

Resisting gentrification in traditional public markets: Lessons from London

Sara González and Gloria Dawson

Introduction

This chapter discusses traditional retail markets in London as spaces where traders and citizens mobilise around wider urban and political issues. Recently in London campaigns have emerged to defend traditional markets from various threats: privatisation, gentrification, closure, demolition, displacement of traders, rent hikes or abandonment and disinvestment (González and Dawson, 2015). These struggles exist in a city that is increasingly unaffordable for low- and middle-income residents while at the same time being a profitable real estate market for global investment companies (Beswick et al., 2016). In particular, housing has become a key space for contestation, with many campaigns fighting against public housing demolition or privatisation, evictions or against the development of luxury and speculative housing projects (Lees and Ferreri, 2016; Watt and Minton, 2016). Less attention has been paid to other spaces where political mobilisation against the neoliberalisation of the city is taking place, such as work or retail spaces (although see Just Space, 2015).

In this chapter, we focus on three inner London markets and campaigns to protect or save them; Queen's Market, Seven Sisters Market and Shepherd's Bush Market (See Figure 1). They are all undergoing or have recently undergone processes of redevelopment which threaten their sustainability. They are all situated in relatively deprived neighbourhoods and serve an ethnically-mixed and generally low-income population. In all three cases there has been a period of neglect and disinvestment which has then been used as partial justification for an intervention which would see the markets' physical infrastructure upgraded, but also, crucially, the social mix of the traders and customers changed – towards a higher income and higher -value goods profile.

Although this chapter focuses on London, market campaigns have been emerging across the UK in the past few decades (for an account, see González and Dawson, 2015). However this phenomenon is largely invisible in the academic literature and more generally in the national media (although see various articles in *The Guardian*, e.g. Dobson, 2015 and Perry, 2015). These campaigns take various shapes, sometimes involving only traders, sometimes only market users and many times bringing both together. At times they focus on specific demands regarding a particular market, while other times they engage with wider changes in borough and/or city, forming alliances with other groups. As we will see, in these struggles, the market becomes a metaphor for the city where issues of urban justice take a particular form. In particular, in this chapter we will interpret these 'market struggles' as anti-gentrification mobilisations. The chapter also aims to expand our understanding of gentrification and anti-gentrification beyond residential struggles to incorporate what can be interpreted as 'retail gentrification'. Finally, we also want to discuss the relevance of traditional retail markets as political spaces for mobilisation around citizenship and the right to the city.

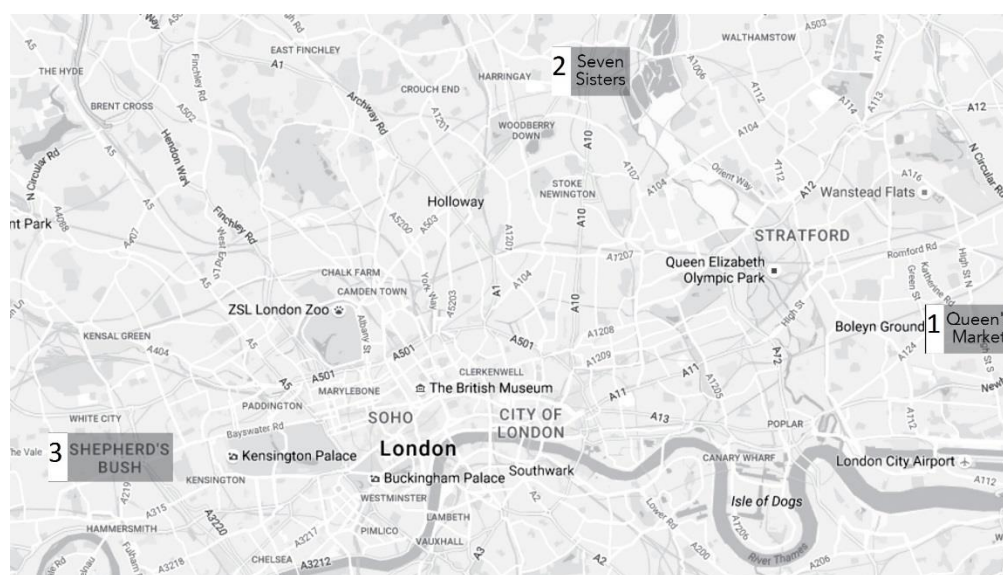


Figure 4.1 Location of markets discussed in this chapter.

Source: Annotated Google Map

This work is based on action research carried out with groups new to us and campaigns and networks in which we were already engaged. It was mostly funded by an Antipode Scholar-Activist award (2014–2015)¹. Through initial desk research ten key campaigns were

identified, three of which are drawn on in this chapter. Initial online contact developed into visits and meetings. As embedded activist researchers, our focus was not so much on producing verbatim accounts of interviews or objective data analysis as on reflecting, organising and deepening collective knowledge and power. Towards the end of the project, a report was published (González and Dawson, 2015) and disseminated widely with market campaigns and policy-makers from key national organisations. The research period culminated in a meeting in January 2016 in London, involving of a group of individuals involved in or interested in market campaigning, including campaign representatives, food activists and researchers. From this an informal network was formed to share information and support.

The following section of the chapter outlines markets as new frontiers of gentrification and contestation by first outlining 'retail gentrification' as distinct from gentrification more generally. The next three sections focus on London, taking first historical issues surrounding London markets in terms of legal frameworks, planning and history, moving to what we identify as a moment of transition for the capital's traditional markets. Following this, three case studies of recent London market campaigns are described. We then draw out some of the wider processes that are challenged by these campaigns, including property speculation, rent rises and displacement of users and traders. The penultimate section focuses on tools and tactics mobilised by these groups. We briefly conclude the chapter with the main arguments returning briefly to the theoretical premises set out at the start.

Markets as new frontiers of gentrification and contestation

Gentrification is now an established concept across the international academic community of critical urban studies, and in activism around urban issues. Using Clark's (2005, p. 263) broad definition, we understand gentrification as

a process involving a change in the population of land users such that the new users are of a higher socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital.

Gentrification inevitably involves displacement of some residents and users of urban space by wealthier and higher-income users. Some authors argue that gentrification has become a global trend, present simultaneously in many different cities, albeit taking many different forms according to diverse geographical contexts (Lees et al., 2016). Traditionally, gentrification has been analysed in relationship to housing, looking at residential and neighbourhood changes and policies which involve the displacement of working-class and lower-income populations. However, gentrification also takes place in retail spaces and although this has been previously neglected in the critical urban studies literature, there is now emerging evidence of this process. We define retail gentrification as:

the process whereby the commerce that serves (amongst others) a population of low income is transformed/replaced into/by a type of retail targeted at wealthier people. From a different angle, we can also see it as the increase in commercial rents that pushes traders [and retailers] to increase the price of their products, change products or change location.

(González and Dawson, 2015, p. 19)

Zukin et al. (2009) have discussed the increase in boutiques and large retail chains in some neighbourhoods in New York at the expense of local traditional stores. Similarly, research shows how residents have been displaced in a neighbourhood in Santiago de Chile by trendy shops and bars (Schlack and Turnbull, 2016), and in a heritage-rich neighbourhood in Shanghai (González Martínez, 2016). As we already discussed in the introduction to this book, gentrification is also taking place in traditional public markets due to multiple processes coming together: decline of the traditional forms of shopping with the explosion of globalised retail businesses such as supermarkets; revalorisation of the heritage value of market buildings; trends of commodification and 'touristification' of food; local and public authorities underinvesting in their retail assets while at the same time wanting to maximise their real estate values. Markets, therefore, are becoming new frontiers for gentrification

processes. This is inevitably bringing about conflict between different publics, communities and classes as well as about what role markets should fulfil in cities.

If the literature on retail gentrification is still limited, research and analysis on processes resisting this gentrification is even scarcer and scattered across various areas. Some of the work focuses on grassroots mobilisations against supermarkets and retail chains: In the US, Sites (2007) discusses a campaign against the opening of the retail chain Walmart because of their poor treatment of staff. In The UK there have been many campaigns against the opening of Tesco stores (a large supermarket chain) (Clement, 2012). In Istanbul the Gezi park mobilisation in 2013 originally started as a protest against the opening of a shopping centre (Kuymulu, 2013). In the global South, as discussed in the introduction of this book, one of the most visible and violent expressions of gentrification is the forced eviction of informal traders and customers from central urban areas, processes which are generally strongly resisted by organised traders (Bromley and Mackie, 2009; Brown et al, 2010; Cross, 2000; Crossa, 2009).

Markets and retail spaces therefore are increasingly becoming not only frontiers for gentrification but also for new struggles against it (González and Waley, 2013). Various chapters in this book report on such struggles, as well as further work from Latin America (Boldrini and Malizia, 2014; Delgadillo, 2016). In contrast to contestation around housing issues, these mobilisations involve people who work *and* use/consume in these spaces and who are demanding a right to the city in different ways. The importance to add retail to struggles for the right to the city has been in fact highlighted by Zukin et al (2009, p. 62) when asserted that 'the right to the city passes through the right to shop there'; and, we would also add (especially in the context of small businesses), to work there too.

Changes and challenges for London Market Trading in a historical and contemporary context

Markets have had a strong presence in the streets in London, emerging in many different forms. In the second half of the seventeenth century, there was a rise in formally recognised markets (Smith, 2002) and by late eighteenth century, London had over 30 such markets. However, by the nineteenth century, formal markets struggled to expand at the same rate as the population and demand. Unlike in other major cities such as Barcelona or Paris, in London there was no centrally organised plan for the expansion of municipal markets (Jones, 2016 and Fava et al, 2015). To cover that gap, informal and unregulated street markets emerged as the alternative. Initially, costermongers, itinerant traders, bought goods from wholesale markets and moved around selling in mobile stalls. Later they started to trade in fixed locations (Kelley, 2015) partly in response to their repression and stigmatisation by the public authorities (Kelley, 2015; Jones, 2016). By the beginning of the twentieth century there were around 8,000 stalls on street markets in London, the majority located in the poorest neighbourhoods (Kelley, 2015). Jones (2016, p.71) explains their social value:

Costermongers' flexibility, sustainability and efficiency meant that they could rapidly find buyers for produce that had been designated as wastage by others. Traders had low overheads and were able to sell smaller amounts of inexpensive goods to customers who could not afford to buy larger amounts of higher-quality produce elsewhere.

Today, London still has many markets which play a vital role in the life of Londoners, particularly the poorest ones. A recent report records 99 markets in central and inner London (Cross River Partnership, 2014) and a slightly earlier report on the whole of London reported 162 (Regeneris, 2010). In inner and central London, the turnover of markets in 2014 is estimated at £360m per annum (Cross River Partnership, 2014). A range of policy reports indicate that many markets in London are in a moment of transition. There has been a growth in the number and turnover of markets but this is mainly amongst privately-run and owned markets and more 'niche' markets catering for a wealthier clientele: farmers' markets,

speciality markets, street food, craft markets, etc (ibid.). There is also a trend for municipal markets to switch to being managed and/or owned by private operators. From 2008-2014 there was an increase of 9% in private markets in London from 30 to 39, and a decline of local authority-run markets from 70% to 54% (Cross River Partnership, 2014). The Financial Times reports that farmers' markets are part of the mix that attracts wealthy residents to expensive central neighbourhoods in London (Cox, 2015). The model markets that are often signalled in policy literature and media as successful are all either tourist destinations or mainly target high-income customers. The more traditional markets, mostly run by local authorities, seem to do less well and these are also more likely to be located in deprived communities (Regeneris, 2010). To explain the decline of the traditional London market, reports highlight changing consumption patterns (the rise of the internet, and supermarkets, especially small ones) but also lack of investment by local authorities (Cross River Partnership, 2014; Regeneris, 2010). Additionally, many London markets are in key central locations and experience pressure from local authorities and developers to be displaced to realise the high land values by building something more profitable instead (González and Dawson, 2015).

As in the past, these reports also show clearly that markets continue to be important for the poorest and most vulnerable communities. There is a clear relationship between the spatial distribution of markets and areas of deprivation in inner and central London; there is also a correlation between the location of markets and those areas with a highest number of Black and minority ethnic (BME) populations, who tend to have lower incomes (Cross River Partnership, 2014). Markets in London also showcase the ethnic and cultural diversity of the city and there has been some research exploring how markets improve communication and understanding between diverse groups (Dines, 2007; Watson, 2009). They also are particularly important for providing access to affordable, accessible fresh food. They also act as 'meeting places and locations for social exchanges, for learning about food and for engaging in the community. The benefits appear to be particularly important for the elderly.' (NEF, 2005, p. 54). This chapter focuses on several such markets.

To understand the public discourse around the 'decline' of traditional markets in the London and to analyse the campaigns and mobilisations around them, we need to put the phenomenon in the context of wider changes in global retail and also urban development and urban policies. The decline and renaissance of markets in London occurs within a context of regeneration, state-led gentrification and austerity urbanism (Watt and Minton, 2015). London is experiencing many forms and levels of gentrification, with low-income residents struggling to afford to live, work and even shop in central spaces. Financialisation of the UK economy has particularly affected housing in the capital, as London property is increasingly seen as an investment not only for individuals but also for the state (Edwards, 2016; Watt and Minton, 2016). In some neighbourhoods where our case study markets are based, the population living in social housing peaked at 82 per cent in the 1980s (Watt and Minton, 2015). But much purpose-built social housing is now undergoing massive processes of regeneration, with large-scale demolition, privatisation and rebuilding on new housing aimed at middle class residents. The result is the displacement of many low-income residents from these central areas (London Tenants Federation, 2014), which is not uncontested (Lees and Ferreri, 2016). Public markets, like housing, have become a frontier for gentrification. They are regarded by public and private actors as under-realised opportunities, where a higher profit uses could be developed.

Three market campaigns in London

In this context of regeneration and gentrification, a number of campaigns to protect public markets in London have emerged. This paper focuses on three campaign groups in London. We describe the emergence and configuration of these groups; in the next section we also analyse their tactics and campaign tools used as well as how the concept of the public market has been explored in each case.

Queen's Market is owned and managed by Newham Council, one of the 32 councils in the Greater London Authority. The market, in North-East London, sits in one of the poorest London neighbourhoods with high ill-health and one of the highest unemployment rates in the

city. Even by London standards it has a high black and minority ethnic (BME) population (London's Poverty Profile, 2015). Queen's Market is a key local resource for the affordability and variety of foods, including for those BME groups. A market has existed for many years but the current canopy building dates from 1963 (Percival, 2009). In 2003 traders and customers found out that the market was up for sale, and in 2004 Newham council revealed that it had partnered with a private developer, St Modwen, for a regeneration plan that involved the demolition of the existing market, the construction of a residential tower block, an ASDA supermarket and a much smaller market. According to the council and developers this regeneration was needed because the market had 'reached the end of its useful life' and 'traders are working in the dark ages' given the lack of hygiene facilities (Percival, 2009, p. 31). These plans attracted opposition from the local community and Friends of Queen's Market (FoQM) was born. In 2006 a petition was submitted against the plans with 12,000 signatures; Over 2,500 separate objection letters were also sent. A revised planning application for the development was approved by the council, although after much lobbying from campaigners it was revoked by London's Mayor, Boris Johnson, in 2009. Queen's Market was saved from demolition and a redevelopment. However, FoQM has carried on campaigning, as they believe the market is under permanent threat; in 2011 Newham Council earmarked it as 'strategic site' for a 'mixed used development' (FoQM website, n.d.). This was contested by FoQM and eventually the threat was removed. However the neighbourhood is experiencing other forms of gentrification and the market suffers a general state of disrepair and disinvestment.

In Seven Sisters, North London, the mainly Latin American indoor market of around 40 shops and stalls has been under threat of demolition and relocation since 2007. Traders and the wider community have been fighting through legal challenges and complex campaigning. The Market is located in Haringey, which, like Newham, is one of the poorest neighbourhoods in London and in the UK, with a very diverse population (Haringey London, 2015).

In 2004, the local authority started negotiations with the developer Grainger to redevelop the whole area, named Wards Corner, with the market at its heart. The proposals, crafted without proper consultation with residents and local businesses, involved the demolition of the indoor market (Román Velázquez, 2013), the building of private flats in a gated style (WCCC, 2008) and demolition of local architectural heritage. By late 2007 a community group called Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCCC) had formed to oppose the plans and propose alternatives, with support from residents' associations, the market traders' association, and heritage and local cultural associations (WCC, n.d a and b). In March 2008 a planning application was submitted by the developer, Grainger, which was initially approved by the public authority. However, WCCC challenged this in the courts on the basis that it did not consider the negative impact on the Latin American community using the market; this resulted in the planning application being quashed in 2010 (WCCC, 2012) Eventually the developer acquired planning permission for a mixed-use project involving new retail space and 196 non-'affordable' housing units. In October 2016, Haringey Council brought forward its power to compulsorily purchase properties in the area to facilitate the developer's land assembly which WCCC and traders opposed. The project is now on hold, subject to a public inquiry by the Secretary of State of local government (Haringey London, 2016). In parallel to the developers' plan, WCCC, other campaigners and traders have been developing an alternative community plan for which they acquired planning permission in 2014 (WCCC, 2014a), have set up a Development Trust and have been linking with other organisations in the area to campaign on issues centring on the best interests of diverse local communities (Our Tottenham, n.d.).

In West London, the Shepherd's Bush Market Tenants' Association (SBMTA) have been fighting for years against a regeneration project which would have transformed the area around the 100-year-old market. SBMTA is an independent association, representing the vast majority of 140-odd market businesses. The market is a partly street and partly covered market stretching along a train track. Again, this market is situated in a highly diverse neighbourhood (Hammersmith and Fulham, 2011). It is also one of the most deprived areas in the highly polarised borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, with lower than average household incomes and academic qualifications (ibid). A survey conducted in 2008 showed

that the market relied heavily on low-income population groups (GVA Grimley, 2008). The report also showed the strong presence of ethnic minority users.

Like Queen's Market, the proposed private development in and around Shepherd's Bush Market would have created around 200 residential units, none of which would be 'affordable'. It would also include refurbishing the market. The local authority and the private developers have both suggested the need to 'enhanc[e] the Market's offer with a more diverse mix, complemented by new retail, café and restaurant uses.' (Hammersmith and Fullham, 2011: section 4). Traders have been concerned that although in theory the new development would keep the market, it would vastly change the area and bring new residents with different consumption preferences unlikely to prefer existing businesses. Even before this proposed development, traders denounced the lack of investment in the market by the previous owner, Transport for London (TfL), a significant London landlord (Horada, 2013). In 2011 a private developer, Orion, in partnership with Development Securities PLC, bought a large part of the market and adjacent plots to enable their development. Their initial planning application was not approved by the Mayor of London as it did not justify the lack of affordable housing and was unclear on how the 'unique character' of the market would be maintained. (Greater London Authority, 2011). Eventually the scheme was given planning permission by the local authority in March 2012. However, a series of legal challenges led by traders and independent business owners and a public inquiry in 2014 by the relevant Secretary of State have challenged the project repeatedly and finally in September 2016 the developers announced that they would no longer pursue the project (Prynn and Diebelius, 2016). Despite this victory, the long dispute and uncertainty has had a significant impact on the market and around 10% of traders left the market in 2014-2015 (Leigh Day, 2015).

In this section we have explored three examples of long-term campaigns by London market traders and users. In the next section we provide a more detailed analysis of how we can understand these contestations through the lens of gentrification and how traders and campaigners are mobilising around markets not just as work or retail spaces but also as a community resources.

Gentrification and displacement in traditional retail markets in London

We see the three campaigns described in the previous section (and several others currently active in London) as campaigns against the gentrification of community and workspaces directly challenging five important processes linked to gentrification: 1) Abandonment and disinvestment; 2) Property speculation, 3) Plans to 'upscale' their socioeconomic profile; 4) Higher rents and prices and 5) Potential displacement of certain users and traders. Using our case studies, we illustrate these processes in turn.

The three market campaigns are struggling against **abandonment and/or disinvestment** by managers and owners. Shepherd's Bush and Seven Sisters were both previously owned (at least in part) by Transport for London (TfL), who increasingly consider their assets as real estate development opportunities (Future of London, 2014). In the case of Shepherd's Bush Market, TfL's share was sold to developer Orion after a long period of neglect. According to local Member of Parliament, Andy Slaughter, deliberate lack of investment by TfL was 'being used as an excuse for demolition of the whole site' (Slaughter, 2013, p. 2). Similarly, in Seven Sisters, WCCC argues that 'Transport for London has allowed their properties [the market and the buildings] to lie derelict and under-occupied despite interest in the buildings from many businesses' (WCCC, n.d.b). Queen's Market is owned and run by a local authority which has neglected investment in the market, which campaigners have repeatedly denounced (See Figure 1).



Figure 4.2: Friends of Queen's Market demonstrating against the lack of investment in the market's infrastructure. Source: Colin O'Brien

Of course, disinvestment and neglect are often preludes to **speculative real estate developments**. The three markets are in key urban development areas, enlarging the potential rent gap. The historical neglect of these infrastructures clearly becomes a justification for redevelopment and residents and traders often prefer to support any kind of investment to halt the neglect.

The pressures for **'upscaling' the socio-economic profile** of traders and users in these markets come in different forms. Cash-strapped public authorities and private developers see the low-income profile of the customers of these markets as an opportunity cost in relation to other potentially more profitable potential uses of the land. They speculate that if higher-income customers were attracted, then traders could upscale their businesses and make more profit which could be captured through higher rents. A report by a commercial property agency concerning Shepherd's Bush market recommends, 'extend[ing] the mix and range of goods to draw in *and retain* expenditure from higher disposable income groups' (GVA

Grimley, 2008). The private developer that pushed the regeneration project described the current markets as 'underutilised' (Savills, 2011).

Displacement of users and traders in these markets takes place in the various ways evidenced in Marcuse's (1985) work on residential gentrification². In the case of retail gentrification, we can identify direct and indirect displacement of market traders, users, products and practices. Direct displacement of traders takes place when markets are demolished without a replacement, but also even when redevelopment projects consider alternative locations or the rebuilding of a market. Sometimes businesses do not survive the disruption of the redevelopment period or cannot find suitable trading places in the higher-rent redeveloped markets. In Seven Sisters, the Latin American market is meant to be moved nearby but according to a consultation carried by the council in 2012, 40% of the businesses surveyed said that they were certain their business would *not* operate in the new premises and 40% were uncertain how to continue (AECON, 2016). This is because rents would be significantly higher. Similarly, in Shepherd's Bush the chair of SBMTA feared that 'the redevelopment of the market will result in units limited to potential retailers abler to afford much higher rents than any market traders could possibly justify' (Horada, 2013). Indirect displacement also takes place but is more difficult to evidence. Lack of investment, particularly in the market's infrastructure, can drive traders out as the trading environment deteriorates. Fewer customers are attracted and their businesses are unsustainable. This has affected Shepherd's Bush in particular.

The displacement of traders has an effect on customers and users. Our three case study markets all sell speciality food and goods from Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. Users of 'traditional' markets often travel there for specific products that are difficult to find elsewhere at low prices, such as particular foods, or speciality fabrics. If traders selling these products are displaced or if they no longer find it sustainable to sell them because the customer base is changing towards wealthier, whiter residents, then these customers stop going to the market, and are themselves displaced.

Customers and market users might also be displaced when the market no longer seems a welcoming space, as discussed by Shaw and Hagemans (2015) in the case of gentrifying neighbourhoods. This loss of sense of place can happen for many different reasons. FoQM denounced proposals for a regenerated Queen's Market, claiming that they would erase the comforting ethnic and cultural diversity of the place (Dines, 2007). Seven Sisters Market has become a solidarity networking point where new Spanish-speaking migrants can find advice through informal help or NGOs situated in the market (AECON, 2016). This slowly-evolved environment would be difficult to replicate in a redeveloped market with higher rents.

Through an analysis of three markets, we have evidenced the processes of gentrification and displacement taking place in spaces which so far have been neglected in the gentrification literature. In the next section, we discuss how the three campaigns are resisting these processes and how through these tactics they invoke markets as alternative spaces to the gentrifying and speculative city.

Markets as spaces of anti-gentrification resistance

In the section above we have used the framework of gentrification as a critical analytical lens to understand the processes involved in campaigns to protect, save or promote traditional retail markets in London. Although the campaigns do not necessarily always use an explicit gentrification language, their actions can be interpreted as practices of resistance against gentrification as they tackle the challenges described in the previous section. There are various dimensions to this resistance which vary according to the type of campaigns, market and the type of strategies used by the traders and campaigners which we discuss below.

FoQM is led by market users who have been meeting regularly about once a month for more than a decade, with backing from traders and with links to many local organisations and

campaigns across London. Campaigning in Seven Sisters has also been long-running and is more fragmented, with traders and various local organisations working within WCCC and more recently through the N15 Development Trust. In Shepherd's Bush, the campaign is more recent and mainly involves traders with support from local residents. Campaign demands and strategies vary according to these different types of groups. FoQM and WCCC have developed a long-term critique of regeneration in their area, linking with housing and more explicit anti-gentrification campaigns and situating their markets within wider urban struggles. Shepherd's Bush traders are far more focused on the market and its trading conditions.

The three campaigns have been involved in legal and planning contestations to stop developments threatening their markets. Legal appeals are common in urban struggles (see also Lees and Ferreri, 2016) as they can sometimes be the last resort. The kind of gentrification framework that we have explained in the previous section is difficult to translate into the UK legal and planning framework. Thus engaging in these battles has demanded that campaigns use technical arguments, which require expensive solicitors and experts to channel their concerns into appropriate language. In all three cases, the campaigns have challenged the way local authorities have consulted the public about the redevelopment projects, pointing out that the potential negative consequences were not fully explored. WCCC set a precedent in planning terms by challenging the private developers' project over its negative impact on a particular ethnic minority community (Latin American) using the Equality Act 2010³. In the three cases, the campaigns have appealed to the special planning powers of the Mayor of London with mixed results. While legal and planning appeals can be restrictive, they also offer a public platform for a wider discussion of explicitly social justice issues such as displacement, gentrification and marginalisation. For example, the planning inquiry over Shepherd's Bush Market was held over 8 days, and considered hundreds of documents and heard many of the traders' and residents' views.

FoQM and WCCC, however, have gone far beyond legal and technical battles and have used other strategies to connect with users of the market and other local and London-wide groups. They organise public meetings, protests, stunts, photo calls with the media and participate in London-wide planning consultations. Since 2012, FoQM have been involved in the regular trader-management regular meetings, where they press on issues arising from traders and market users although they have been banned from these for unclear reasons (FoQM website). Beyond their specific markets, FoQM has been key in the emergence and sustaining of a parallel campaign demanding 100% social housing in a nearby development project (Murphy-Bates, 2015) and WCCC is well networked with other campaigns in wider neighbourhood. Its Latin American traders have linked with similar campaigns over retail spaces in Elephant and Castle, South London (Román Velazquez and Hill, 2016).

Notably, FoQM and WCCC have patiently developed alternative plans for the markets which express alternative well-researched proposals for their improvement and flourishing. These have been drafted in consultation with traders and the public through participatory planning, sometimes with support from planning experts, architects and academics (Creative Citizens, n.d.). Like many similar campaigns, FoQM has been successful in listing their market an 'asset of community value' which means that the local authority recognises it as 'a place of resort and social interaction for and provides social services [which] furthers the social wellbeing and social interests of the local community' (London Borough of Newham, 2015). As mentioned earlier, WCCC have gone even further, forming a development trust and acquiring planning permission for the development of an alternative project in the site of the Market (West Green Road / Seven Sisters Development Trust, n.d.).

Through these techniques and initiatives the three campaigns have so far managed to stop or delay attempts to redevelop and potentially gentrify their markets, displacing traders and customers. Although these might seem small drops in London's rapid change in the opposite direction, they are important in showing that community and grassroots movements can have an important influence in shaping their urban environments and limiting gentrification.

Indeed, these campaigns have not only resisted and limited the gentrification of the particular retail spaces they work in, they have taken steps to re-inscribe them under a different framework. Instead of looking at markets as mere commercial spaces or real estate assets, they are reclaiming them as public and community spaces, affordable and welcoming for low income and ethnic minority groups. For example, FoQM campaigned successfully to have a special policy on markets in the Mayor's London Plan in 2010 which proposed that 'in considering proposals for redevelopment [the Mayor should] consider whether this will impact on economically hard-pressed groups; enable[s] mechanisms to protect the levels of rent necessary for the market's social and locally affordable function' (Friends of Queens Market, n.d.). This policy was later incorporated into a 'community-led plan for London' (Just Space, 2016a) by the campaign network Just Space which has been recently used to highlight the lack of attention in the Mayor's plan over such community work spaces (Just Space, 2016b). Similarly, WCCC has engaged in a public consultation process to provide further alterations to the London Plan in 2014, highlighting the importance of their market as community space and stressing the gap in the planning system that does not recognise the cultural and social value of such diverse spaces (WCCC, 2014b).

Conclusions

In this chapter we have outlined a grassroots resistance to the disappearance, neglect and gentrification of traditional public markets. We have concentrated on three initiatives in London which campaign around three markets in deprived and multi-ethnic neighbourhoods. Markets in London, as well as in other parts of the world, are undergoing a process of transformation. While some types of markets that appeal to high-income consumers are flourishing, the more traditional market which serves vulnerable communities such as low income or ethnic minorities are increasingly under threat. In London, this struggle is exacerbated by high land values where local authorities hit by austerity policies are reconsidering redeveloping them into something more profitable or simply selling them off. Similarly, private developers are looking at the real estate opportunities of central London

areas where often-neglected markets are in the way of new retail developments.

Gentrification literature in critical urban studies has generally focused on residential transformations and the displacement of vulnerable and working class communities but much less is known about the gentrification and displacement in the retail environment. This chapter has shown that traditional public markets are affected by gentrification processes; this often starts with neglect and abandonment of the physical infrastructure of the market which later justifies a redevelopment project. These projects, as we have shown in our three cases, sometimes plan to eliminate markets but often aim at upgrading them, not only through investment in the infrastructure but also by 'upscaling' the trader and customer mix. As we have seen this can have the effect of displacing traders who cannot afford the rents in the new redeveloped market and indirectly displaces market users who can no longer afford the produce or feel out of place. Although the market campaigns analysed in this chapter might not use the language of gentrification, they all address these issues of displacement and real estate speculation and will sometimes use terms such as 'ethnic cleansing' or 'social cleansing'. We noted that these campaigns are for the most part networked with other local campaigns and struggles who are making wide claims about the unaffordability of housing and the lack of community spaces in their neighbourhoods. In fact, campaigns mobilise markets not just as commercial spaces or independent businesses but also as community hubs where vulnerable groups can find support and solidarity. These struggles for markets can therefore be understood as the wider fight for the 'right to the city'.

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¹ Sara Gonzalez was awarded a scholar activist award by the Antipode Foundation in 2014. The funding allowed Gloria Dawson to be employed to carry out the research. The project also funded meetings and workshops. See Antipode Foundation website: <https://antipodefoundation.org/scholar-activist-project-awards/201314-recipients/>

² Marcuse identified various forms of residential displacement linked to gentrification and abandonment of neighbourhoods: direct displacement, indirect displacement and exclusionary displacement. See Marcuse (1985). See also see Schlack et al, in this book, for an elaboration of Marcuse's displacement discussion adopted to markets

³ However, the negative impact of a particular project over low-income and economically vulnerable groups of people is not legally recognised as a reason to challenge a planning application in the UK and therefore this cannot be used by campaigns.