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Shopping spaces

Prague, 1992: the city is bounded to the southeast by one of the largest public housing complexes in Europe. Chodov housed a population in the region of 100,000 in a horizonless expanse of brute modernist high-rises, done in identical prefab concrete. Each building had painted onto its top floor an icon of a piece of fruit, in various colours, so that one could spot from a distance which building might be home. In fact, flats in Chodov were sought after, and people paid a premium rent in order to move out of the «old and decaying» Prague inner city (which to western eyes was the height of *retro chic*). This fact was incomprehensible to western visitors like myself not simply because of the soulless character of the accommodation but possibly more because of the paucity of amenities: These 100,000 people —a small town, in fact— were served by one small shopping arcade which addressed only the most basic of everyday grocery shopping, plus the rudiments of entertainment (a pub and a kind of leisure centre). Civil society —in the sense both of self-organised, voluntary association and in the sense of the private pursuit of self-interest that is meant to characterise both the consumption and production sides of a consumer society— had been spatially edited out of Chodov in the planning process. These things literally had no *place* here. By 1992, Chodov showed evidence of what was happening all over Eastern Europe: people were beginning to carve spaces out of this built environment, setting up markets and used car lots on vacant plots of grass between the buildings, transforming ground floor flats into shops, and so on.

One morning, next to one of the metro stations serving Chodov, I came across a huge, windowless, red brick cube of a building, two stories high and at least the size of a football pitch. Looking like a hi-tech factory for a science park, it came as no great surprise that this building was intended to house a mega supermarket much in keeping with its surrounds. I could almost see this phantom shopping space that never came into being, and I can visualise it because I know it from my western life as much as my eastern research: a Taylorist factory of consumption, the goods are organised in

smooth flowing isles according to function and substitutability (soap powders here, tins of sweetcorn there). The consumer moves along this Fordist conveyor belt up to the banks of check out tills which, like the time-clock in the factory, measure the wages of consumption as opposed to production. The visual and experiential stress is on stripped-down modernist functionality (indeed, let's call this ghost of Chodov the «modernist shopping centre») comprising time-savings, convenience, efficiency of operation, value for money, and above all economies of scale derived from the Fordist principle (and problem) of articulating mass production and mass consumption, and doing so through standardisation and homogenisation. It is crucial to remember that in both the east and the west, this modernist shopping once seemed both to signify and actually to deliver modernity into everyday life: for one's community to have a supermarket, to go shopping in one of these palaces of scientific consumption, was to be on the map of modernity, to *be* modern or even futuristic.

We have then to remember the extent to which that version of modernism has been discredited as a popular desire in both west and east. In the west, it declined through a revulsion against managerialism, massification, homogenisation; in the east, the revulsion additionally stems from the abject failure of soviet style modernisation to deliver what it promised: the functional shopping space came to be recognised as a hypocritical or empty signifier to the extent that the shelves were empty, the queues long, the choice risible, the quality shoddy and so on. It represented, enacted and embodied within everyday life the stupidity and indignity of a failing and delegitimised social order. Hence, with almost too neat symbolism, the building at Chodov was nearing completion just as the Velvet Revolution was gathering pace in autumn 1989 and was never used as a supermarket: that version of modernism died out for good in Prague without having delivered anything at all to the shelves at Chodov.

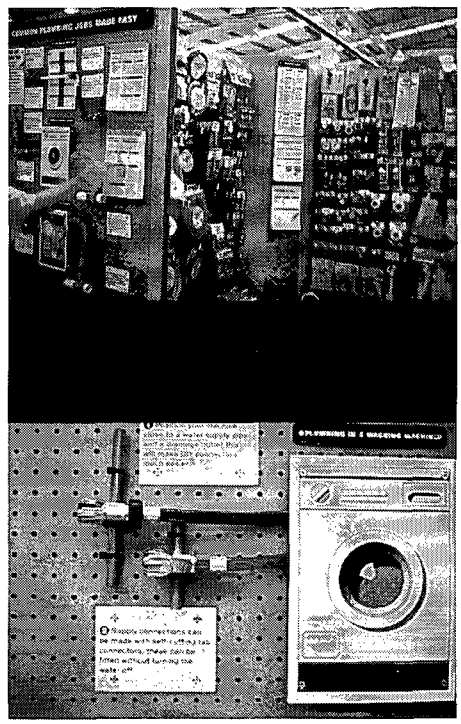
Instead, by 1992 the brick cube had come to house two very different kinds of market-places, different ways in which people encountered each other as well as commodities, experiences, forms of sociality and visions of society. Firstly, the vast downstairs floor at Chodov housed the kind of pre-modern marketplace which has been regarded as exemplary by liberal ideology from early modernity onwards: a multitude of small stall-holding vendors, confronting a milling crowd of street-wise buyers. Organisation and regulation of the marketplace was minimal. Vendors were non-bureaucratic entrepreneurs, operating on the lowest of margins, often socially liminal or criminal, and often themselves ethnically displaced merchants (Vietnamese, Poles, Russians, Romanians). The scene was vibrant, chaotic, free-wheeling: the negation of both the fact and signification of modernist rationalisation evinced by the supermarket, yet enunciating that other principle of modernity in which «all that is solid melts into air», dissolved by the «creative destructive» dynamism of economic and technological striving. The air was filled with shouting, dealing, hawking; the eyes filled by a profusion of things, by the swirling and unpredictable yet purposeful crowd. Paradoxically, this exemplary marketplace (like all the other ones that sprang up in Prague's social, spatial and economic interstices) was despised by the doctrinaire, Chicago-trained neo-liberal regime headed by Vaclav Klaus, as well as by the new corporate elite in downtown Prague who were seeking footholds in the new East for multinational advertising agencies, manufacturers, entertainment conglomerates and so on: those who most passionately promoted free choice and neo-liberal deregulation despised this free and unregulated market as criminal, disorganised, not paying proper taxes or keeping accounts (and therefore actually declared them to be engaged in «unfair competition»). This kind of market was to be stamped out both as an actual form of shopping and encountering commodities, and also as a signifier of the new consumerist and hence westernised Czechoslovakia. It was deemed more appropriate to the third world or criminal fringes.

Now, if you left the ground floor marketplace and walked upstairs, you reached a huge glass door which *swishhhhhed* open as you passed an electronic eye into a space with a regulated temperature and an atmosphere that struck you at the same time as the extraordinary range of colours, of organised visual spectacles, organised sounds (music, announcements, a quiet if excited hum of voices). Upstairs at Chodov was —to put this again all too neatly, but not inaccurately— a postmodern market place. Bizarrely, this space had recently been opened by a Mallorcan supermarket chain (SYP), and this was their first and only operation on mainland Europe. The *appearance* of this supermarket drew much of its symbolism from the pre-modern world evoked downstairs: it did not simply have a bak-

ery section but a «country kitchen» done in pine, with costumed bakers, sheafs of grain and an old-fashioned barrow; the fish section was done up as a mediterranean fishing village, with nets, buoys, painted seascapes; the vegetable section was kitted out to simulate an old market stall. There were many references other than to the pre-modern: for example, the fish stall's Mediterranean flavour was part of a general theme which linked this supermarket to Mallorca through holiday offers, pictures of beaches, use of Spanish signs, all of which evoked the glamour of western travel, a link to western leisure and consumption, a north/south axis which describes a flow of pleasures and luxuries. It was remarked to me that —as with the western shopping malls, but more intensely— people came to SYP in droves not just to buy or browse or even shop, but also to look and absorb the spectacles (as if in a museum or theatre), to absorb the ambience, moreover just to *be there*, where «it» was happening, where everyone else seemed to be pointing.

SYP was therefore something familiar to the west in terms of postmodernity: shopping as a form of leisure pursued within spaces that encompass consumption, or at least buying, within playful, fantastic, dreamlike spaces, spaces through which one flows from desire to desire (rather than from one functional need and rational calculation to another). These spaces simulate other social spaces (cities and streets, markets, workspaces) but in the form of safe representations, spaces in which to dream. They are therefore —in a possibly more complete sense than in previous eras of shopping— utopian spaces: social stages on which the pleasure principle rules unchecked by a reality principle. This version of shopping has now developed a generous literature which connects it up with larger mall complexes that combine shopping, entertainment, leisure and spaces for sociality, with theme parks and amusement complexes (which start from the other end —entertainment— and work back towards shopping), with the postmodernisation of inner cities and their transformation from industrial centres into centres of financial, service and leisure networks: Boston's Quincy Market, London's Covent Garden, see also Zukin (1991) on New York's downtown, or Davis (1990) on Los Angeles.

However if SYP evoked and simulated the premodern market (and other utopian imaginaries) it was actually quite a different social phenomenon: it did not spring from the voluntary actions and associations of



a multitude of buyers and sellers. Like the modernist supermarket, it sprang from detailed rational planning, in this case by and experienced multi-national marketing organisation which managed within one structure the convergence of diverse goods drawn from vast networks of trade onto a space planned in meticulous detail.

Shopping, modern and postmodern

I have been using this rather long ethnographic engagement with a particular shopping space in order to state the obvious in great detail: shopping can never be reduced to individuals' price-rational or functional behaviours in pursuit of the satisfaction of pre-understood and discrete wants (though it is important to recognise that we all do that *too*). The spatial, organisational, economic, socio-cultural and perceptual structures in which our encounters with commodities take place add up to complex cultural formations. What I have tried to emphasise above is that these shopping spaces very clearly reflect broader senses of the social, of what kind of society people are living in or —more usually— what kind of society they are working towards or dreaming of, or what social dreams are being conjured up for them by the marketing magicians who build these consumerist utopias. Shopping spaces seem to reflect forms of sociality as such; they are powerful because more than simply signifying these forms of sociality, they seem to embody them and to provide theatrical stages or spectacular collective spaces in which these dreams of sociality can be enacted, acted out, performed. To shop at SYP was —for the Prague citizens who went there not so much to shop as to «visit», as they would visit a museum, gallery or theatre— to partake of (and help nurture) a putative «return» to western liberal values such as freedom and individualism which they believed most accessible in consumerist spaces. Upstairs or downstairs at Chodov, or in the Chodov that never happened, people meet goods and assemble in collectivities that conjure up or promise different Czechoslovakias, different Europes, different lives, different ways of being together within the social.

The idea that we should think about shopping as a complex stage for the enactment of the social, and of dreams of the social, has been bound up with postmodern and post-Fordist theory. Indeed, for much of this work the shopping mall has been identified with «social centrality» (Shields, 1992; see also Chaney, 1983, 1991, 1993): if consumption is now the centre of social identity and meaning, then the mall —as the public space of consumerism— is the centre of social encounter, the place that we identify *as* our social stage. The mall is symptomatically where youth hangs out, but also a place to which old people in America are bused to spend their days amongst friends. It replaces —functionally, often physically— the old town centre, the older market square.

Postmodern work has sensitised us to such issues, but at the same time misleadingly identified them as recent developments, as if shopping has only become social in this broad sense with the rise of postmodern culture or the transition to a post-Fordist (as opposed to Fordist) articulation of production and consumption. Undoubtedly, there is some truth to this picture. Certain developments have intensified the cultural construction and calculation of shopping spaces: for example, niche marketing and product diversification, the increasing economic centrality of services, leisure and entertainment; the subsumption of older social roles and identities (worker, citizen, member of ethnic tradition) to the figure of the consumer and the procedures of individual choice.

However, it is not only in postmodern shopping malls that market relations become cultural: as we have seen in the case of Chodov, even the most modernist, apparently «de-culturated» shopping space was not just a place of hyper-efficient retailing but also a signifier of modernity and a stage on which to act it out, to participate in being modern. However, the functional aesthetic of modernism often obscures the fact that an aesthetic is nonetheless involved. Similarly the forms of economic thought that dominated modernity from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, tended to treat markets and market relations as entirely abstract, formally rational relationships (supply and demand vectors, aggregations of individual rational decision processes) (Slater, 1997). The market in economic thought has been a mathematical equation rather than the socio-cultural event which was really at stake. The hidden hand of market forces, in conventional thought, should not be affected by whether they are at work in an open market, shopping mall or global electronic futures market. This abstract, disembodied sense of the market is in marked contrast to the concretely spatio-temporal original meaning of «a mar-

ket»: a physical place where buyers and sellers meet at particular times, a word for the actual «building, square, or other public place for such meetings» (Chambers Dictionary). The market, in this older sense, *is* the town square on the first Saturday of each month or the floor of the Stock Exchange between 9.00 and 3.00 on weekdays. In fact, the more powerful developments in this field have recently come from economic sociology, which recognises that market relations can only be made sense of as substantive social relations; this includes making sense of shopping and consumer behaviour (for example, DiMaggio, 1990; Etzioni, 1988; Granovetter, 1985; Nelson, 1993).

If we look at the history of shopping, it is abundantly clear that the markets, shops and consumerist spectacles we today associate with postmodern shopping are rooted in long-term developments. The structures through which we now encounter commodities emerged within a complex of developments that we associate with modernity, as well as with modern transformations of more archaic social relations and institutions. Most fundamentally, shopping seems to be continuous with a near universal theme in human society: that markets establish a social focus by concentrating in specific times and locations not only economic provisioning, but also a range of desires and pleasures, political and social association, and cultural rites, celebrations and identities that are possible when people are gathered in a public space. Marketplaces are bound up with the gathering of urban crowds around a range of spectacles (goods, entertainments, opportunities for sociality, as well as for making a quick buck, the spectacle of the crowd itself). This market crowd, as Walter Benjamin (1989) argued, is simply a congregation of individuals pursuing their «isolated private interests», who happen to come together around a focus (*«a street, a conflagration, or a* traffic accident» —or a marketplace with its manifold spectacles).

For Benjamin, the urban crowd is modelled on the gathering of customers at the market: In fact, market, crowd and city are inextricable terms. As Braudel (1981 : 501) puts it, «Without a market, a town is inconceivable», while a «crowd» is inconceivable outside towns or markets (which can be a sort of temporary town). The market attracts crowds to the town, makes of it the geographical focus of networks of commercial enterprise and interest. The market square was the natural focus of social life, of its communications networks, activities and identity: Braudel (1982 : 30) notes that in pre-modern Europe, market days saw a rise in all forms of activity (for example, land sales, marriage and dowry contracts). As it grew, the permanent shops and houses built by prosperous merchants dominated the town centre, while the permanent civic structures designed to house the market tended also to house the town hall, thus uniting political, social and commercial centres. Only in the largest commercial cities and those which identified themselves less with merchant culture (eg Paris) were political and commercial activities hived off into separate civic spaces. Yet even non-commercial gatherings created markets: in the seventeenth century the old Palais in Paris (much like Westminster Hall in London) was the site of the Parlement and of the commercial law courts, yet along with the crowds gathered there primarily for legal matters, were gossips, merchants, prostitutes and strollers catered to by «stalls selling everything from ribbons to mirrors or purses to plumes». It was referred to as the «Palais Marchand», a kind of «luxury shopping centre» (Girouard, 1985 : 169).

Because of its relation to crowds, to the focusing of heterogeneous activities, the market is never just a market. For example, exchanges and early bourses, like the Royal Exchange (1567) in London or the Bourse (1513) in Antwerp were permanent enclosed structures built to house the activities of international merchant and banking networks. They included large, enclosed courtyards for gathering merchants, stalls in arcades around the centre for displaying and warehousing samples; on the upper stories, shops and refreshment stands selling unrelated goods, such as books, pictures, luxury clothing, spices and rarities; inside and around the exchange might well be rentable apartments. The crowd attracted to the exchange included not only merchants, but people keen to obtain information about international affairs; hawkers and prostitutes; a general public for whom the exchange like any market evinced the exotic in the form of goods and people from far-flung lands.

The arcades which Benjamin explored embody within a single image the idea that a market is, culturally, a gathering-place for crowds, offering diverse points of focus for diverse and contingent interests. Constructed in major capital cities throughout the nineteenth century, the arcades were covered passageways —glass and steel roofs covering pedestrian streets, originally crammed between buildings, closed

to traffic, policed, and lined by architecturally uniform shops as well as «cafés brothels, luxury stores, apartments, displays of food, fashion and furniture, art galleries, book stores, dioramas, theatres, baths, news stands, gambling houses, private clubs» (Buck-Morss, 1981 : 66). The Palais Royal (which Benjamin does not specifically discuss) built in Paris from 1780 contained the first arcade, and is emblematic in showing the roots of modern consumerism in the urban, spectacle-focused crowd. It represents the «unity» (Geist, 1983 : 458) of crowd functions gathered into one space: market, «society» and city crowds (from all social strata) were focused onto a spectacle in which there was «a direct connection between business, consumerism, entertainment, politics and information» (Geist, 1983 : 458). The Palais Royal contained «reading rooms, bookstores, small food markets for the cosmopolitan palate... furniture stores, jewellery and fashion shops, souvenir shops, pottery, tobacco, perfume and antiques. It had restaurants of all categories, cafés, gambling rooms, a stock exchange, a real estate agency, betting offices, brothels for all inclinations, and countless apartments and attic rooms for rent. It also contained theatres, picture galleries and other exhibitions» (Geist, 1983 : 458; see also Schama, 1989 : 134-136). Onto the Palais Royal was focused the emergent public sphere of the revolutionary period; the emerging consumer groups; emerging capital from stall-holders to international speculators; the emerging artistic bohemia: all the scattered dynamism of civil society focused on one physical space.

At least three historical forms of crowd-gathering can be mapped onto the «unity» of the Palais Royal: the pre-modern market, the leisure gatherings of «society», and the city itself. Firstly, although the Palais Royal contained shops, it contained them within the form of the older markets and exchanges. Pre-modern shops exemplified medieval *personalised* relationships (the seller was also the craftsman, the producer and member of the guild; the relationship between client and craftsman was one of patronage and commission in which even entering a shop involved an obligation to buy); by contrast the market, and the congregation of shops within an arcade, was based on *depersonalised* relationships —the individuals who here and there constellate into crowds are not only autonomous but *anonymous* and therefore democratically freed from personal obligation. The depersonalisation of market relationships is crucial to the history of shopping: the separation and *mediation* of production and consumption in the rise of middlemen; the replacement of haggling with fixed prices; not least the very idea of the (eventually *mass*) manufacture of goods for an unknown and generalised market. Above all, the anonymity of the marketer as opposed to shopper is linked from the earliest of markets and fairs to the idea of the hedonistic release of desires. The theme of the Rabelaisian, the carnivalesque, the spectacular, of utopian gratification in consumption (more specifically in shopping, in the marketplace itself) has been revived recently (for example, Featherstone, 1991) and particularly in relation to the reassertion of the body in cultural experience (for example, Turner, 1983; Stallybrass and White, 1986), and this must certainly be crucial in countering the formal and overly cognitive abstraction of the market in most social discourse. That the arcade, as prototype of the future of shopping, reaches back to the market rather than the shop, emblematises the continuity of a certain kind of relation between action and focus (ie the crowd), one in which economic activity continues to be wrapped up in the carnivalesque and the exotic, in showmanship and the attraction of desire. It points to both the libidinal nature of the relation between people and spectacles in shopping (the paradox that it is so utterly intimate precisely because it is so thoroughly depersonalised); and to the way in which this libidinal environment takes the form of such a wide range of amenities, so many forms of focus.

The second form of gathering cointained in the «unity» of the Palais Royal was the gathering of «society», the beau monde of the fashionable, the promenading social elite. To some extent, too much has been made of the role of social emulation in the development of consumerism, the aping of society fashions (and the very derivation of the idea of fashion from «society») (see for example McKendrick, *et al.*, 1983). I would rather derive the sense of play in modern consumerism from the culture of commerce itself, from the libidinal crowd, rather than from the diffusion of aristocratic lifestyles. Nonetheless, the structures for gathering developed by «society» over the eighteenth century certainly directly promoted the growth of specific consumer infrastructures, for example the modern shop and the commercialisation of leisure. What is most interesting however are the crowd-like qualities of «society» itself: «society» took over or created loosely enclosed public spaces (malls, parades, squares,

streets such as Regent Street) for the purposes of gathering and circulating, lobbying and politicking, arranging love and marriages, seeing and being seen. The well-dressed promenader in the Cours de Reine or Tuilleries was halted in his or her tracks by the equivalents of «a street, a conflagration, or a traffic accident» —though it might the sight of a royal, a courtesan, or a scandal.

«Society» as an element in the history of shopping emphasises that the idea of «a public space» is as important to actual markets as the buying and selling *per se*. This space could be commercially exploited —many of the activities around which society focused carried a price tag, while buying emerged gradually as a major activity in its own right— but all the forms in which it was institutionalised and commercialised had to preserve the essential element of «gathering» amorphously and on the basis of one's own desires and impulses: the promenades and avenues were themselves catered to by cafés, performers, the ubiquitous prostitutes; the pleasure gardens and coffee-houses, the leisure towns (spas like Bath) all had to preserve the free flowing nature of crowd-like encounters.

In fact, the relation between the carnivalesque market and the commercialisation of leisure could be quite direct: Late medieval fairs, like St Bartholemew's, Mayfair or Foire St Germain were periodic gatherings of merchants from all over Europe. The range of people and activities it attracted made of the fair another city, a simulated city: the incoming population often dwarfed and took over the town itself. The range of activity was astonishing: at the centre, the goods to be displayed and sold come from around the world, were themselves an exotic spectacle; on one side of this, the meeting of merchant bankers behind closed doors to settle debts on an international scale; on the other side, a panoply of Rabelaisian activity from gaming and prostitution, through animal baiting and theatricals, to refreshments, and the lure of the crowd itself. However, if the market was never just a market because it was also a spectacle and amusement, so it could evolve into pure spectacle, as was the case in the eighteenth century with both St Germain and St Bartholemew's «where the cloth-selling booths gradually disappeared and puppet-shows, plays, rope-walkers, waxworks, menageries, fire-eaters, jugglers and Punch and Judies took over» (Girouard, 1985 : 184).

Thirdly and finally, in addition to being a marketplace for the crowd and a leisure centre for society, the Palais Royal was also a simulated city. The list of the Palais Royal's amenities shows that it contained a city-like range of crowd-focusing attractions. It also simulated the city by virtue of the crowd that it gathered: catering to a sophisticated bourgeois market segment, nonetheless the presence of a panoply of social types —«financiers, gamblers, bohemians, *flâneurs*, political conspirators, dandies, prostitutes, criminals, ragpickers» (Buck-Morss, 1981 : 66)— rendered it a fit setting for a Balzacian *Comédie Humaine*. This crowd, like the members of society, assembled among other reasons in order to be a crowd, to be at the centre of networks of display, communications and spectacle. Finally the spectacle of the goods themselves signified cosmopolitan urbanity: like the range of social types and their activities, the mixing of identities and origins to be found in the city, such a market could claim to represent the world, its wealth and its diversity.

But the arcades which developed along the lines of the Palais Royal simulated the city in a deeper sense which Benjamin expresses in terms of their «ambiguity of space»: «The passages were buildings, closed interiors, yet their three-storey high, glass roofs let in the sky and gave the illusion of an exterior space, a street lined by shop facades» (Buck-Morss, 1981 : 66). Were these spaces interiors or exteriors? The glass and steel roofs did more than keep the elements out: they kept a «reality» in, moulding it an shaping it while cutting it off from the city outside, containing the ambience of market and city like a genie in a bottle. «What is really at work in the arcades is not, as in other iron constructions, the illumination of inner space but rather the subduing of external space» (Frisby, 1988 : 241), with the result «that such an arcade is a city, indeed a world, in miniature» (Benjamin, 1989 : 158). A simulacrum: «constructions or passages that have no outside, like the dream» (Frisby, 1988 : 240).

The arcade is a «dreamscape». This is Benjamin's term, but Rosalind Williams (1982) demonstrates that the metaphor of consumption as «dreamworld» dominated nineteenth century discussions of consumption. The arcade, the department store, the world exhibition —these were all places of transport, and this possibility of transport hinges on the crucial ambiguity which Benjamin identified in the interiorisation or containment of the market which both preserved and intensified its crowd qualities. One entered the arcade as if into a dream: new experiences loomed out of the hazy space as one walked, due to the flickering gas-lighting,

the punctuation of spectacle by spectacle, and to conscious architectural ploys such as poured glass shopfronts, and the arcade's «wealth of mirrors which extended spaces as if magically and made more difficult orientation, whilst at the same time giving them the ambiguous twinkle of nirvana» (Frisby, 1988 : 241).

The range of amenities, wares, spectacles and activities —of local points for gathering crowds— is not peculiar to the Palais Royal, but universal to the idea of a market. Geist's exhaustive catalogue shows that all arcades would have many of the following attractions in addition to shops: cafés, restaurants, bars; brothels, gaming rooms; hotels and pensions; clubs, meeting rooms; theatres, vaudeville, concert halls, cabarets, later cinemas; showrooms; panoramas, dioramas, cosmoramas, panopticons; bazaars, picture galleries, reading rooms; baths (Geist, 1983 : 110). The nineteenth-century department store, too, would want to boast reading rooms and rooms for ladies to write letters and relax, tea-rooms and restaurants, concerts and other theatricals (see for example, Adburgham, 1989; Miller, 1981). Williams (1982) vividly evokes the modelling of nineteenth-century Parisian department stores on the North African bazaar, producing a style she dubs the «chaotic-exotic»: extravagant shop displays rapidly became a crowd-attracting spectacle in their own right, in which both the profusion of goods and the use of props to place them in exotic settings turned the «market» into something of a theme park. Williams (1982) notes that at the 1900 Paris exposition, 21 of 33 major exhibits involved a «dynamic voyage of illusion», *«visions lointains»*: a trip down the Nile or across the Alps deploying every contemporary tool of magic, including film of mountain landscape back-projected onto the windows of real (and shaking) railway carriages. Further back in time, dioramas and panoramas were a central spectacular craze of the early modern period and were offered by most arcades (see also Slater, 1995).

This nineteenth century coincidence of hedonistic drifting, geographically focused gathering and wide-ranging attractions all contained within an enclosed space so that they «have no outside, like the dream» is virtually identical to the kind of consumer markets which are now considered archetypally postmodern. Consider, for example, Jameson's (1984) description of the Bonaventura hotel as emblematic of «a mutation in built space». The Bonaventura —like so many similar developments— houses a profusion of shops, cafés, financial facilities, landscapes and waterfalls, residences (albeit temporary), and amusements, all lining the street-like walkways the whole of which are contained within reality-excluding glass and metal canopies. Jameson notes that the entryways are almost backdoor affairs, the «membrane» between inside and outside being effaced to increase the sense of being within a self-contained world: it «aspires to being a total space, a complete world, a kind of miniature city» (Jameson, 1984 : 81). «It does not wish to be a part of the city but rather its equivalent and its replacement or substitute.» (Jameson, 1984 : 81) Like the arcade, this space replaces the city by simulating it. This might well bring us back to the postmodern supermarket at Chodov, which reached back before the modernist supermarket (whose aim was to command and plan life in the city) to simulate a fantasy of premodern social vibrancy under conditions of multi-national rationalisation.

However, the idea of containment, the interiorisation and intensification of the market experience into the managed «dreamscape» of modern shopping, is generally regarded as a lever by which crowds were disciplined into masses. Benjamin discerned the fascist mass in the ur-image of the crowd. The arcade was, for him, a «fossil», its consumers «dinosaurs», precisely because it preserved an image of an archaic form of consumption which was destroyed by department stores and exhibitions, by the concentrated forms of capital which assembled masses and linked them to overriding mass identities such as Capitalism, Nation, Race. The dialectic of the crowd —its ability to use the output of mass productions as vehicles for dreaming its own dreams— was shattered as its interests were regulated and rationalised in relation to the now all-determining mass production of commodities and the commodification of all the crowd's points of focus: they become means to the end of regulating and controlling consumption. Thus, for Rosalind Williams, the mid-nineteenth century department store appears to have become a place of manipulation by spectacle, the «dreamworld» (defined dialectically by Benjamin) has become instrumentalised into a generator of *mass* consumption.

We can isolate several features of such a story of the move to mass marketing: First, the market —punters and stalls— are incorporated and literally «interiorised» within ever larger and more rationalised and integrated forms of management. The department store, shopping mall and so on interiorise the crowd

and market spatially —within a unified architecture and logistics; and organisationally— all aspects of shopping are subjected to rationalisation: range and supply of goods, shop display, movements of people around the commodities, payment and billing. The market can be cost-accounted on a per item basis. The entire spectacle of focused desire can be placed under one roof —under the control of unified management— and subjected without residue to the rationality of profit.

Under the rationalising logic of routinisation and the commercial logic of high turnover with low unit price, the residual fripperies which formerly attracted the market crowd fall by the wayside until in the end we reach the supermarket, the hypermarket, the discount warehouse: the impulsive crowd is subjected to the unitary logic of planning. These are Taylorist machines for selling, in which buyers and sellers are both ergonomically measured for maximum throughput. Function and process dictate form and movement: unambiguous, evenly lit commodities differentiated by category on cost-accounted, highway-like shelving; check-outs like toll-booths at the end of the road or like the time-clock at the entrance to the assembly-line. Modernism in production —Taylorist rationalization of all movement to norms of efficiency— is met with the mass production of consumer desires as standardized and predictable as the goods which supposedly fill them. This is the «myth of mass culture»: the fear of unitary organization (vertically integrated monopolies with price-fixing power) and unitary principles of control (the psychology of persuasion, the power of the media). This is not a market.

Secondly, the assembled crowd is turned into a mass by being «named», as Benjamin puts it. By the mid-nineteenth century, arcades, markets, department stores, international exhibitions were hitched to the twin juggernauts of nationalism and global modernity. The arcades up to the mid-nineteenth century were private speculations which depended on serving public needs. After this point, Berlin, Milan and Brussels, for example, built —for the first time with major public financial and political participation— monolithic arcades which were designed as symbols and ideological engines of national unification, national pride and modernity. Moscow's New Trade Halls, later GUM department store, was the giganticist culmination, clearing an entire section of the city for a statement of modernising nationalism which suited the productivist avant-garde (Mayakovsky and Rodchenko did the advertising) and Stalinist bureaucracy as well as the modernising elite which actually built it under the Czar. The department stores, too, claimed to be national institutions and linked themselves to the world expositions, marrying nationalism, modernity and consumption. The world exhibitions, according to Benjamin, turned the market into a social and political phantasmagoria —an advertisement for modern industrialism.

Thirdly, the interiorisation and «ideologisation» of the market can be understood in Foucauldian terms as the disciplining of congregated bodies. In the narrative of oppressive modernism, the arcade is a direct ancestor of twentieth century social engineering. Emblematic for Benjamin of the «dream-world» of consumerism, they were also Fourier's model for the phalanstery: these were envisaged as large self-contained «communities» of 2,000 people, divided into «clans» and living on arcade style corridors —appartments taking the place of the shops— linked by covered and heated passageways, with a communal dining hall which could serve the whole community at once, and «one shop for buying and selling goods would replace the 300 parasitic and competitive businesses. In short, a uniform economic plan...» (Fourier, quoted in Geist, 1983 : 32). Fourier had in mind the Palais Royal, but turned its atomic crowds into masses organised in detail. Geist notes close architectural and historical connections between the arcades and prisons and other Foucauldian carceral and public buildings. John Havilland's American prisons were influenced by the Parisian arcades from 1822 onwards. The arcade is actually the original panopticon: arcade and prison are a «total traffic system, with surveillance and a very high density of cells/shops» (Geist, 1983 : 28).

The interiorisation of the market appears as part of the story of the social engineering of cities and dwellings under bureaucratic socialism and welfare capitalism, with a stopping point first in the utopian modernism of the avant-garde —simulations of the city as a «machine for living» which crowd out the very dynamism of civil society they were designed to house. The red brick cube of Chodov is one its cheaper culminations. After oppressive modernity, postmodernity presents itself as a reaction and a return to first principles. The shopping mall returns architecturally to the arcade and the market gathering and browsing, its simulation of the city street, its planned organicism. The central theme in postmodernism is precisely the return

from the mass back to the crowd: instead of replacing the chaotic movement of individuals with the uniformity of efficient movement, it addresses the bizarre, organic, lunatic ways in which people move about. It starts from the spectacles which attract them rather than the functions into which they must fit. Such is the promise anyway: that distraction rather than discipline, pleasure rather than control, fluidity rather than system is the order of postmodern space. Certainly the labels of 1980s consumerism highlight this: the move from mass, national markets to market segments; from standardized mass production to small-batch targeted design; the move to designed environments and a «shopping experience», to «consumption communities» (Boorstin, 1973), lifestyles and identities which «are not defined along class lines» (Benjamin), a heightened hedonistic individualism which constellates groups by the accident of their shared desires. All this addresses the «crowd» in terms of the very concrete situations of the persons whose attention must be gained to constitute it (and translate it into sales).

Do we all go «shopping»

Our exploration of these long-term themes within the history of shopping —crowds, spectacles, amenities, regulation and so on— indicate fairly clearly that we are involved in evolutions of market spaces over the course of modernity rather than a local and recent production of the postmodern period. Where postmodern theorists ignore this history they fail to recognise that markets and shopping are always cultural structures; that they integrate and focus the economic, social and cultural reproduction of communities within spatially and temporally specific events and structures. This is simply not a new story.

On the other hand, it is also not the whole story about shopping and markets. A consistent problem with much recent work on shopping has been a tendency to take these market experiences at their own word, to swallow the imagery and promises projected by their spectacles, by the apparent democracy of the market crowd, by the aura of fantastical hedonism that surrounds shopping. The problem with this is fairly simple and evident in everyday experience: firstly, not everyone is able to participate in this «dreamscape», or even allowed to enter it; and, secondly, not all shopping is of this utopian, socially visionary sort. Moreover, these two issues come together in various critical and also reactionary discourses: when subordinated social groups seem to be gaining access to this version of shopping as hedonistic sociality unnerved elitists —whether of the political right or left— tend to start shouting about moral danger and decay. Simply put: contemporary theory must recognise that not all shopping is like this, or for everyone.

At one level, the issues here are crude and obvious: Clearly, poverty disenfranchises whole sectors of the population from the world of shopping. Bauman (1987), for example, has powerful distinguished between the «seduced» and the «repressed» sectors of postmodern populations: if identity is now truly worked out in relation to private consumer choice (and the «seductions» that operate on it), then those whose needs are met as clients of the remains of the welfare state are inevitably repressed and excluded (and presumably would be even if their state benefits were remotely sufficient). Shopping probably has been quite crucial to the working out of modern dreams; but these dreams and dream spaces may have excluded many people. Of course, poverty is only one form of exclusion: the respectable spaces of department stores and shopping malls —more extremely than the city streets they simulated— were inhospitable (or prohibited) to women, ethnic minorites, the disabled, the old, the very young, and so on. Moreover, in order for shopping malls and their like to function as safe dreamscapes and profitable enterprises, they are heavily policed. Populations are displaced in the tens of thousands to make way for them through the «clearance» of decayed inner cities; once built, private security organisations, surveillance equipment, statutes and by-laws, local custom and so on enforce certain kinds of behaviours, exclude populations (above all the policing of youth, ethnic minorities, the poor or poor-looking). The very design as well as geographical placing of shopping spaces can tell entire populations that «this place is not for you», «you won't feel comfortable here». The eye of a surveillance camera or of a confident middle-class shopper or sales assistant can convey this message equally well.

Interestingly, the mapping of social inequalities of class, age, ethnicity onto shopping goes deeper than income inequality or status ascriptions. For example, the early modern English language made a distinction between «shopping» and «marketing» that reflects apparently very widespread anthropological data about

distinctions between spheres of luxury, status-confering goods (women, shells) which are exchanged and possessed by those competing for power and which are generally kept strictly separate from objects of everyday use and from those members of the population (generally women, servants, low status castes) who carry out mundane social reproduction. In the late seventeenth century, the upper class diarist Samuel Pepys records that, one day, his maid was away and there was insufficient food in the house. Pepys, who loved «shopping» for stationery, clothes and information at Westminster and the Royal Exchange, decided to go «marketing» with his wife down at the food and vegetable markets down by the river Thames. They made of it a kind of pastoral or masque, playing at being servant girl and lackey, a costume drama of class inversion. They were careful, however, to hire a real servant girl to carry their basket home for them, lest a neighbour might see (Adburgham, 1979).

Although, as my Chodov example indicates, mundane provisioning is now frequently wrapped in many of the same signifiers as luxury shopping (though there are still clear distinctions between up-market and budget supermarkets), the difference nonethless persists: any woman, and increasing numbers of men, know the difference between everyday shopping for groceries and the pleasurable, hedonist dreamlike engaged in a department store, for special occasion purchases, for special clothes. We know the difference between leisurely window shopping in a mall as opposed to buying toothpaste, toilet paper or prepared food in a rush on the way home from work or dragging the kids home from school. We even know the difference between this kind of shopping on the run an the big weekly shop which may have quite pleasurable elements or be accompanied by treats, entertainments, family pleasures and so on.

It is also clear that the transitions between mundane marketing and hedonistic shopping a la postmodernism is very heavily policed, as is all access to pleasure. A historical example may be best here: whereas the development of the department store has generally been heralded as a place in which bourgeois women gained significant freedoms to go to the city unaccompanied, to be motivated by their own desires, to engage in imaginative longings (Campbell, 1989) it has also to be remembered that woman's entry into these new spaces was accompanied by major moral panics, pathologisation and policing (see, for example, Bowlby 1985, 1987, Reekie 1993, Wilson 1985, 1991). Miller's (1981) history of the Bon Marché in Paris argues that the very scale of its operation and bureaucracy, its modernity, appeared to the bourgeoisie as destructive of the traditional values of *Gemeinschäftlich* society. Much of this worry was articulated around fears about female sexuality, about the extent to which shopping women would continue to act «respectably». Emergent places of public gathering regularly attract moral suspicion: this goes for the pleasure gardens and assembly rooms of eighteenth century «society» as much as for commercial gatherings and the city streets themselves (for example, Walkowitz, 1993). All these crowds typified unregulated hedonism —how was any moral order possible in collectivity organised around desire and distraction and no longer regulated by traditional, person-based forms of scrutiny? Miller traces the history of kleptomania, topicalised in Parisian debate and psychiatry from the 1850s onwards: it was clearly ascribed to female sexual disorder (hysteria) and focused moral fears of shopping as unbridled and unabashed desire. These fears extended to shopping as a female addiction, stories of women abandoning children and ruining husbands because of the enticements and the moral anonymity of the crowd, the possibility of living out a secret life in these public places. Such fears were furthermore projected onto the shop staff, with worries about shop girls leading licentious lives. The Bon Marché consequently policed their employee's private lives (cohabitation was grounds for dismissal), and at work provided separate dining rooms for men and women. In Miller's account, this was part of the Bon Marché general policy of countering fears about the propriety of shopping with a policy of paternalism in which husbands were assured that the department store was a fit place for their wives to attend.

These issues of regulation and exclusion, as much as the history of assembling crowds around spectacles of utopian social order, should underline how far beyond «merely» economic or rational social action shopping takes us. In all its aspects, shopping is a stage upon which a very modern drama is both organised and acted out, on which it can be seen and also dreamed: it would seem that it is through the ways in which desires and commodities meet in these public spaces that we represent the social order.

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