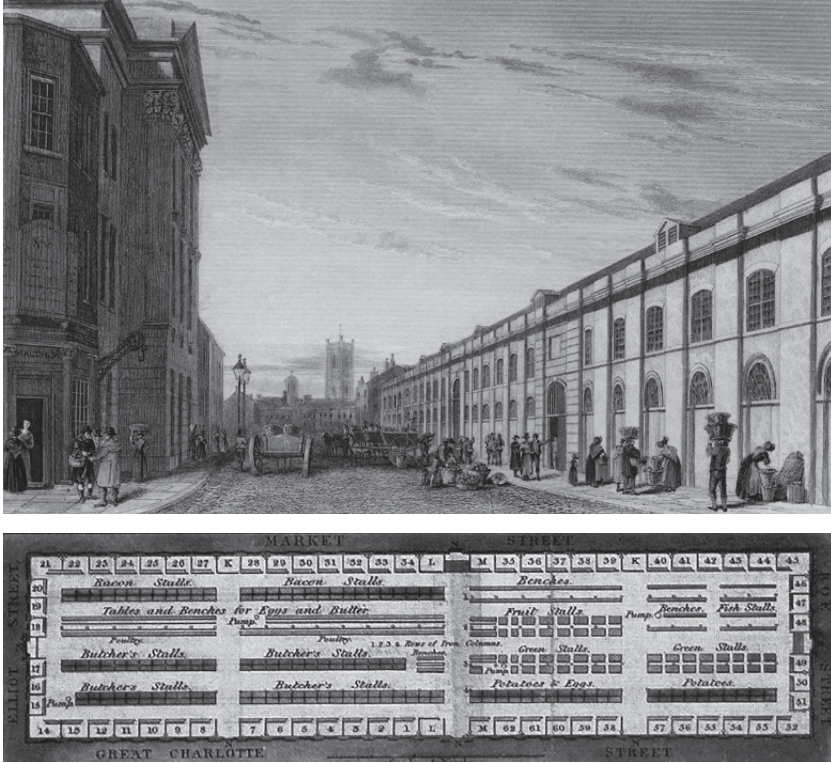
### **Architectural Types:**

#### **From Neo-classical Market Halls to the Baltard Model**

The transitional period during which the first markets were built as independent structures was characterised by a great typological diversity. Those built after 1750 repeated formal types established from time immemorial, such as cloistered constructions, those of mixed use and sheds, but they also adopted a few original models such as arcades or circular forms. The dominant form in the United Kingdom up until the nineteenth century was the traditional market house of mixed use. Without forsaking this type, after 1800 the pioneering enclosed market prevailed. With the exception of certain circular free-standing market halls indebted to the butter cross markets that were not too widespread and basically served the purpose of small specialised markets (fish markets and butter markets), the models

33. See Manuel Guàrdia and José Luis Oyón, ‘La formació del modern sistema de mercats de Barcelona,’ *Quaderns del Seminari d’Història de Barcelona*, 20, Barcelona, 2008, p. 9-10; Luciano Re, ‘Il Louvre del popolo,’ in Luisa Barosso, Maria Ida Cametti, Maurizio Lucat, Silvia Mantovani and Luciano Re, *Mercati coperti a Torino. Progetti, realizzazioni e tecnologie ottocentesche*, op. cit., p. 15-39.

34. Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, op. cit., p. 93.



Exterior view and ground plan of St John's Market in Liverpool, 1822

most frequently adopted were the cloister or *loggia*, a type that was not too common before then in England (Plymouth, Ipswich, Chichester and Stamford), and the 'arcade', built in communal areas inside blocks (Bristol and Cheltenham). The influence of British markets in the United States was indisputable between 1750 and 1820. As a result of their location in communal space, in the middle of long, wide and straight streets, long sheds that were open and extendable would be very popular as from the second half of the eighteenth century (the most famous one being the Philadelphia High Street Market built in 1785). Long markets of mixed use with council offices on the ground floor were less common, although their size and urban personality surpassed all those hitherto built in the former British colonies (Faneuil Hall marketplace, Boston, 1823-1826).<sup>35</sup>

35. Reproduced by Helen Tangires in *Public Markets*, W. W. Norton & Company/Library of Congress, New York, 2008, p. 20.





Interior view of St John's Market in Liverpool, 1822

Despite the fact that there were many examples of *halles* and markets with circular ground plans, as was the case in the United Kingdom, the large Neo-classical markets built in France between 1800 and 1850 preferred the cloistered type of semi-open *loggia* or open-air arcades around a large square or rectangular court that was partially closed on one of its sides. Paris set the trend with her Saint-Germain market designed by Blondel (120 x 148 metres), a model characterised by having a single perimetral nave and a double roof with a clerestory designed to provide increased ventilation. This simple layout spread to many French cities during the first half of the century. The model would be repeated with slight variations in the few Italian and Spanish market halls erected at this time, such as the one in Novara or Barcelona's Santa Caterina market. As early as 1813 Bruyère, the civil engineer responsible for public works in Paris, had presented the Minister for the Interior with the global plan for the city's markets which we have previously mentioned, comprising 127 drawings of markets, among them his Grande Halle design, *Collection des marchés de Paris avec projet*. In 1823 he dedicated the fourth volume of his Parisian publication *Recueil* to the specific subject of markets.

The age of large market halls and the extension of metal structures, initially just to pillars and then to pillars and roofs, meant the establishment of a new architectural type that was first developed in Great Britain. As from 1820, large market buildings would be designed as totally covered closed

structures in the form of semi-detached elongated naves, while smaller markets had single naves. The large parallelogram (usually a large rectangle in a basilican plan with several naves and lit from a clerestory) was not new in Europe, but the sheer size of the buildings, the fact that they were completely closed to the outside, their height and the lightness and transparency achieved thanks to the use of iron and glass entailed a genuine typological reinvention of markets. The first monumental example of the new type was St John's market, built in Liverpool in 1822. The building, with a rectangular plan, measured 167 x 40 metres and had five naves, 116 cast-iron pillars and wooden trusses. The introduction of iron in the pillars preceded the use of this material by Charles Fowler in London's Covent Garden wholesale market (1828-1830). The iron structure Fowler designed for the famous Hungerford market in 1835<sup>36</sup> would not become standard in retail markets in other British cities until ten years later when it first appeared at Birkenhead market, designed by the civil engineers Fox and Henderson, which was the largest metal structure in the world. A significant feature characterising British markets (and many American markets erected in the second half of the nineteenth century) was the complete dissociation between the buildings' interior metal structures and their façades. Unlike French markets, these structures were seldom apparent in the exterior elevations (beyond the cases of Shudehill in Manchester, Kirkgate in Leeds and the two markets in Bradford, that bore a greater resemblance to the French markets inspired by Les Halles in Paris). In order to conceal the structures, the façades became monumental—huge frameworks with their own styles, initially Neo-classical and then increasingly eclectic. They often included towers or projecting bodies on elevations, such as domes, turrets, pilasters, arcades and pediments that diverged completely from the architectural style of the interiors. In the seventies, the inclusion of more outlets that looked onto the street made façades even more prominent, and the increase in number of floors and in height gradually granted the new markets the monumental appearance of department stores. Such markedly urban traits revealed their singularity as public buildings that could just as well have been town halls or museums, an image that was substantially different to that of mass-produced industrial premises expressed by many markets on the Continent.

The construction of Les Halles by Baltard and Callet in the early days of the Second Empire entailed a radical change in the architecture of

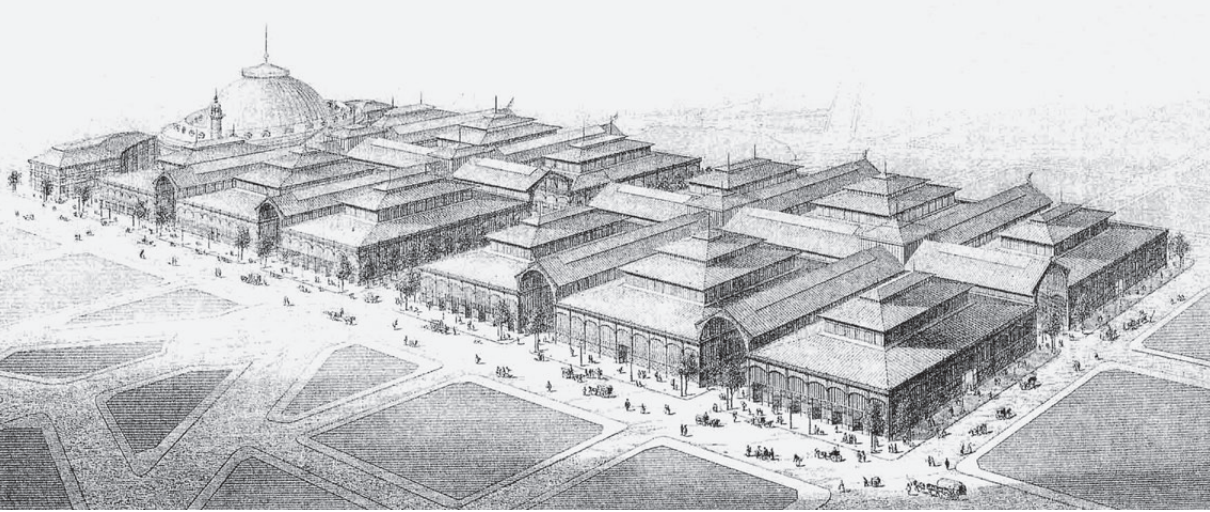
36. Gavin Stamp, 'The Hungerford Market,' *AA-Files*, 11, 1986, p. 58-70.

European markets, becoming the other indisputable referent. Baltard, who was appointed architect of the new *halles* in 1843, presented his first design for nine pavilions in 1845. The ‘British’ idea of an impressive classical outer framework that concealed a bold interior structure made entirely out of glass and iron was clear to see in the first pavilion that opened in 1853. The huge debate surrounding the building’s solid, leaden appearance (which won it the nickname of *le fort de la Halle*) swung public opinion towards architectural solutions that favoured lightness and transparency, in short, the much more lightweight Crystal Palace buildings, inaugurated two years before, and the iron and glass railway stations built in Paris at the time.<sup>37</sup> Once the first pavilion had been knocked down, the new design, which had once and for all been altered following these guidelines in 1854, was an immediate success. Each of the ten cubic pavilions of metal and glass boasted a large central area that organised the space. The glass face and the light ceramic finish of the façades revealed the rhythm of the structure’s metal pillars and became a model of constructive simplicity and elegance that lent itself to mass diffusion on account of its industrialised nature. In Paris alone, thirty-two metal market halls were erected, and a few hundred others were built in the main French provincial cities. The model was also exported, and French technicians and metal building contractors erected markets in Bucharest, Madrid, Recife, El Callao and São Paulo. The *Monographie des Halles Centrales*, published in 1863 and reprinted with a supplement ten years later, contributed greatly to the undeniable spreading of the model.<sup>38</sup> The indiscriminate repetition of such iron and glass pavilions was savagely criticised by many French architects. Viollet-le-Duc, who was committed to bolder projects, considered that market architecture should seek inspiration outside of France, in projects such as Hector Horeau’s design for La Cebada market in Madrid: ‘In France we are condemned to seeing the same market, time and again.’<sup>39</sup> Guadet felt that the imitation of Baltard’s

37. It is well known that, according to Haussmann, the opinion of Napoleon III was decisive: ‘L’Empereur, enchanté de la gare de l’Est, ... concevait les halles centrales construites d’après ce type de hall couvert, qui abrite le départ et l’arrivée des trains. “Ce sont de vastes parapluies qu’il me faut; rien de plus!”, me dit-il un jour.’ Quoted in Bertrand Lemoine, *L’architecture du fer. France XIXe siècle*, Champ Vallon, Seyssel, 1986, p. 166.

38. See Victor Baltard and Félix Callet, *Monographie des Halles de Paris*, A. Morel, Paris, 1863, and Victor Baltard, *Complément à la monographie des Halles centrales de Paris, comprenant un parallèle entre divers édifices du même ordre*, Ducher, Paris, in folio, 3 pl., 1873.

39. ‘En France nous sommes condamnés à voir toujours le même marché,’ E. V., ‘Projet de marché. Place Cebada, a Madrid,’ *Gazette des architectes et du bâtiment*, 15, 1868-1869. The initials could possibly be those of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, one of the two editors of the journal. Horeau had already contributed highly innovative designs to the proposal for Les Halles.



Les Halles Centrales, Paris, 1863

architecture was nothing but a persistent repetition of the same type: ‘Unfortunately, if you’ve seen one you’ve seen them all! ... As if a market in Lille could be identical to one in Marseilles.’<sup>40</sup> Not all provincial French markets, however, were of the same construction type. The model that was more often repeated, according to Lemoine, was the one inspired by the cubic shape of Baltard’s pavilions and the one made up of several pavilions of the same type connected by covered streets (such as Troyes). Others had a central ground plan (Sens) or else one in the shape of a parallelogram with end blocks that revealed the nave sections (Belfort).<sup>41</sup>

The market type inspired by Baltard’s pavilions for Les Halles soon spread throughout the Continent. By the middle of 1850 the new building types so successfully introduced in Les Halles were well established alongside British models. The excellent bibliography compiled in the 1891 monograph by Osthoff and Schmitt that spans the whole of the century reveals the growing importance of the French model as from the eighteen fifties. If we turn to the articles published in technical journals we see that the markets built in French cities enjoy a greater number of references, and

40. ‘Hélas, qui en a vu un les a tous vu! ... Comme si un marché pouvait être identique sous les latitudes de Lille et Marseille,’ Julien Guadet, *Éléments et théorie de l’architecture*, Librairie de la construction moderne, Paris, III, 1894, p. 29.

41. Bertrand Lemoine, *L’architecture du fer. France XIXe siècle*, op. cit., p. 168.

Les Halles is certainly the most prominent of them all, followed closely by British markets.

Despite arriving somewhat late, the French model was highly successful in Latin countries. By the decade of 1860 the influence that Parisian markets would have in Spain was obvious. As Castañer recalls, after the 1868 revolution Spain's preference for metal markets with exposed structures was consolidated by references to the *Monographie des Halles* and the numerous trips made by municipal architects and technicians to Paris. Although Madrid took a long time to establish a coherent network of new markets it would be the first place to welcome large metal markets in the country. These markets faithfully reproduced Baltard's model, longitudinally attaching three pavilions separated by transversal covered streets. Many others adopted the simpler basilican ground plan with three naves, the middle one of larger dimensions, which we come across in many of Barcelona's district markets, in markets in Badajoz and Palencia (1898) and in the two large district markets in Valencia in the early twentieth century.

In Italy, with the exception of Turin, such a network had been promoted even earlier by the Unification of 1861. The first large iron markets were built by the engineers Pecco and Velasco on Piazza Bodoni in Turin between 1864 and 1866, following the Les Halles pavilion model. The first two small markets in Milan were designed by architect Terzaghi on Piazza della Vetra in 1862 and 1866, following the British shed model, one of them with an open roof and the other with several segmented sheds with 12.5 metre spans and enclosure walls instead of metal structures. Sant'Ambrogio market and Florence's Saint Lorenzo market, built in 1869 and 1876 respectively by Mengoni, were more faithful to the Parisian Les Halles pavilion model. In Belgium, besides Sainte Madeleine, French models inspired the circular fish market in Ostende (1870), publicised in German and Italian publications, Saint-Géry (1874) by Léon Suys and Edmond Le Graive, and the central market in Brussels (1875). At the onset of the twentieth century the Belgian capital boasted four metal market halls and Ostende possessed two. In Bucharest, the group of metal buildings that formed the Halele Centrale followed the Parisian scheme of Les Halles and was erected by a French company between the years 1872 and 1899. Five new metal markets, smaller in size, were built and disseminated around the city between 1872 and 1896. Only the latter, Hala Traian, concealed its metal structure with solid stone walls.

A *Gross-Markthalle* opened in Vienna in 1865 although the debate had arisen previously, in 1857, when the Ring Boulevard was about to be built. Typologically, the U-shaped market with solid Neo-Romanesque façades

has more in common with the wholesale London markets of Billingsgate and Columbia. In 1866 Vienna had signed a contract with the Austrian state for the building of small district markets. The first of these *Kleine Markthallen*, Stuben Baster, was erected in 1871 and had a basilican ground plan with a clerestory, like other smaller markets built later. The elevation seems to reveal a metal structure and reintroduces the architectural layout of Les Halles in Paris, although in all other markets the façade is a masonry wall that conceals the light interior metal structure. By 1890 there were six district markets besides nineteen street markets; some of them had ground plans in the shape of elongated rectangles, three naves and a clerestory in the middle nave which was always the most prominent.<sup>42</sup>

In Prussia it seems as if the model of British markets had a greater influence, both in the case of wholesale and of retail markets. In the former we discover a desire to connect the market to railway structures, which was never fulfilled in Les Halles in Paris even though such a subterranean connection had been foreseen. The opening of Smithfield central markets in London in the eighteen sixties had a huge impact on the new buildings (that were more than just monumental façades concealing metal structures, as was the rule in British market halls), and on the desire to ensure that the different pavilions had underground railway connections. German architectural and construction journals had been reviewing large English markets alongside Les Halles ever since the previous decade, and these had also prompted Berlin technicians and administrators such as councillor Theodor Risch to travel to Britain. London's wholesale markets and retail markets in other British cities also featured greatly in the compilations by Hennicke in 1881 and by Osthoff and Schmitt shortly afterwards.<sup>43</sup>

42. See Emil Winkler, 'Markthallen in Wien.' *Technischer Führer durch Wien*, 2, 1874, p. 208-212, and Georg Osthoff and Eduard Schmitt, 'Markthallen und Marktplätze,' in *Handbuch der Architektur. Gebäude für die Zwecke der Landwirtschaft und der Lebensmittelversorgung*, op. cit., p. 249-251.

43. See H. Tellkamp, 'Reisenotizen über Markthallen in England,' in *Rombert's Zeitschrift für praktische Baukunst*, op. cit.; Theodor Risch, *Bericht über Markthalen in Deutschland, Belgien, Frankreich, England und Italien*, in Selbstverlage des Magistrats/Wolf Peiser, Berlin, 1867; A. Lent, 'Die neue Markthalle zu Berlin,' *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen*, 1869, pages 230-232 and 447-448; Julius Hennicke, *Mitteilungen über Markthallen in Deutschland, England, Frankreich, Belgien und Italien*, Ernst & Korn, Berlin, 1881; and Georg Osthoff and Eduard Schmitt, 'Markthallen und Marktplätze,' in *Handbuch der Architektur. Gebäude für die Zwecke der Landwirtschaft und der Lebensmittelversorgung*, op. cit., p. 194-273. On the provisioning of London and Paris just before the construction of their large central markets, see Jules-Henry-Robert de Massy, *Des halles et marchés et du commerce des objets de consommation à Londres et à Paris*, Imprimerie Impériale, Paris, 1861-1862; Ernest Thomas, *Manuel des halles et marché en gros*, Guillaumin et Cie. Librairies, Paris, 1867; Steven Laurence Kaplan, *Provisioning Paris. Merchants and Millers in the Grain and Flour Trade during the Eighteenth*

With the exception of the markets of Hamburg and Munich, Germany had built very few large markets before the decade of 1860. Two market halls of Parisian influence (as revealed by the façades with their visible metal structures) opened in Stuttgart and Berlin in 1865 and 1867, respectively. Frankfurt built a metal market with a basement and a large vaulted central nave and two side naves with upper corridors such as those found in certain British markets of the first half of the nineteenth century like Aberdeen, Glasgow and Derby. Over the following decade, cities such as Leipzig, Cologne, Munich, Dresden (1891) and other smaller towns like Barmen, Aschaffenburg, Oldenburg, Resmscheid, Gera and Eisenach also opened new markets. Several were rectangular and had three naves, such as those designed by Osthoff, and were characterised by the impressive central nave and enclosure walls that made the inner metal structure invisible from the façade. Broadly speaking, the gradual preference for large central naves as the nineteenth century progressed has been related to the increasing use of arches in the metal structures, which enabled the construction of greater spans. Hannover market, designed by Bokenberg and Rowald and built in 1892, explicitly followed the model of the Gallery of Machines at the Parisian Exposition Universelle of 1889. Berlin was a latecomer to the group of large cities that possessed covered markets, although when construction began it did so vigorously. Between 1886 and 1893 the new capital of the Reich built up a strong network of fourteen district markets presided over by a great central market, the first of those erected.<sup>44</sup> The huge complex, possibly inspired by the Smithfield model, was connected to Alexanderplatz station and possessed underground railway sidings. District markets were essentially of two types: one was elongated and rectangular with a prominent central nave and a clerestory, and the other also had a prominent central nave with a number of smaller perpendicular side naves. In both cases the enclosure walls were made of masonry that concealed their metal structures.

*Century*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1984; and James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., chap. 3.

44. See Andrew Lohmeier, 'Bürgerliche Gesellschaft and Consumer Interests: The Berlin Public Market Hall Reform, 1867-1891,' *Business History Review*, 73 (Spring 1999), p. 91-113; 'Berlin in seiner gegenwärtigen Bauthätigkeit,' *Wochenschrift des Architekten-Vereins*, Berlin, 1, 1867; *Wochenblatt, herausgegeben von Mitgliedern des Architekten-Vereins zu Berlin*, April 1867; 'Das Projekt der Berliner Markthallen,' *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 1873, pages 152-153, 162-163, 265 and 288; Andreas Lindemann, *Die Markthallen Berlins*, Julius Springer, Berlin, 1899; Edgar Lange, *Die Versorgung der grossstädtischen Bevölkerung mit frischen Nahrungsmitteln unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Marktwesens der Stadt Berlin*, Duncker und Humblot, Leipzig, 1911, chap. 27.

As Allan Siegel mentions, after a long debate the original network of markets in Budapest ended up following the Berlin model and therefore projected itself as a genuine system. The six original markets, in addition to a central market hall, opened almost simultaneously in the last years of the eighteen nineties. The central market, the first to be inaugurated, was impressive—its huge central nave had a sixty-metre span and measured 150 metres in length. The exteriors concealed the metal structures and emphasised façades and roofs by means of glazed ceramic materials. Metal roofs were usually concealed behind elaborate brick façades, as in Moscow's Nikiforov market. The same structures were built in Scandinavia and the Baltic Countries, where elongated basilican models were adopted in practically all the market halls erected, as described by Omilanowska. The model based on the basilican ground plan with three naves, a clerestory (and less frequently with five naves) and metal structures concealed by elaborate solid façades was also recurrent in the other countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

A key dimension of markets was the fact that their architecture was designed with circulation in mind, i.e., they had an intrinsically functional purpose—that of displaying and selling goods—which could only be fulfilled if an absolutely free-flowing movement was guaranteed. In his notes to *The Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin had already stressed that the first iron buildings (covered markets, railway stations and exhibition pavilions) 'served transitory purposes ... Iron is thus immediately allied with functional moments in the life of the economy.'<sup>45</sup> The concern with obtaining a free-flowing movement of people had already appeared in drawings of the layout of stalls and corridors in many open-air markets of the previous era, as local civil servants hoped to ensure purchases were made correctly, the different foodstuffs were properly classified and stallholders duly taxed. From the construction of the first Napoleonic market halls, 'the mesh of movements and stalls becomes the market's actual ground plan.'<sup>46</sup> Later on,

45. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, Rolf Tiedemann (Ed.), translated by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1999, p. 154 [F2,9]. Georges Teyssot, 'Habits/Habitus/Habitat,' [www.cccb.org](http://www.cccb.org), accessed May 2010, Urban Library, 1996, observed: 'Two contrasting modes of subjectivity began to insinuate themselves into the world of things: on the one hand, the "transitoriness" that determines a sort of man, mobile and nomadic; and on the other, the old individualism of the inhabitant *par excellence* who defends his traditional "permanence" or "allocation". ... It is certainly true that recent studies, for example, on the Victorian country house in Great Britain, or on the apartment building during the Hausmann era, tend to qualify Benjamin's assertion that "iron, then, combines itself immediately with functional moments of economic life".'

46. Bertrand Lemoine, *L'architecture du fer. France XIXe siècle*, op. cit., p. 34.



beneath metal roofs and the transparency of glass, movement became the leitmotif: above all markets were supposed to embody, to 'represent' free-flowing movement. This concern, inherent in markets, determined even the metal support structure—the metal pillars with small sections barely interrupted the activity of the ground floor, now freed of the obstacles of walls and of thick brick supports.<sup>47</sup> As in a modern car park, the iron pillars that supported the roof defined an interior layout divided up into corridors or sections (especially in markets that had three naves) marking the logic of movement of the building, designed to achieve a space wide enough to enable buyers to move around freely and stallholders to load and unload their carts. The transversal span between the pillars in the nave was particularly relevant in determining the placing of the stalls and the width of the corridors in each section, which were supposed to be wide enough to allow for crowds of buyers (a width of less than three metres was unthinkable for corridors in large markets). Lengthwise, the pillars were taken as a guideline for the symmetrical distribution of the rows of stalls on each side. The distance between longitudinal pillars was the reference for dividing the row of stalls into equal portions that determined their width. Finally, openings were foreseen between all the rows of stalls to make it easy to cross from one section to another, thereby multiplying accesses to all sales outlets and favouring criss-cross in lieu of linear movement. The interior corridors merely channelled or prolonged the exterior movement. In spite of their heaviness, the enclosure walls had a number of doors that were emphasised in the façade by the setbacks of the ground plan, and pediments and inflected terminations along the cornice of the elevation.<sup>48</sup> The multiplication of entrances and itineraries lengthwise and crosswise was due, in turn, to the desire to avoid the hierarchical organisation of stalls according to their

47. Even the handbooks published in the first third of the twentieth century, once reinforced concrete had been introduced, noted the qualities of slender iron pillars: 'The most appropriate structures to cover a large space such as that of a medium-sized market, reducing the number and the dimension of supports needed for the roof, are made of metal and of reinforced concrete; the former allows for the use of extremely small uprights.' Daniele Donghi, 'Il mercato coperto,' in *Manuale dell'architetto*, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, Turin, 1923, p. 256-257. Our translation from the version by Manuel Guàrdia and José Luis Oyón in the Catalan edition of this volume.

48. For some interesting remarks on the movement inside markets and the layout of stalls as early as the pre-industrial age in many open-air markets, see *Il disegno di luoghi e mercati di Torino*, Politecnico di Torino, Dipartimento di Ingegneria dei Sistemi Edilizi e Territoriali/Celid, Turin, 2006, pages 31, 66-67 and 92-97. See also James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 105-111. For a survey of modern markets that continue to attach the same importance to movement and homogeneity, see Sergio di Macco, *L'architettura dei mercati. Tecniche dell'edilizia annonaria*, Kappa, Rome, 1986, chap. 3.

accesses. To a certain extent, the sequentiality of stalls was the culmination of a logic of iron architecture consisting of serialised and repeatable elements (naves, pillars, trusses and roofs) that could be dismantled and rebuilt somewhere else, that could move or ‘travel’ from one place to another to accommodate similar architectural programmes, as actually occurred with some specific iron and glass structures. The affinity between the various building programmes we discover in iron-architecture handbooks and in general histories of nineteenth-century architecture reflects this common identity—the fact that all these buildings were designed with movement in mind, as interpreted by Benjamin.<sup>49</sup>

Last but not least, important functional matters related to markets were those of ventilation, lighting and sanitary facilities, which were progressively updated during the nineteenth century. Ventilation had been a key issue in such constructions since the early Napoleonic age; as the century advanced, cross ventilation with upper openings was consolidated, for it did not only eliminate foul smells and purify the air but it did so without inconveniencing buyers or sellers. In a century obsessed with eliminating miasmata, the lofty glass and iron *halles* with their great cubic capacity enabled market spaces to be aired and consequently the spectre of infection removed. Such iron and glass structures were also flooded in light and were therefore nothing like earlier dark crammed markets. The huge glass openings in ceilings, the increasingly solid and opaque enclosure walls, and the basements that allowed produce to be kept at reasonable temperatures or in cold stores would also gradually become standardised features. As regards water supply, it soon became important to have good drains and sewer systems with increasingly large volumes of flow and polished or glazed ceramic linings and surfaces that would facilitate the cleaning of stalls and prevent food from decomposing.

### **Market Management and the Public Sector**

Up until the nineteenth century most markets in the United Kingdom were manorial jurisdiction, but in England and Wales ownership would soon be transferred to municipalities. By the end of the century almost 90 per cent of market halls were under municipal jurisdiction (especially those in large towns), a few others remained in the power of the nobility and only a handful were private property. Between these two dates (the

49. See Antoni Rovira y Rabassa, *El hierro. Sus cortes y enlaces*, Ribó y Marín, Barcelona, 2 vols., undated (ca. 1900), p. 171, and Nikolaus Pevsner, *History of Building Types*, op. cit.

beginning and end of the nineteenth century) what were known as public or market commissions flourished, enabling cities to seize market halls from their former manorial ownership. These commissions administered markets in a fair number of cities until a series of legislative changes allowed noble property to be formally transferred to local authorities. In London, however, most wholesale markets were in private hands. In Scottish cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh public markets were soon abandoned in favour of grocers' shops.

In Latin countries, the weight of municipalities seemed greater from the very beginning. The majority of town halls inherited their prerogatives in controlling foodstuffs sold in markets, but that didn't always make it easy for other new ones to be built. Apparently, since the French Revolution of 1789 town halls in France had managed to obtain resources and technical guidance from the central administration to build new marketplaces. In the case of Spain, however, the later fall of the *ancien régime* made this process much more difficult. In legal terms, it was not until 1834 with the liberalisation of commercial activity that permission was granted to trade in 'all eatable, drinkable and burnable items', with the exception of bread. The confiscation orders drawn up in 1836 offered cities the possibility of rearranging and modernising urban space, introducing a number of new facilities that included markets. The permanent economic instability of the public coffers did not, however, enable programmes comparable to the French model to be implemented.

Broadly speaking, municipal intervention in market halls on the Continent was greater than in the British Isles, especially when the covered markets erected during the second wave of construction in Europe were added to the list of such buildings. In the mid-eighteen sixties Risch surveyed approximately sixty markets and revealed that 40 per cent of those in Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria and Italy were administered by private companies and owners (some of which were concessions). Even in Paris, four were private property and five others were exploited as concessions and reserved the right of reversion, although these were certainly of secondary importance. During these years other cities also considered these options. In Madrid, for instance, private ownership prevailed in the case of the first two large iron markets built in Spain, whereas in Barcelona, in spite of the number of private offers made for the exploitation of wholesale and retail markets, the municipal alternative eventually proved victorious. Risch's report, which was an attempt to enlighten Berlin town hall with respect to the management of the city's future markets and included an offer made by a construction company

to build several, explained that most public markets in Europe were municipal and that Vienna was thinking of establishing a public system with a central market and several district markets under local administration. Risch was convinced: 'We will only fulfil our objectives if it is the State rather than private companies that takes charge of the situation.'<sup>50</sup> The establishment of a powerful public market system after the decade of 1880 in Berlin, other German cities and other towns in Central, Eastern and Scandinavian Europe, not to mention the diffusion of municipal markets in Southern Europe meant that by the end of the century the network of public markets had been consolidated throughout the Continent. Exactly the opposite path was followed in the United States, where, after a brilliant public market phase, the singular advance of private markets and grocery stores was produced in a widespread atmosphere of deregulation, provoking the collapse of the thriving municipal market system of the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the early twentieth century, with the construction of the new markets in Vienna, Budapest and other cities in Central and Eastern Europe, the local administrations of a number of large cities on the Continent established a coordinated market network presided over by a central market. Some of the Central European cities that had begun to build markets in the last third of the nineteenth century then became the touchstones of a coordinated municipal system. If these markets included storage of certain goods, they could also help regulate prices in years of shortages and avoid the social conflicts derived from the high prices of provisions, an issue that would reach its high point during the period of inflation at the time of World War I. The coordination of all markets within a general urban supply system (the Berlin model of a central market connected to a railway, and in some cases to river wharves) would be copied by other German cities such as Dresden. In the others, whether if there was only one market or whether the activity of retail markets had been on the wane until World War I, the modern central market that supplied all the city's retail markets gradually gained prominence. Just before the outbreak of the Great War, the municipal central market in Munich (a city in which hardly any covered markets had been built), that also stored and refrigerated food and consisted of four large parallel blocks with inner metal structures specialised in different

50. Theodor Risch, *Bericht über Markthalen in Deutschland, Belgien, Frankreich, England und Italien*, op. cit., p. 450.



Market staff at St John's Market in Liverpool, 1885

foodstuffs and connected by railway, was considered in America to be the world's most modern central market.<sup>51</sup>

For town halls, the organisation of a market system also meant the creation of a specialised local administration with specifically trained staff. The rental of stalls, controlled and made public by town halls, replaced the taxes and sales rights collected by the *ancien régime*. As a result, such centres required regulations, initially drawn up for each individual market and then for the totality, with special rules for the various wholesale markets. The amount of rent paid by stallholders (usually calculated according to the area they occupied), the auctions and leasing of stalls to relatives of licensee sellers were also regulated by local authorities. Opening and closing times, control of weights and measures, inspection of foodstuffs in suspect cases of contamination, fines and confiscation for selling food in bad condition and internal policing, cleaning and general order made the control of markets a municipal prerogative that evoked past times, before the liberalisation of the food trade. In many European cities of the late nineteenth century like

51. See Helen Tangires's text in this book and also Richard Schachner, *Märkte und Markthallen für Lebensmittel*, Goeschen, Berlin and Leipzig, 1914.

Barcelona, municipal markets were in fact one of the few public services offered to citizens in an age of undeniable dominance of *laissez faire* and a shortage or lack of publicly managed facilities.

The internal management of public markets and their sound financial health became a great source of pride for many town halls, a fact that contributed to the upkeep and renovation of the markets themselves. In Europe, a number of town halls were thus able to resist the offers of private initiative and make a significant contribution to the regulation of urban provisioning and food prices. In cities like Manchester, however, the mismanagement of income derived from stall rental prevented infrastructure from being renovated and markets ended up in private hands.<sup>52</sup> In other cities suffering from serious economic deficits, like many in Spain, the health of public markets was good enough to lead us to believe that they were funded in part by town halls, that the service they provided was so profitable that they could be self-managed and even make provisions of funds for the cities' depleted coffers. In the words of one municipal architect, 'all markets generate income ... if some cities don't have them this is not because of the poor condition of their local treasury, or because councillors have shown little interest [in them] but because markets everywhere face a huge enemy: vested interests!'<sup>53</sup>

### The Urban Impact

A preliminary issue when it comes to assessing the impact of new covered market halls in European cities is elucidating their true significance with respect to other forms of trade in urban commercial structures, the most important of which was the grocery store, that became widespread in the nineteenth century and was inextricably linked to the consumption of the working classes.<sup>54</sup> The historiographical problem we face is discovering the speed at which they developed and the extent to which they actually rivalled or even disrupted the smooth running of the new markets. Broadly speaking, we have left behind a vision in which grocery stores—that had been thriving since the late

52. Roger Scola, *Feeding the Victorian City: The Food Supply of Manchester 1770-1870*, Walter Alan Armstrong and Pauline Scola (eds.), Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1992.

53. See Ricard Giralt i Casadesús, 'Serveis Tècnics Municipals,' *Revista de la Vida Municipal*, 4, 1923, p. 100. For an appraisal of the management of Manchester's municipal markets in the nineteenth century, see Roger Scola, *Feeding the Victorian City: The Food Supply of Manchester 1770-1870*, op. cit. See also the chapter on Barcelona in this volume.

54. John Benson and Gareth Shaw (eds.), *The Evolution of Retail Systems, c. 1800-1914*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, London and New York, 1992, p. 200.

eighteenth century—won the consumption war in all social sectors (including, of course, majority working-class sectors), to embrace a much more cautious vision in which the new markets, that had virtually been forgotten in the former vision, played a more prominent role than initially foreseen. The question is to find out how large that role was as regards actual citizen consumption throughout the nineteenth century. Studies to date give the impression of a great diversity according to countries, but also to regions and towns. In the United Kingdom, as had been previously the case in the United States and Canada, a number of studies reveal the strength of grocers, butchers and fishmongers whose stores were located outside of markets. The same growth process appears to have taken place in Germany, although somewhat later perhaps.<sup>55</sup> In any event, the importance of this form of food distribution as opposed to market halls seems extremely varied in all countries. While in some English cities like Manchester, public markets had played a crucial role until the middle of the century and their importance had declined considerably by 1870, in other industrial towns like Sheffield apparently half the population continued to purchase their food at markets in the year 1888.<sup>56</sup> This explains why some writers have championed the commitment and positive results of grocery stores against the inefficiency of markets (like Scola in the case of Manchester), whereas others (like Schmiechen and Carls) preferred to focus on the examples of cities where the weight of municipal market halls is greater. Consequently, due to the lack of indisputable studies, no definitive conclusions can be drawn even in countries that have been researching the history of retail trade for a number of years.

Be that as it may, from the information we have about certain cities in the south of Europe, the impact of the retail food trade was far smaller than it was in English-speaking countries. In cities like Barcelona, the hegemony of municipal markets during the years between the two world wars was almost absolute; in comparison with capitals of similar size such

55. *Ibid.*, in particular the essays by Martin Phillips, ‘The Evolution of Markets and Shops in Britain,’ Dietrich Denecke and Gareth Shaw, ‘Traditional Retail Systems in Germany’ and John Benson, ‘Small-scale Retailing in Canada.’ See also Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, op. cit., p. 201-205.

56. See Roger Scola, ‘Food Markets and Shops in Manchester 1770-1870,’ *Journal of Historical Geography*, 1, 2, 1975, p. 153-168, and *Feeding the Victorian City: The Food Supply of Manchester 1770-1870*, op. cit.; James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 128. See also Deborah Hodson, ‘“The Municipal Store”: Adaptation and Development in the Retail Markets of Nineteenth-Century Urban Lancashire,’ in Nicholas Alexander and Gary Akehurst, *The Emergence of Modern Retailing. 1750-1950*, Frank Cass & Co., London, 1999.

as Manchester, and indeed with other British towns in which the influence of market halls was greater, the fact proved quite eloquent, and was even more significant if we bear in mind that British markets had been losing importance since the first decades of the twentieth century. We should not overlook the fact that other forms of trade such as consumption cooperatives would play a considerable role in the United Kingdom from the late nineteenth century onwards.<sup>57</sup>

Nonetheless, the debate is not limited to comparing sales in market halls with retail trade in external establishments. Numerous forms of pre-industrial trade, like peddling, less stable and more difficult to appraise, also resisted disappearance. Even in large American cities like New York, peddling never lost its importance and quite substantial percentages of food supplies were channelled through street markets, particularly by immigrants. In London, open-air retail markets didn't seem to avoid the proliferation of peddlars in their environs, and by the mid-nineteenth century many of the city's enclaves had become hubs of street trade. In Germany such a supply was common, at least up until the First World War. Not even in cities with strong market systems like Berlin, did trade in the old outdoor markets held on streets and squares disappear completely, as proven by the photographs taken by Heinrich Zille. Siegel reminds us that when Budapest inaugurated her six markets at the turn of the century, the city had forty-four open-air markets in which between 4,500 and 8,000 traders sold their wares.<sup>58</sup> In large southern cities like Barcelona and Madrid, the street markets that often surrounded the perimeters of the new covered markets survived throughout the nineteenth century and burgeoned during times of crises such as the nineteen thirties.<sup>59</sup>

57. Martin Purvis, 'Co-operative Retailing in Britain,' in John Benson and Gareth Shaw (eds.), *The Evolution of Retail Systems, c. 1800-1914*, op. cit.

58. See the chapter by Allan Siegel in this volume.

59. For information on such trade in New York, see Daniel M. Bluestone, "'The Pushcart Evil'. Peddlers, Merchants, and New York City Streets, 1890-1940,' *Journal of Urban History*, XVIII, 1, 1991, p. 68-92. The estimates of some distributors attributed between 25% and 40% of sales in the nineteen twenties to peddling (p. 86). For the situation in London, see D. R. Green, 'Street Trading in London: A Case Study of Casual Labour, 1830-1860,' in James H. Johnson and Colin G. Pooley (eds.), *The Structure of Nineteenth-Century Cities*, Croom Helm, Beckenham, Kent, 1982, p. 129-151. The German case is described in Dietrich Denecke and Gareth Shaw, 'Traditional Retail Systems in Germany,' in John Benson and Gareth Shaw (eds.), *The Evolution of Retail Systems, c. 1800-1914*, op. cit., and in Karen F. Beal, *Kaufleute und Strassenhändler. Eine Bibliographie*, Hauswedell, Hamburg, 1975; *fin-de-siècle* Berlin is portrayed in Heinrich Zille *Photographien Berlin, 1890-1910* (introduction by Winfried Ranke), Schirmer/Mosel, Munich, 1975, p. 121-127. For details of street vendors in Barcelona, see Chris Ealham, 'La lluita pel carrer. Els venedors ambulants durant la II República,' *L'Avenç*, 230 (November 1998), p. 21-26, and by the same author, *Class, Culture and*



While it is difficult to ascertain the relevance of markets within the global consumption of cities, it is even more complicated to discover their true impact on the increase and variety of the supply of marketed foodstuffs, on sale prices and on the quality of produce. Schmiechen and Carls have persuasively argued the issue by establishing the huge variety of products offered at the different stalls in British markets, many of which were not taken into account in the surveys of the average cost of a week's shopping or in those of the diet of the working classes, e.g. fish, fruit and vegetables or fowl. Despite basing their studies on non-conclusive evidence, these authors suggest that the revolution in the diet of the British working class in the eighteen sixties—triggered by the rise in salaries that entailed a widespread increase in the consumption of progressively cheaper foodstuffs—could have been connected to the growing supply of these products at the newly opened municipal market halls, given that cities with markets, and therefore a wider variety of products on sale, were able to offer cheaper prices.<sup>60</sup> Connections have also been established with the expansion of the areas supplying markets—boosted by the construction of railways and by international trade, that brought prices down—and with the intensification of farming in the rural areas neighbouring cities. By the end of the nineteenth century, intensive farming and new methods of fruit and vegetable production in the environs of many European cities had made huge progress, enabling them to supply their markets and even send surpluses to other cities, as described by Kropotkin.<sup>61</sup>

The trails of the impact of markets on planning are more precise, and enable us to make clear distinctions between cities with no markets, cities with a single large market in the town centre, and cities with a proper

*Conflict in Barcelona, 1898-1937*, Cañada Blanch Studies on Contemporary Spain, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, 2005, and in Madrid, see José Antonio Nieto Sánchez, *Historia del Rastro*, II, Visión Net, Madrid, 2007, pages 46-51 and 171-193. For a comparison with other contexts, see Ray Bromley, 'Working in the Streets: Survival Strategy, Necessity, or Unavoidable Evil?,' in Alan Gilbert, Jorge E. Hardoy and Ronaldo Ramírez (eds.), *Urbanisation in Contemporary Latin America*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 1982; John Benson, 'Hawking and Peddling in Canada, 1867-1914,' *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, XVIII/35, May 1985, p. 75-83; Andrew Brown-May, 'A Charitable Indulgence: Street Stalls and the Transformation of Public Space in Melbourne,' *Urban History*, 23, Part 1 (May 1996), p. 48-71; Susie S. Porter, "'And That It Is Custom Makes It Law": Class Conflict and Gender Ideology in the Public Sphere, Mexico City, 1880-1910,' *Social Science History*, 24, 1 (Spring 2000), p. 111-148.

60. James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., chap. 7.

61. Piotr Kropotkin, *Fields, Factories and Workshops: or Industry Combined with Agriculture and Brain Work with Manual Work*, Thomas Nelson & Sons, London, Edinburgh, Dublin and New York, 1912.

system in which markets are evenly distributed throughout the various districts. In almost all the Russian cities that preserved their traditional bazaars or *torgovie riadi*, in many Balkan towns and in second-rank cities in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, not to mention in German industrial cities like Bochum or Dusseldorf and in many provincial capitals around Europe, markets were still held outdoors or under the protection of arcades in squares and colonnaded pavilions of pre-industrial origin.<sup>62</sup>

In Great Britain the successful opening of central markets was not sustained. Exeter built two district markets at each end of the city, yet had to close them down shortly afterwards, and the same was true of Manchester and Liverpool. In practically all cases these structures were built on the same sites that had welcomed the former markets in the historical quarters of cities. New urban developments were increasingly dispersed and difficult for markets to supply. Distances to and from markets in these suburban areas dotted with detached houses were multiplied, and the area that could be served on foot was totally insufficient to make such a service profitable. These low-density urban sprawls were, however, much more suited to popular grocery stores or small groups of shopping parades, just as many American cities had been since the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>63</sup> A number of Central European towns in Germany, Austria, Hungary and former Czechoslovakia, as well as others in Scandinavia, were hardly committed to the construction of district markets and as a result repeated the British model of a single central market. Save for the case of certain large cities that ended up consolidating a mature market system, the new urban expansions during the period between the two world wars were not paralleled by the construction of public markets.

In spite of the fact that mature networks of covered markets were only established in a few large cities, their introduction represented an alternative to the model of central covered markets erected on the traditional sites that had been welcoming open-air markets since the Middle Ages. As opposed to the British model, in which covered markets were only exceptionally erected in non-central areas and where shopping therefore meant

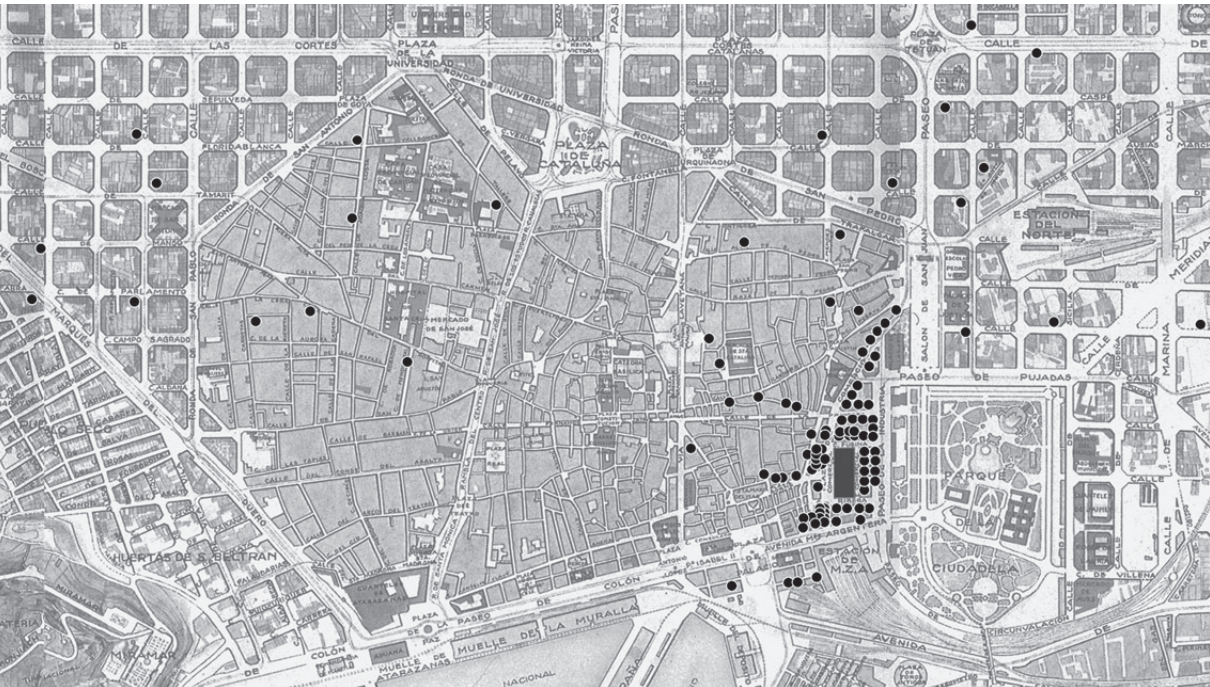
62. Dietrich Denecke and Gareth Shaw, 'Traditional Retail Systems in Germany,' in John Benson and Gareth Shaw (eds.), *The Evolution of Retail Systems, c. 1800-1914*, op. cit., p. 79.

63. See James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., pages 95, 101 and 185-187. The authors trace the evolution of urban growth, from 'intensive' to 'extensive', during the last part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, especially after 1914, to explain the decline of British markets in the twentieth century. See also Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, op. cit.

increasingly long trips to the city centre, the decentralised Parisian model entailed an experience of city markets that was based on proximity. Whereas the British model failed when it came to accompanying the growth of cities with market halls, the Parisian model of the market as facility, subsequently adopted in a programmed fashion by Berlin and Budapest, and in a more diversified way by Barcelona, Turin, Madrid and other Eastern European cities towards the end of the nineteenth century proved initially successful. Outside of the case of Berlin, in Central and Eastern Europe the idea of a powerful system of markets scattered around cities seemed to take on at a later date, as described by Haiko taking Vienna as an example.

The key to the early success of the Parisian market-facility model did not only lie in the fact that it built district markets, but that it did so in areas with medium and high population densities. As a result, a sufficiently high number of inhabitants actually pivoted around the markets, thereby making them not only economically profitable but also extraordinarily busy buildings from the point of view of sociability. By the year 1914, for instance, almost all large popular neighbourhoods in Barcelona, both in the city centre and in the industrial suburbs, had iron market halls and some of the largest suburbs boasted more than one. The facility and the model of compact city thus came together to act as a tandem and transform the new urban sprawls around markets into bustling areas. In the case of Barcelona, one building manual read as follows, 'Each market acts as a nucleus for different urban groups in the densely populated city, and therefore facilitates its services, making it more convenient for those inhabitants who live closest to it ...' Not surprisingly, in those countries with densely populated cities already used to the services provided by the new district markets we come across surveys that reflect the general idea that, 'One market is required per every twenty or thirty thousand inhabitants, so that when a city's increase in population goes beyond a certain limit, this entails the need for new markets.' There could be no better description of the logic of the market as a facility.<sup>64</sup>

64. See Antoni Rovira y Rabassa, *El hierro. Sus cortes y enlaces*, op. cit., p. 172. The description of the word 'market' in *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, first published in 1933, is also quite illuminating. Italian manuals of the period between the two world wars follow similar criteria: 'A single covered market is not enough in large cities, which need to ensure that people do not travel more than 600 or 800 metres from home to their nearest market. The latter should measure one square metre per every 20-30 inhabitants.' Daniele Donghi, 'I mercati coperti,' in *Manuale dell'architetto*, op. cit., p. 262. Our translation from the version by Manuel Guàrdia and José Luis Oyón in the Catalan edition of this volume. See also Francesco Basile, *I mercati*, Collana Leonardo, Messina, 1940.



Plan of the accommodation of wholesalers at El Born market in Barcelona, 1945-1948

In the early twentieth century covered markets were extremely important functional cores for structuring neighbourhoods, i.e., for making cities. The concentration of food stalls in many markets in city centres, especially in Britain, was not limited to foodstuffs but also included a wide range of household goods such as cheap linen, crockery, cutlery and toys.<sup>65</sup> Their ability to attract purchasers on a daily basis was not negligible if we take into consideration the shops that sprang up around them. In many cities on the Continent, like Barcelona, their influence could also be traced in district markets, the interiors of which were strictly reserved for fresh produce while their immediate perimeter welcomed shops selling perishables and non-perishables (salted fish, nuts and dried fruit, pasta), cheap bars and cafés and shops selling general household wares.<sup>66</sup> As Miller suggests

65. James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., p. 166-175. See also Andrew Davies, 'Saturday Night Markets in Manchester and Salford, 1840-1939', *Manchester Region History Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Autumn-Winter 1987).

66. See the chapter on Barcelona by Manuel Guàrdia and José Luis Oyón in this volume.

was the case in Barcelona's La Revolució market, the activity of many of these shopkeepers did not rival but complemented that of stallholders, and in fact they themselves purchased stalls 'as a way to extend their family's retail operations horizontally.' As a result, market halls became true centres for economic relations, reproducing on a small scale the mixture of activities that had characterised former outdoor markets. Despite the fact that butchers and fishmongers managed to convince town halls to draw up bylaws forbidding the sale of certain products by the competition within a close radius to markets, the attraction of retail trade was indisputable and, although it is diminishing, it can still be felt today.<sup>67</sup> The areas around markets were also convenient for traders to settle in. As we learn from Miller, more than half the stallholders at Barcelona's intramural Santa Caterina lived in the old quarter of the town, and almost a third within a one-block radius; more than two thirds of those at La Llibertat market lived in the Gràcia neighbourhood and 25 per cent lived within the range of the adjacent blocks. The appeal was even clearer in the case of wholesale markets. At El Born central market, where business hours greatly conditioned journeys to and from work, half of the wholesalers lived in the blocks closest to the market and only 8 per cent in areas that lead us to believe they used some form of mechanised transport to get to work.

In those cities that developed networks of district markets, these became genuine socialising centres. During the period between the two world wars, most workers in Barcelona lived close to a market. As a regular customer at Sants market in the popular Barcelona suburb of the same name put it, 'We've always been local people ... from a lively neighbourhood, where it is not uncommon to be greeted by all and sundry, where everybody knows everybody else, where people socialise at the market and chat at grocery stores.'<sup>68</sup>

Special mention should be made of the specificity of gender at markets. The dominant presence of women was indisputable and there is an extensive bibliography on women in the public sphere of consumption among the booming middle classes and bourgeoisie, especially in department stores,<sup>69</sup>

67. See Carles Carreras (ed.), *Atlas Comercial de Barcelona*, Ajuntament de Barcelona, Barcelona, 2003.

68. José Luis Oyón, *La quiebra de la ciudad popular. Espacio urbano, inmigración y anarquismo en la Barcelona de entreguerras, 1914-1936*, Ediciones del Serbal, Barcelona, 2007, p. 329.

69. For an enlightening summary of English studies of the subject, see Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity. Representations and Productions of Metropolitan Space, 1840-1930*, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, p. 351-362.

although little is still known of their role in one of the popular public spaces where their visibility was more obvious. Women from all social conditions met at markets—from the maids who shopped for their mistresses, to the humble housewives who shopped on a daily basis after weighing up costs or waiting till the last minute to buy food at giveaway prices. Montserrat Miller describes the transcendental role of saleswomen and female stall owners in Barcelona (wholesalers were predominantly male), and these women tended to establish privileged relationships with a mainly female clientele. Important territorial networks of primary solidarity were consolidated around markets, based on bonds of neighbourhood and kinship, and numerous festivities derived from retailers' associations were crowned by celebrations. The social role of women structuring the life of markets projected them symbolically into the public sphere as 'market queens'.<sup>70</sup>

### The First Decline of Markets

In the early twentieth century European markets began to show the first undeniable symptoms of stagnation. Their progressive erosion was particularly noticeable in countries that had established innovative models, followed by other European regions. This downturn, that had been anticipated in the United States as early as the eighteen fifties,<sup>71</sup> progressed for more than fifty years until the virtual liquidation of market systems as they had been conceived in the nineteenth century.

The first and no doubt most important decline of markets was produced in Great Britain. After 1890, especially after the First World War, the construction of these buildings dropped considerably (no new market hall was built between the years 1910 and 1920 and very few up until 1950), the main reason being the revolution in food supply brought about when the distribution channel was dominated by large wholesalers, breaking the direct and local relationship between producer and retailer that

70. See the essay by Montserrat Miller in this volume.

71. As new uptown neighbourhoods were developing in New York, an 1885 publication wondered whether markets were permanently doomed by the growing competition of private shopping centres and stores. Prices were certainly higher in the latter, but as well as being close to residential homes they offered a much better service—customers were treated better, their tastes were catered for and they could pay on account, which meant they could send their servants to shop. In comparison, municipal markets were criticised for their poor upkeep, their lack of cleanliness and the vulgarity of their stallholders. In Philadelphia, the clerk of the markets of 1913 was convinced that in the age of the telephone and neighbourhood shops, the old habit of going to market was a thing of the past. In actual fact, by the late nineteenth century Philadelphia had lost a considerable number of her markets. For further details, see Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, op. cit.

had prevailed in the model of farming and food distribution in nineteenth-century markets. A wide range of products like fruit and vegetables, potatoes, eggs, dairy produce and, above all, industrially cured or canned foods such as imported meat and fish, were dominated by intermediary wholesalers directly or indirectly related to large cooperatives or booming food chains. The substantial price reduction increased the proportion of co-operatives and food chains in 1914 to a fifth of the total of food sales; by the end of the World War Two, the large food distribution chains and co-operatives amounted to a third of the total.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, other purchases were made less frequently in markets and increasingly in shops located in new peripheral neighbourhoods, especially when the huge shock wave of urban construction in the period between the two world wars led to a burgeoning of the outskirts of main cities. Significantly, the large-scale construction of public housing by town halls during these years in areas of urban growth was bereft of covered markets.

The authors who have studied the case of France have also observed a certain weakening of markets in the last years of the nineteenth century, disrupted by the new forms of marketing farm produce (wholesalers, co-operatives, etc.) and by the decline of traditional agriculture. To this drop, accelerated by the Great War, we should add the lack of upkeep and the subsequent demolition of many structures. Be that as it may, this did not mark the definitive collapse of French markets, which in most cities were still bustling with life. The main problem was that as the century progressed, public budgets found it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of renovation of such facilities. Open-air markets did not need great investments or installations and adapted more flexibly to the new situation. The fact is that those held in public spaces never quite disappeared, and around the year 1890 Guadet observed that in Paris, while some long-established markets held under old awnings managed to remain open, the new ones built at great expense were closing one after another.<sup>73</sup> The survival and re-emergence of outdoor markets was a recurrent phenomenon.<sup>74</sup>

72. See James Schmiechen and Kenneth Carls, *The British Market Hall. A Social and Architectural History*, op. cit., chap. 10, and Martin Purvis, 'Co-operative Retailing in Britain,' in John Benson and Gareth Shaw (Eds.), *The Evolution of Retail Systems, c. 1800-1914*, op. cit.

73. See Julien Guadet, *Éléments et théorie de l'architecture* [4 tomes], Librairie de la Construction Moderne, Paris, undated [ca. 1920]. Quoted in Gilles-Henri Bailly and Philippe Laurent, *La France des halles et marchés*, Éditions Privat, Toulouse, 1998, p. 45: 'à Paris même tandis que quelques vieux marchés tenus sous les anciens parapluies de toile goudronnée réussissent à merveille, les marchés neufs, construits à grands frais, aménagés avec luxe, ferment les uns après les autres.'

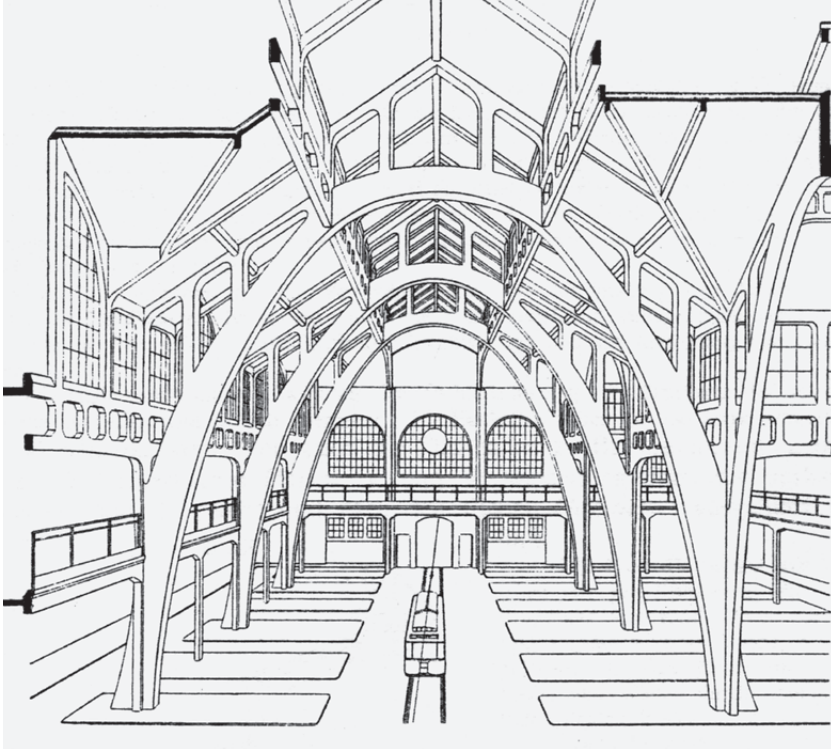
74. Gilles-Henri Bailly and Philippe Laurent, *La France des halles et marchés*, op. cit., p. 45-48.

In those countries where covered markets were erected at a later date, these reflected the latest innovations in early twentieth-century architecture and planning. In spite of the decline in some retail markets around the time of the First World War, Germany became a pioneer in the construction of covered markets, to be precise, of a new generation of central markets made of concrete. The tendency to build them in specific isolated places where farm produce could be rapidly processed from railways and river transport to the lorries and loading bays of wholesalers had first emerged when the great central market in Munich was designed by Schachner just before the war. German central markets made of concrete after the war consolidated the disposition to functional specialisation and introduced the lorry as the main vehicle for food distribution, a tendency that culminated in the markets built in large American cities in the thirties. Moreover, they took the spatial and functional possibilities of reinforced concrete construction to its maximum splendour. The search for large spans in market architecture and the aspiration to make markets increasingly open and uniform covered spaces had emerged in German markets in the late nineteenth century, and can also be traced in many markets built around Europe in the early twentieth century. In lieu of traditional trusses, we discover the use of iron and arches that became progressively more audacious, as exemplified by those in La Mouche livestock market and slaughterhouse built by Tony Garnier between 1907 and 1914,<sup>75</sup> and by the Central and Colon markets in Valencia built in the second decade of the twentieth century. The brighter structures, however, were those made of concrete. Parabolic concrete arches replaced iron arches in Breslau market, built between 1906 and 1908<sup>76</sup> by Heinrich Küster, although the possibilities of the new material would be taken to constructive and expressive heights in two large central markets: the one in Frankfurt, designed by architect Martin Elsaesser, which opened in 1928, and the one in Leipzig, designed by engineers Franz Dischinger and Ulrich Finsterwalcher and architect Hubert Ritter, inaugurated the following year. In the former, a tall longitudinal pavilion measuring over two hundred metres in length was built parallel to the railway tracks. The section, without

75. See 'Les bergeries du marché aux bestiaux,' *Architecture (Société centrale des architectes)*, 52, 1925, p. 187-188; Howard Robertson and Francis Rowland Yerbury, 'The Lyons Market: Tony Garnier, Architect,' *Architect & Building News*, 119, p. 467-472; and 'Marché aux bestiaux et abattoirs de La Mouche à Lyon,' *Cahiers d'Art*, no. 8, 1928, p. 343-351.

76. Georg Osthoff and Eduard Schmitt, 'Markthallen und Marktplätze,' in *Handbuch der Architektur. Gebäude für die Zwecke der Landwirtschaft und der Lebensmittelversorgung*, op. cit., p. 403-407.





Interior view of Breslau Market with concrete arches, 1906-1908. Architect: Heinrich Küster

pillars, was defined by huge reinforced-concrete arches that formed the skeleton of a space with a forty-metre span, and the arches were separated by cylindrical vaults.<sup>77</sup> Leipzig market consisted of three large adjacent domes made of reinforced concrete and a square ground plan that covered an area

77. For more information on the markets of Frankfurt, see *Architectural Review*, vol. 71, 1932, p. 60-61; Martin Elsaesser, *Martin Elsaesser. Bauten und Entwürfe aus der Jahren 1924-1932*, Bauwelt-Verlag/Ullsteinhaus, Berlin, 1933; and Roberto Secchi, *L'architettura degli spazi commerciali*, Officina Edizioni, Rome, 1991, p. 134, 136-139. Those built in other German cities are described in 'Markthallen in Reims und Leipzig,' *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst*, 14, 1930, p. 105-119; 'Leipzig Market Hall: Architect, Hubert Ritter,' *Architect & Building News*, 136, 1933, p. 138-139. On German markets built before the First World War, see Georg Osthoff and Eduard Schmitt, 'Markthallen und Marktplätze,' in *Handbuch der Architektur. Gebäude für die Zwecke der Landwirtschaft und der Lebensmittelversorgung*, op. cit., and Richard Schachner, *Märkte und Markthallen für Lebensmittel*, op. cit. In 1941 another large central market opened in Cologne, designed by architect Teichen: 'Die neue Grossmarkthalle der Stadt Köln,' *Moderne Bauformen*, 40, 1941, p. 97-108; 'Large Market Hall in Cologne,' *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, I, 1941, p. 1; and 'Central Market Hall,' Cologne, *Architekt*, 5-6, 1942.

measuring over two hundred metres in length and seventy-six metres in width. The reinforced-concrete domes (of which only two would be built) formed a self-bearing system that made it possible to cover great distances between supports (in comparison with the cupola of St Peter's in Rome, for instance, the space free of pilasters was quadrupled) and provided a uniform span. The wide-open spaces and unobstructed ground plans conceived by the architecture of iron markets culminated in the lightweight domes of reinforced concrete.<sup>78</sup>

The suggestive plasticity of the curved roofs of these markets led the architects and engineers of the Modern Movement to value them as means to achieve hitherto unthinkable forms of expression. A substantial part of the most innovative concrete building work produced in the years between the two world wars was designed for large central market halls and slaughterhouses: first of all the one in Reims, designed in 1923 by Émile Maigrot; followed by Grossard's project for Gennevilliers in the thirties and early forties; the Obor premises designed by Creanga and Georgescu in Bucharest; Vevey market, with its huge cylindrical vault with a fifty-metre span built in 1935 by Taverny, Schobinger and Getaz; the Helsinki building designed by Hytonen and Luukkonen; the Maison du Peuple in Clichy, by Beaudouin and Lods; Algeciras market designed by Torroja; those in Madrid by architect Ferrero; the central market in Florence planned by Michelucci; the fruit, vegetable and flower market in Pescia, by Gori, Ricci, Savioli and Brizzi; and the fish markets in Naples and Ancona, designed by Cosenza and Minucci, respectively.<sup>79</sup>

78. Dischinger himself would shortly afterwards design a huge circular variety hall, measuring 140 metres in diameter and 44 metres in height, that quadrupled the space free of supports of the Leipzig building. On the possibilities of large open spaces made of concrete and the role played by Leipzig market in the path followed by the Modern Movement towards the openness of large covered spaces with reinforced-concrete domes, see Ludwig Hilberseimer and Julius H. Vischer, *Beton als Gestalter*, Verlag Julius Hoffmann, Stuttgart, 1928. In 1935 a mixed-use market building (wholesale and retail sales) opened in Karlsruhe.

79. 'Markthallen in Reims und Leipzig' and 'Covered Market and Festival Hall, Gennevilliers,' *Construction Moderne* (1 November 1936), p. 70; 'Covered Market and Festival Hall, Gennevilliers,' *Parthenon*, 1939, p. 180; 'A Covered Market at Vevey, Switzerland,' 51, 1936, p. 341-348; 'Markt und Stadt Halle für Vevey,' *Moderne Bauformen*, 36, 1937, p. 169-172; 'A Covered Market at Vevey,' *Architectural Record*, 79, 1936, p. 374-379; 'Covered Market, Helsinki,' *Architect & Building News*, 1936, p. 312; Javier Ferrero, 'Nuevos mercados madrileños,' *Arquitectura*, 17 (June 1935), p. 115-124; 'El mercado de los pescados,' *Arquitectura*, 18, 1936, p. 2-11; 'Competition Designs for the Central Market at Bratislava,' *Slovensky Staviteľ*, 11-12, 1937, p. 225 and ff.; G. Braive, 'Maison du peuple de Clichy,' *Construction Moderne*, 54, 1939, p. 486-491; 'A Public Market, Clichy,' *Architect & Building News*, 159, 1939, p. 164-166; 'A Market Hall at Clichy,' *Builder*, 158, 1940, p. 273-275; 'Clichy Public Hall,' *RIBA Journal, Progressive Architecture*, 1948, p. 57-61; 'Proyecto para un mercado de fruta, flores y verduras en Pescia,' *Revista de Arquitectura*, Buenos Aires (September 1949), p. 238-242;

Most of these new market halls, which were more often than not central markets, were located in cities and countries that had not experienced the first wave of covered market construction.<sup>80</sup> We could say that these European countries took over from those of the first generation of markets. The case of Spain proved quite relevant in this respect. In spite of the country's historical backwardness in terms of commercial structures, between the years 1910 and 1936 a considerable number of markets were built in large Spanish capitals and smaller towns. The renovation of Madrid's market system in the thirties was characterised by the use of reinforced concrete. Barcelona and the Catalan region were particularly active areas in this sense.<sup>81</sup> Small provincial cities in Spain that had not had a metallic market hall erected in the nineteenth century built their first and last concrete market at this time; in some cities, like Logroño, the market would stand as one of the most emblematic and well built structures of the twentieth century.<sup>82</sup> During the years between the first and the second world wars many large Italian cities erected concrete structures selling meat, fish, fruit and vegetables and fowl (the central markets in Rome, Milan, Genoa, Venice and Naples, and Cuzzi's Turin market of 1934), and so did medium-size towns such as Padua.<sup>83</sup>

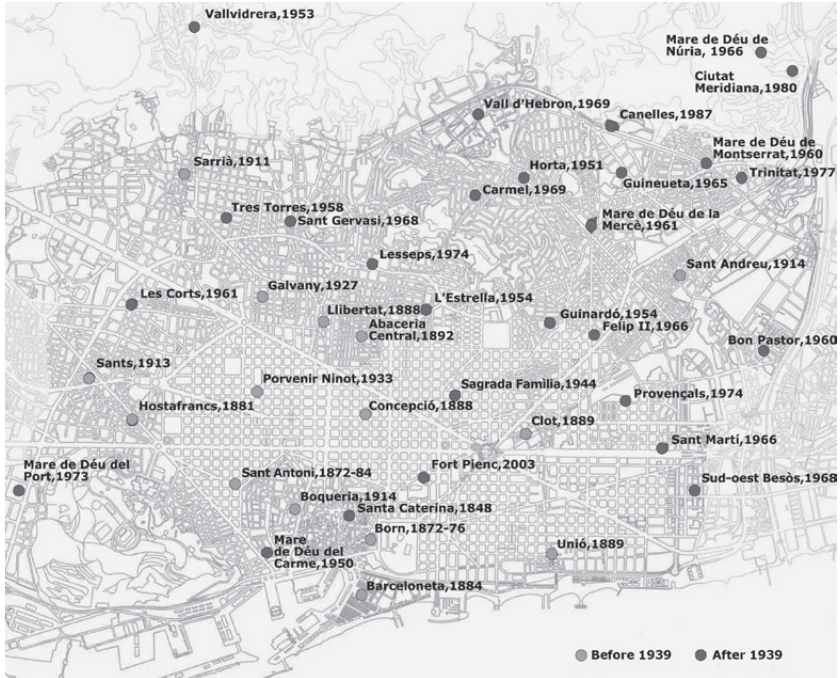
Gaetano Minucci, 'Mercato del pesce in Ancona,' *Spazio*, 2, 1951, p. 48-53; 'Marché aux poissons, Ancone,' *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 24, 1953, p. 14-16. Other concrete markets were built in Vichy in 1934, in Basle, the cupola of which was inspired by the dome in Leipzig market. Those built in Gennevilliers and Vevey were based on the constructional concept of Reims market. For an excellent appraisal of all these markets, many of which were central markets, erected during the years between the world wars, see Francesco Basile, *I mercati*, op. cit., pages 9-13, 63-76 and 89-112. Market halls built in the nineteen fifties, such as Royan market in France and Hamburg central market, were also the object of discussion in architectural publications. For a general survey of all these designs from an architectural point of view, see Roberto Secchi, *L'architettura degli spazi commerciali*, op. cit., p. 131-135, and Roberto Aloï, *Mercati e negozi*, Hoepli, Milan, 1959, p. 1-59.

80. For the example of the slaughterhouse in Madrid, see *El Matadero Municipal de Madrid. La recuperación de la memoria*, Ayuntamiento de Madrid, Madrid, 2006. On the new central markets built in the Italian cities of Rome and Bologna, see Giuseppe Stemperini, 'La questione di un unico mercato alimentare all'ingrosso nella Roma post-unitaria: la scelta dell'Ostiense,' *Roma moderna e contemporanea*, XII, 1-2, 2004, pages 49-50 and 57-58, and David Sicari, *Il mercato più antico d'Italia. Architetture e commercio a Bologna*, Editrice Compositori, Bologna, 2004, p. 57-64.

81. See Esteban Castañer Muñoz, *L'architecture métallique en Espagne: les Halles au XIXe siècle*, Presses Universitaires de Perpignan, Perpignan, 2004. It is important to stress the activity of the newly founded body of municipal architects in Spain and their journal, *CAME*, that published a number of articles on markets between the years 1929 and 1936. Architect Giralte Casadesús, driving force of the publication, also devoted a monograph to the subject, *Mercados. Teoría y práctica de su construcción y funcionamiento*, Cuerpo de Arquitectos Municipales de España, Barcelona, 1937.

82. See 'Equipamiento comercial en edificios de interés arquitectónico,' *Cuadernos de la Dirección General para la Vivienda y Arquitectura*, Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Urbanismo, Madrid, 1989, p. 25-34.

83. Francesco Basile, *I mercati*, op. cit., p. 63-76.



The covered markets of Barcelona, before and after 1939

The situation in the countries belonging to the former Communist bloc described by Omilanowska in this book reveals the vitality of large European cities in the so-called outer periphery, in Eastern, Central Eastern and Northern Europe, up until the outbreak of World War Two. We could, therefore, speak of a third generation of market halls, that began to be erected around 1900 and are still standing. Budapest completed her late plan for setting up district markets in the early years of the twentieth century, and built a central market hall in the interwar period. Many other cities in Central, Eastern and Scandinavian Europe such as Prague, Warsaw, Bucharest, Helsinki and towns under German influence like Gdańsk, Breslau and Chorzów went on building markets after having begun to do so in the late nineteenth century. Many others opened their first market hall at this time: Riga (which built a huge central structure in the thirties), Vilna, Katowice, Ploiesti (which boasted a beautiful octagonal concrete cupola with a fifty-metre span designed in 1935 by architect Socolesco), Ljubljana (a splendid market hall planned Josef Plecnik), Sofia, Kiev and Odessa, as well as Turku, Tampere and Oulu in Scandinavian Europe.

In any event, the age that witnessed the building of the third generation of European market halls was not characterised by the same intensity of construction as the two previous periods. A substantial number of the new structures were exclusively central markets; virtually no new retail markets were built at district level, so the intense urban growth of the early twentieth century was not accompanied by an evenly distributed network of markets. Such was the case in Germany, France and Italy; Spain and certain Eastern European countries continued to open markets during the years between the two world wars, although these were the exception that proved the rule.

### **The Second Decline of Markets and the New Crossroads**

The definitive crisis was hastened in the aftermath of the Second World War. The long period during which no investments were made, the destruction caused by the war, the renovation of city centres and, above all, the progressive increase in car ownership and dispersion of the population decimated the legacy. Moreover, the revolution brought about by supermarkets and self-services led to serialisation and to the packaging of goods on a totally new scale, and thereby contributed to making the traditional market definitely appear as an anachronistic option. Quality was increasingly associated with brands instead of with the establishments that sold goods. Indeed, the nineteen fifties and sixties witnessed the swift development of new forms of trade in Europe which, despite being combated by the representatives of traditional trade, enjoyed the decisive political support of economic teams concerned with containing inflation. The scene evolved rapidly after the sixties, when the foundations of the present system were laid in the United Kingdom, France and Germany. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the main Western European countries the most destructive period for markets should have been the years following World War Two. Many were modernised, losing in the process their original character, or else were replaced by other commercial formulas on account of being located in central and usually congested urban areas. The eventual demolition of Les Halles in 1971 and the debate surrounding Covent Garden around the same time marked the most visible and dramatic moments of this process of destruction and abandonment. The former had the greatest international impact and triggered public awareness of the need to conserve nineteenth-century structures.<sup>84</sup>

84. The architectural journals published during this period are an excellent guide for following in detail the projects designed to replace, adapt or renovate old markets to meet new commercial requirements.



While this was the trend in more developed European countries, during the fifties and sixties a new generation of markets, the fourth, was built in countries on the periphery of Europe such as Spain and in those under former Soviet influence that had been quite productive in the first half of the twentieth century. As Siegel tells us, the initial structure of metallic markets in Budapest that was completed in the early years of the century began to be complemented by another generation of market halls in the new areas of growth of the city in 1949; in all, eight new markets would be inaugurated in seven of the city's districts. During the Communist régime, Bucharest also opened a number of unroofed neighbourhood markets that supplied the new housing blocks on the outskirts. In the eighties, several concrete markets were built featuring large domes in the so-called food and agriculture complexes, although only two of these 'hunger circuses' as they were popularly known were officially opened. Interest in market halls was also renewed in Spanish cities. In Madrid it had been obvious since the end of the Spanish Civil War, as reflected in the report published by the town hall that summed up the work carried out between the years 1939 and 1943. During this short period, four markets were erected (thereby increasing the total number from ten to fourteen), in keeping with a plan that anticipated twenty-six such installations. The new buildings were envisaged as district facilities and genuine urban focal points to be promoted by the new town planning.<sup>85</sup> In this sense, the case of Barcelona was exemplary: between 1939 and 1977 twenty-six market halls were built, some of which replaced former street markets, but most of which were designed to be the only such facility in the new peripheral growth areas. While in Madrid the renovation of markets that began in the thirties meant the disappearance of the most outstanding iron buildings, in Barcelona practically all such structures were conserved. As a result, paradoxically, a latecomer city was able to retain a greater legacy than the towns it was modelled on, not only in terms of architectural heritage but also as regards the continuance of its commercial functioning. In spite of the number of stalls that have closed in recent years, the activity of markets in Spanish cities today is still incomparably greater than it is in France, not to mention the United Kingdom.<sup>86</sup>

85. See, for instance, *Mercados de Madrid: labor realizada por el excelentísimo Ayuntamiento, Comisión Especial de Mercados*, Publicaciones de la Sección Cultura e Información, Madrid, 1944.

86. These differences are also obvious in one and the same country, as exemplified by Great Britain. See Deborah Hodson, "'The Municipal Store': Adaptation and Development in the Retail Markets of Nineteenth-Century Urban Lancashire,' in Nicholas Alexander and Gary Akehurst, *The Emergence of Modern Retailing. 1750-1950*, op. cit. A swift survey of the information on market systems in

Up until the energy crisis of the mid-seventies, many of the European markets belonging to the second, third and fourth generations, both in Mediterranean and Central Eastern Europe, managed to withstand with dignity the incipient incursions of new forms of trade. Nonetheless, the economic crisis of the period and the fall of the Communist régimes in the late eighties placed cities at a difficult crossroads. Today nobody doubts that the increase in number of hypermarkets in large cities in the European Union has weakened the traditional trade that enlivened city centres. Although at the onset of the Great War, France was the European country that possessed a greater number of covered markets, and today 43 per cent of cities with over 10,000 inhabitants have one or more market halls, there are three times more unroofed markets than roofed ones. In fact, only thirteen of the seventy-eight Parisian markets are covered structures.<sup>87</sup> Even in Barcelona, the city that boasts the most complete and evenly distributed network of covered markets in Europe, the decline is undeniable—the proportion of market sales in overall urban consumption has also dropped considerably with respect to previous days of glory.<sup>88</sup>

The basic challenge faced by market halls today is the salvation of all this built capital and, more importantly, the reuse of local trade and services to structure cities. The possibilities of intervening in markets, the feasibility of continuing to use them, either as built heritage or as potential urban structures, as makers of cities in Europe vary extremely as a result of the historical differences we have been examining in this introduction. European market cities developed at different paces, i.e., following different

various cities reveals that in Paris, which served as a model for large Spanish cities, only eleven covered market halls out of a total of seventy-eight have survived. Most of the others, outdoor markets, are held only twice a week, including a Saturday or a Sunday. Covered markets in Paris open six days a week, for approximately forty-five hours. On average, opening hours for all markets are 2.72 days a week and the average per market is 20 hours. In Lyon, only four out of a total of thirty-five markets open forty hours a week, and seven open approximately twenty hours per week, the average being 2.37 days and 16.7 weekly hours per market. In Marseilles ordinary markets, totalling twenty-three, are distinguished from *marchés forains*, that total twelve. Two markets open sixty-six hours a week, fourteen open around thirty hours a week and the rest less than thirty. On average, opening times for ordinary markets are 4.43 days and twenty-six hours per week, while in the case of *marchés forains* the average is two days a week. In comparison, Madrid has fifty-one markets (in a municipal area covering 607 square kilometres) and Barcelona has forty (in a municipal area of 92 square kilometres), all of which are covered structures that open approximately forty-seven hours a week, Mondays to Saturdays (in Madrid opening time is on average forty-seven hours, and in Barcelona forty-seven and a half). Valencia possesses eighteen markets and both ordinary and extraordinary markets open on average more than forty-eight hours a week.

87. See Carol Maillard, *25 halles de marché*, AMC-Le Moniteur, Paris, 2004, p. 10.

88. See the essay by Guàrdia and Oyón in this book.



chronological cycles of growth (expansion), peak, continuance and recession (decline), and therefore the roles they are able to play also differ. Some cities have no covered markets at all and only hold occasional outdoor markets, while others still conserve a weakened network of markets relatively well distributed throughout urban areas (or at least in the densest parts), a system indebted to the continental model of homogeneous spreading of markets.

To speak of markets in pioneering countries, particularly in English-speaking countries, now that they have either disappeared or been converted to other uses, is extremely difficult. The abandonment of London's Covent Garden around 1970 seemed to be the most visible aspect of a widespread process of disappearance of former covered markets. Concern over the deterioration of city centres and the loss of such buildings favoured conversions that respected architectural heritage in the city of London.<sup>89</sup> Be that as it may, from a functional point of view the old markets seemed finally doomed. The only hope was that of a new lease of life for simpler commercial structures, many of them roofless, albeit in the distant future. Around the same time, in the early seventies, some voices defended farmers' markets as fully functional 'anachronisms'.<sup>90</sup> They were dearer than supermarkets but had managed to cater to consumers' desire for fresh, quality produce from the rural areas closest to cities, thereby rekindling the old friendship between producer and buyer that had existed in early market places. In contraposition to those who considered markets inefficient and anachronistic, the energy crisis of the seventies and growing environmental awareness were decisive arguments in their favour. Over recent decades they have enjoyed increasing support and have grown spectacularly.<sup>91</sup> However, their impact on urban space and their ability to structure commercial fabric seldom

89. The case of Covent Garden is studied in depth in Robert Thorne, *Covent Garden Market: Its History and Restoration*, The Architectural Press, London, 1980.

90. See Jane Pyle, 'Farmers' Markets in the United States: Functional Anachronisms,' *Geographical Review*, LXI, 2 (April 1971), p. 167-197.

91. In 1994 the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, began to publish the *National Directory of Farmers' Markets* (on line) that lists all the farmers' markets doing business in the country. Between the years 1994 and 2006 their numbers doubled from 1755 to 4300. See [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0), accessed May 2010. Open-air farmers' markets have been set up and run since 1976 within the green market and agriculture programmes backed by the Council on the Environment of New York City, CENYC (now known as GrowNYC), [www.cenyc.org/site](http://www.cenyc.org/site), accessed May 2010. Regional agriculture is promoted, continuous supplies of fresh local produce are guaranteed and farmers are supported thanks to the new opportunities they have to sell their produce. See also Theodore Morrow Spitzer and Hilary Baum, *Public Markets and Community Revitalization*, Project for Public Spaces and the Urban Land Institute, Washington DC, 1995.

deserve a mention, when the latter is as fundamental an issue today as it has been throughout their history.<sup>92</sup> As Michael Sorkin recalls, in recent years we have witnessed the gradual disappearance of the ‘historical laws of proximity, the very cement of the city.’ The logical consequence of this verification is that mere conservation of historical remains is not enough —what is important is to conserve the ‘human ecologies that produced and inhabit them.’ Every market day, the farmers’ markets and *marchés forains* of many French cities revive the old laws of proximity between producer and stallholders, between market gardens on the urban perimeter and the city itself, between the market and its immediate area of influence, redefining the practices of local production with precise geographic limits and seasonal products and reactivating their urban surroundings with numerous commercial and socialising projects.<sup>93</sup> Promoting these markets, almost all of which were outdoor structures, was one of the efforts made to recover cities and that Sorkin identifies with the fight for democracy itself.<sup>94</sup> The structuring role of proximity is still preserved in many cities where nineteenth-century iron markets gave way in the twentieth century to outdoor travelling markets held daily at fixed venues. Alongside her old covered markets such as the one at Porta Palazzo, the city of Turin conserves a network of forty-two markets created during the twentieth century, most of them open-air structures in keeping with the various levels of planning influence: metropolitan, urban and local.<sup>95</sup>

In countries where covered-market networks were still in operation, these offered not inconsiderable advantages. Several Southern European countries like France introduced regulations, such as the 1973 Royer law, that were not posed strictly in terms of urban development but strove to avoid the collapse of small businesses and the waste of commercial

92. There are some interesting initiatives, however, such as the Project for Public Spaces (on-line), that suggests, among other proposals, using markets as elements in the revitalisation of cities and communities, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org), May 2010. Another interesting proposal is that of the Open Air Market Network, subtitled *The World Wide Guide to Farmers’ Markets, Street Markets, Flea Markets and Street Vendors*, [www.openair.org](http://www.openair.org), accessed May 2010.

93. This fight for recognition of the local as a sign of identity can be traced, for instance, in Michèle de la Pradelle, *Market Day in Provence*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2006; Roza Tchoukaleyska, ‘The Markets of Montpellier: national identity, food culture, and everyday city spaces,’ *IXth European Association for Urban History Conference 2008*, Lyon, 27-30 August 2008.

94. Michael Sorkin (ed.), *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, The Noonday Press, New York, 1992, p. XI-XV.

95. See Valter Cavallaro, ‘Il ruolo economico dei mercati ambulanti e il piano della città di Torino,’ in Dino Coppo and Anna Osello, *Il disegno di luoghi e mercati di Torino*, Celid, Turin, 2006, p. 49-59, and Carol Maillard, *25 halles de marché*, op. cit., p. 11.



Renovation of Santa Caterina market in Barcelona, 1997-2004. Architects: Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue

facilities.<sup>96</sup> From that moment on, the standpoint regarding hypermarkets became increasingly restrictive. In Spain, the impact of shopping centres was felt at a later date. Between 1984 and 1996 the expansion of large-scale shops coincided with the administrative adoption of the French model of commercial urbanism.<sup>97</sup> As had occurred with the plans for unroofed markets in Turin, Barcelona has been attempting since 1986 to use her covered markets to restore harmony in the city, stressing their significance in terms of planning and turning the renovation of the existing market system into a key element in proximity trade. These attempts have improved the infrastructure and image of many markets, although at the expense of

96. For a general survey, see Luis E. Arribas and Jacques Van de Ven, 'Políticas sectoriales adaptadas e insuficiencia analítica: la regulación del comercio minorista,' *Quaderns de Política Econòmica* (online), 2nd epoch, 5 (September-December 2003), [www.uv.es/~qpe/revista/num5/arribasven5.pdf](http://www.uv.es/~qpe/revista/num5/arribasven5.pdf), accessed May 2010.

97. See Raúl H. Green, Silvia Gatti and Manuel Rodríguez Zúñiga, 'Contraintes réglementaires et logique commerciale. Le cas de la France, de l'Italie et de l'Espagne,' *Agroalimentaria*, 6 (June 1998), p. 83-93.

a widespread drop in the number of stalls and of an increasingly thematised approach to market practices. As in other areas of post-industrial civilisation, in a hyper-consumption society filled with 'leisure experiences' these attempts can be related to the development of a sphere of consumption in which food is a key element.<sup>98</sup> To place emphasis exclusively on this bourgeois vision of markets can be limiting and in the long run will lead to an inexorable decrease in food consumption channelled through markets, in the interests of the unstoppable rise of other forms of distribution that basically offer lower prices.<sup>99</sup>

The true challenge faced by cities with networks of roofed or unroofed markets is that of avoiding total gentrification and through-and-through 'touristisation'. The thematised renewal entailed by renovation recovers the original idea of the first British markets, the search for the idea of middle-class respectability, emphasising only a limited aspect of the market experience, that of the upper spectrum of demand. Nevertheless, both before and during the golden age of covered markets, shopping at such establishments was essentially a popular experience. Supply and demand of foodstuffs were generated around markets and a wide variety of retailers and buyers: from sophisticated delicatessens to onion and garlic pedlars, from ladies accompanied by their maids to working-class women on the lookout for last-minute bargains on a Saturday. While renovated markets could not offer products as cheap and popular as those found in large chain stores or small neighbourhood franchises distributing fruit and vegetables, as beautiful and patrimonial structures catering only to one sector of demand or to tourist curiosity the days of the new markets are counted. While they may of course welcome tourists and delicatessen customers, more important is that they do not lose their traditional interclass character. What are needed

98. See Gilles Lipovetsky, *Le bonheur paradoxal. Essai sur la société d'hyperconsommation*, Gallimard, Paris, 2006. Néstor García Canclini's research on consumption is also very interesting, for it revises the binary terms of consumption and anti-consumption in which the subject is often discussed. For an ecological vision of consumption and necessities see, for instance, Joaquim Sempere, *Mejor con menos. Necesidades, explosión consumista y crisis ecológica*, Crítica, Barcelona, 2009.

99. The growth of hypermarkets as a new form of commercial distribution shouldn't be considered unlimited and some experts predict a notable contraction of the large shopping centres that dominate today's retail trade. In this sense, *Harvard Design School, Guide to Shopping*, Taschen, Cologne, 2001, p. 72-92, documents a number of abandoned shopping precincts. The time American consumers spend in 'malls' has steadily dropped, and it is believed that new forms of on-line shopping able to guarantee lower prices will lead to a fall in traditional trade, concentrating distribution in a few giant companies. For a critical view of large-scale commercial distribution of foodstuffs, see Xavier Montagut and Esther Vivas (eds.), *Supermercados: no, gracias. Grandes cadenas de distribución: impactos y alternativas*, Icaria, Barcelona, 2007.

are policies that combine renovation and new forms of popularisation: the chance for customers to purchase fresh produce (preferably local and seasonal) at cheap prices and for retailers to associate in order to make this feasible and at the same time compete with large-scale food distribution. The idea is also to promote medium and low scale demand, as in the case of stalls run by immigrants. Face-to-face trade in markets offers richer and more genuine experiences than other more generic forms of trade, providing that the capital component on which it is based, the hustle and bustle of market life, is not lost. Links to the past, new habits and cultural diversity in cities can all come together in markets, but to ensure that they continue to be that 'landmark for understanding human relations in neighbourhood practices,' as defined by Michel de Certeau,<sup>100</sup> markets must continue to be privileged centres of sociability and preserve their virtue as genuine sources of proximity—the very stuff cities are made of. If stalls continue to close, one after the other, this won't be possible.

The historical experience of covered markets in Europe teaches us, among other things, that cities characterised by residential dispersion (and unable to offer prices competitive with other modern forms of distribution and sales) eventually demolished their market halls, while denser cities with living networks of markets scattered around neighbourhoods (cities where modern forms of food distribution were introduced at a later date) managed to conserve them. In the latter, markets continue to be assets that favour urban balance, institutions that contribute to the making of cities. Hopefully, we are still in time to avoid making the mistake that European cities made when they gave up efficient and democratic forms of public transport such as electric trams, only to reintroduce them at a later date and at a much higher cost. We are still in time to ensure that market systems in European cities help avoid the weakening of urban life, the loss of the sense of solidarity, of belonging to and appropriating public space entailed by indiscriminate urban dispersion. The strategies and practices we adopt in relation to our markets will determine whether or not we succeed.

100. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984. Translation by Steven Rendall of *Arts de faire*, volume 1 of Certeau's *L'invention du quotidien*, Union générale d'éditions 10-18, Paris, 1980.