SPACES AND PLACES

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Introduction

In 1573 Isabella Whitney, a woman of genteel birth from Cheshire who like so many of her female contemporaries had left north-west England to become a servant in London, produced a poem in which she mourned being forced to leave the metropolis. Written in the form of a will and elegiac in tone, Whitney provided a list of what she had 'left to London', including details of the extensive range of retailers which were to be found within the walls of the medieval city. These included butchers "that every day shall kill"; "brewers store and bakers at your will"; mercers "with silk so rich as any would desire"; and goldsmiths "with jewels such as are for ladies meet". The mercers and goldsmiths, Whitney told her readers, were based in Cheapside, and she expounded on where other goods might be purchased too, noting that woollens might be bought in Watling Street and Candlewick Street; linens in Friday Street; hose in Burchin Lane; "boots, shoes or pantables" in St Martin's; and beds in Cornhill, while tailors were to be found in Bow. "In many places, shops are full" observed Isabella, reassuring her readers with the promise that 'I left you nothing scant". (Whitney [1573] 2000: 13-15).

Five years later a French emigre named Grenade wrote an account of London as one who had been welcomed into rather than banished from the City. Fulsome in praise for his (possibly her – the identity of the author is unclear) new place of residence, this Protestant refugee described numerous retail spaces across London, beginning with Smithfield, where "every Friday of the year there is a very fine market for horses and other beasts", but which also played host to Bartholomew Fair, "one of the finest fairs in the whole country of England", when the square and nearby streets were "filled with so many tents with a great abundance of all sorts of merchandise that one would think one was in the heart of the most mercantile city in Christendom". Grenade also described London Bridge, along which were "great storehouses, full of all sorts of very opulent merchandise"; Billingsgate, "famous and renowned" for "all sorts of foodstuffs [that] arrive from foreign countries"; the Drapery, home to "two hundred drapers' shops … full of all sorts of cloths of all prices"; the Shambles and Leadenhall where a "vast quantity of meat" was sold; Cheapside and Lombard Street along which could be found the shops of apothecaries, booksellers, changers, drapers, goldsmiths, grocers, haberdashers, hosiers, ironmongers and mercers; and Cornhill where

"three times a week, a very fine market is held … selling all sorts of foodstuffs which come from the villages". Cornhill was also where "wealthy dealers" in tapestry, copperware and "other rich merchandise" were based, and was home to the Royal Exchange which Grenade described at great length, calling it "the sumptuous edifice" (Keene and Archer 2014: 77, 89, 92, 103-5, 109-18).

Following the lead of Whitney and Grenade this chapter invites the reader to perambulate within and beyond the walls of the pre-modern City, focusing on the commercial networks and built environments which shoppers interacted with as they decided where, what and how to shop during the long sixteenth century. Using London as a case study the first half of the chapter outlines the varied places where the products available to metropolitan shoppers originated, explores the changing topography of shops during the long sixteenth century, and details how, where and why novel retail venues such as the Royal and New Exchanges were constructed during this period, as well as how the experience of shopping in such a space would have differed from buying from a more traditional outlet. The second half turns to the spaces and places where medical products might be purchased in London, detailing where medical practitioners operated from, how shoppers acquired information about where medicinal services and goods could be obtained, and how the geographical origins of exotic medical products affected how they were labelled and marketed. Unlike other chapters, this essay will focus on one city, but will conclude with some general remarks about the (a)typicality of retails spaces and places in London compared with other urban centres in Western Europe.

London as a centre of conspicuous consumption

As has been discussed briefly in the introduction to this volume, shopping in London was a distinctive consumer experience, especially but not only for those seeking out expensive high-end items, and in the late 1940s Jack Fisher was the first modern historian to attempt to explain why the English capital developed as a centre of conspicuous consumption between around 1580 and 1640, arguing that political, financial, legal, educational and social imperatives drew genteel consumers to the metropolis who fostered a culture of competitive emulation in which the display of luxury goods was used to reflect the refinement and taste of their owners (Fisher [1948] 1990: 105-18). Derek Keene questioned the novelty of such developments by arguing that many of the political, legal and economic trends Fisher identified as fuelling conspicuous consumption in the decades after 1580 were evident in

London by 1300, before being ended by the demographic disasters of the fourteenth century. By the time the population had recovered in the mid-sixteenth century the right conditions were in place for competitive shopping to resume as unprecedented wealth was becoming concentrated in the hands of nobles, gentry and merchants due to the vibrant land market which resulted from the dissolution of the monasteries, and landowners were benefitting from food prices which were rising more rapidly than the range of manufactured goods was expanding (Keene 2000: 58-9). Most recently Ian Archer has demonstrated that the increasingly sedentary nature of the royal court also played a key role in fostering this culture of metropolitan conspicuous consumption during the sixteenth century, and during the reign of Elizabeth I the royal wardrobe alone put more back into the London economy than was extracted in parliamentary taxation. Aristocrats and gentry who visited court and city regularly contracted with London-based brewers, wine merchants, grocers, mercers, drapers, tailors, embroiderers, hosiers, saddlers, goldsmiths and jewellers, and mutual dependency was a feature of many such commercial relationships, with landed elites fostering close ties in the hope of securing exotic and high-end goods, gaining credit, or obtaining discounts on bulk purchases, while livery companies granted honorary freedoms and invited courtiers to company feasts in the hope of gaining or securing their custom (Archer 2008: 38-57). As David Harris Sacks has observed, by 1600 London was imagined as "a perpetual market" in which "life turned on the provision of material things, necessities as well as luxuries, to customers far and wide", with many of these commodities, or at least the raw material needed to produce them, coming "from its hinterlands or from beyond the seas" (Sacks 2000: 20-1).

As well as discussing the spaces in which goods were purchased in London, it is important to acknowledge the diverse places from which such commodities arrived. Again, Fisher was one of the first historians to draw attention to how, by the start of the seventeenth century, London was linked to every part of provincial England by coastal vessels which sailed between the capital and the provincial ports; by barges which navigated the tributaries of the Thames; by carriers in the form of pack-horses or carts which travelled regularly to provincial market towns; and by a growth in the number of shopkeepers in towns and villages across the kingdom. This system enabled produce to be brought from across England for consumption in London, ensured imports were distributed from the port of London into the provinces, and facilitated the circulation of news about consumption and retailing as well as shoppers themselves around England (Fisher [1971] 1990: 191). The development of such networks helps explain how resources from beyond the metropolis were drawn upon to ensure that the

finite production capacity of the capital did not prevent Londoners from fulfilling their desires as consumers, and between 1560 and 1640 inhabitants of the metropolis relied increasingly on London-based middlemen, as well as hawkers and pedlars, to supply them with foodstuffs which came from specialised regional centres of production. Fruit, herbs, hops and vegetables arrived from market gardens in the home counties and London suburbs; Kent was the primary source of grain and Sussex of wheat, with the north-eastern and south-western counties also contributing cereals during periods of dearth; Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Essex and Suffolk provided butter, cheese and milk; Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire sent eggs and poultry; while sheep and cattle were driven from the northern and western counties as well as Wales, stopping off in East Anglia and the south midlands to be fattened prior to sale. As the metropolitan population grew so too did existing markets such as Leadenhall and Newgate, while new ones opened at Bishopsgate, Queenshithe and Smithfield, and the importance of free retailers such as bakers, brewers, butchers, cheesemongers, fishmongers, fruiterers and poulterers increased. In addition to foodstuffs, fuel, textiles and metal-wares arrived in London from the English regions: coal from Newcastle; knitted stockings from Yorkshire; lace from Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Devon; blankets from Oxfordshire; knives from Sheffield; and cooking pots from Sussex (Fisher [1935] 1990: 61-79; Fisher [1957] 1990: 139-41; Dietz 1986: 115; Thirsk 2000: 95-108).

Although there were numerous places to purchase food, cutlery and fuel, accessing a hearth or oven and finding secure storage facilities for cooking equipment was difficult, especially for those living with employers as servants or renting rooms as lodgers, so even Londoners of modest means bought ready-made food from inns, taverns, eating houses, cook-shops, and ordinaries on a regular basis, often as snacks or to take-away, activities which constituted a form of leisurely commensality for many (Pennell 2000: 228-49). The accessibility and quality of food in London was recorded frequently in the journal of the Italian Alessandro Magno, who in 1562 described how, upon arriving in London, he and his companions “went to the inn *della bella* kept by a married Italian called Master Claudio” and “agreed with him ten denarii for a meal, room and a bed, and eight denarii for the servants”. The company enjoyed “a choice of two or three kinds of roast meat at a meal or as an alternative, meat pies, savouries, fruit tarts, cheese and other things – and excellent wine”, with Magno adding that “whenever we wanted something else, we had only to say the word and it was provided”. To Magno it was “extraordinary to see the great quantity and quality of the meat – beef and

mutton – that comes every day from the slaughter-houses in this city, let alone the meat that is sold at a special market held every Wednesday for meat brought in from outside the city", and he also commented on the plentiful fish, especially the pike, flounders and salmon, adding that 'there is a street which has many shops on both sides where they do nothing for three days of the week but tie this fish into bundles and batter it continuously" before sending large quantities to Flanders and Germany. Oysters fascinated Magno too, who described how "there is an excellent market where for one Marcello one can have a big basket full" (Barron, Coleman and Gobbi 1983: 141, 143, 147). In 1578 the French refugee Grenade was amazed by the "excellence of the meat exposed for sale" in the Shambles and at Leadenhall which was "overflowing with agreeable qualities … tender and of a delicate taste, but clean and … extremely well dressed" so that "the sight and beauty of the meat encourage people to buy it" (Keene and Archer 2014: 105). Writing in 1599 the Swiss traveller Thomas Platter focused on food too, and was impressed by the presence of hawkers selling "all kinds of useful foods and wares". Like Magno, Platter wrote in detail about the fish market where he saw "a great quantity of pike up for sale", noting how "each of these fishermen and fishwives kept a copper or brass needle and thread in the tub, with a sharp knife" so that when a customer requested a pike they were able to "slit open it belly at their bidding, placing the guts on their hands to show whether the pike was sufficiently fat" before sewing up the fish again (Williams 1937: 175).

Fish were not the only goods to be shipped into sixteenth-century London, and Platter observed that most Londoners were "employed in commerce", buying, selling and trading "in all the corners of the globe, for which purpose the water serves them well, since ships from France, the Netherlands, Germany and other countries land in this city, bringing goods with them and loading others in exchange for transportation" (Williams 1937: 156). Connections with northern European ports were well-established by 1500, and although the Antwerp links were put under strain in the 1550s and 1560s due to political and religious unrest, they were not broken until 1569 when the Merchant Adventurers relocated their staple to Hamburg, and in the preceding decades London merchants had been searching out alternative markets in the Baltic. Matters changed in the early seventeenth century with the formation of the East India Company, which within twenty years of its foundation was responsible for 5 per cent of metropolitan imports, and from 1620 new goods were starting to arrive from the Americas and southern Europe, many of which were luxury products, such as wine, silks, sugar, raisins, currants, pepper and tobacco, much (but not all) of which was sold by Londoners to

Londoners (Dietz 1986: 121-6). During the long sixteenth century Londoners thus became exposed to an increasing range of imported consumer goods consisting of silk, lace, glassware and paper from Italy; blades, armour, brassware, plus engraved measurement and navigation instruments from Germany and the Low Countries; decorated leather from Spain and Brussels; textiles from southern Germany; furniture and furnishings from Antwerp and its hinterlands; tin-glazed ceramics from Spain and Italy; and exotic goods from the Ottoman Empire, Persia and China, with Turkey carpets being one of the most popular (Keene 2000: 64-5).

As well as being a period when the geographical origins of consumer goods began to change, the long sixteenth century was also one when the spaces in which manufactured goods were produced began to alter due to demographic and topographical expansion. Fisher argued that between 1450 and 1650 the functions of retailers and producers were increasingly separated, with the business of selling concentrated along prominent thoroughfares, while many artisans, fearing exploitation by wealthy retailers on whom they relied for raw materials as well as for outlets in which to sell their wares, sought to escape regulation by guilds and aldermen by shifting production into extramural suburbs (Fisher [1968] 1990: 177-9). As Lee Beier has demonstrated, between 1540 and 1600 in central London parishes 53 per cent of the work-force was employed in production and 28 per cent in trade, but after 1600 production fell to 40 per cent and trade rose to 36 per cent. By contrast, in extra-mural parishes the respective figures were 70 per cent production to 8 per cent prior to 1600 (Beier 1986: 152-3). Yet setting up in trade within the City was far from easy. In 1562 Alessandro Magno observed that

> no man can set up shop or buy anything from foreign merchants if he has not served a seven-year apprenticeship; and if it is discovered that goods have been bought from foreign merchants rather than from an Englishman who has served the required time, the goods are forfeited. If they have been sold but not yet paid for, it is the seller who loses his money, and so one has to be careful to whom one sells and from whom one buys goods. One can see at the doors of many shops, and on the street outside, bareheaded young men asking passers-by if they want anything (Barron, Coleman and Gobbi 1983: 146).

Shops and Exchanges

The historiography of fixed retail outlets in early modern England, discussed in the introduction to this volume, suggests that before 1650 the physical structure of provincial shops did not differ drastically from those in the metropolis. However, the metropolis was a complex consumer and retail environment, and the location of shops within London did much to determine how successful shopkeepers would be, as well as how likely it was for shoppers to visit venues. Between 1550 and 1650 the best shops in London were located on wider paved streets down which large numbers of potential shoppers passed. The reputation, and thus the ultimate success, of the outlet also depended on which parish it was in, which in turn might determine which trades were to be found nearby. In his analysis of the topography of London retail outlets between 1550 and 1700, William Baer discovered clusters of shops in Cornhill and Lombard Street close to the Royal Exchange, on London Bridge, in St Paul's precinct, and around the southern end of Chancery Lane, but such clustering was not proof that retailers collaborated with or supported each other, and individual retailers might move sites if a more promising location became available. Moreover, since shops were always under separate ownership, clustering might lead to frictions between traders. (Baer 2007: 30-2).

Arguably the most important developments in the history of shopping in London during the long sixteenth century were the opening of two purpose-built malls which offered very different physical environments for consumers to shop in. Both had complex histories, and the first to open in the City was the Royal Exchange (what follows is based on Blanchard 1997: 11-9; Imray 1997: 20-35; Saunders 1997a: 36-47; Baer 2007: 33-7). In 1521 the merchants of the Staple requested an exchange in Leadenhall, and in July 1534 the Court of Common Council passed a motion to create "a burse and a place meet and convenient for merchants to treat of their feat of merchandise, as is accustomed and sued in other noble cities", but this was overturned in January 1535. On 3 July 1537 the Pope's Head in Lombard Street was proposed as the site of a burse, but a fortnight later action was postponed. In July 1538 the mayor, Sir Richard Gresham, wrote to Thomas Cromwell with plans for the venue, but despite further correspondence with Richard Rich and Cromwell, the project petered out the following summer. In November 1557 the Court of Alderman received a petition from the Merchant Adventurers for a burse near Lombard Street, but the request appears to have been rebuffed, and ultimately it was Sir Thomas Gresham, son of Richard, a graduate of Cambridge and freeman of the Mercers Company, who was to bring about the building of the Royal Exchange in the following decade. Thomas had visited the

Low Countries frequently on family and crown business, but the trigger for building what was to be the Royal Exchange appears to have been personal, namely the death of his son Richard in May 1563. Plans were accepted by the City in January 1565, fundraising began in June 1565, and the freeholds in Cornhill were acquired in April 1566, after which the site was cleared in May with building starting in June.

Plans drawn up around 1569-70 by Franz Hogenberg present an exterior view from the south depicting the Exchange as a four-storey building, the ground floor made of Flemish stone with shutters to give light to shops. The next two storeys contained windows to light the booths, with dormers in the roof topped with grasshoppers. Customer entered through a double archway approached by steps and flanked by Doric columns, above which were three compartments containing the royal coat-of-arms flanked by those of Gresham (a triumphant grasshopper) and possibly his father-in-law, William Ferneley. To the east of the entrance was the Tendring House where deals were recorded, which included two balconies in the top half of the building from where the City Waites performed music on Sundays, as well as a seven-storey bell tower topped by four ogee-shaped buttresses above which was Gresham's crest. Inside was an open courtyard paved with Turkey stones, and an arcade of sheltered walks ran around the walls containing statues of English royalty and punctuated by Doric columns surmounted by semi-circular arches and paved with black and white marble, with a bench set against the wall. The upper storey was composed of almost continuous niches separated by Ionic pilasters and contained life-size figures. How much of this was an accurate representation is difficult to ascertain. The site itself measured 165 by 135 feet with a court inside capable of holding hundreds of people, above which were "100 to 160 shops lit by windows and dormers", some of which would have been "built-in, lock-up stalls" adjustable in size. The height of the Royal Exchange made it visible from most parts of the City, and in January 1571 the visit of Elizabeth I helped bring in indigenous and international customers as well as ensuring all the shops were let.

Overseas visitors who came to London in the Elizabethan era commented on the layout of the Royal Exchange, focusing particularly on the behaviour of the merchants who traded at street level while customers shopped in the upper galleries. In 1578 Grenade observed that "each nation has its own place there, so that those who have trade to do with them can find them with ease", but noted too that "each merchant has the freedom to go here and there throughout the said Exchange according to what his business requires". Grenade also

described "the form and shape of the Exchange" as being "a quadrangle surrounded by three great alleys or galleries" on top of each other, adding that "several women dealers and merchants" had based themselves on the lower level, which was known as New Venice (Keene and Archer 2014: 114-5). Visiting in 1599 Thomas Platter described the Royal Exchange as "a great square place like the one in Antwerp", but "a little smaller" with "only two entrances and only one passage running through it, where all kinds of fine goods are on show", noting how "merchants having to deal with one another agree to meet together in this palace, where several hundred may be found assembled twice daily, before lunch at eleven, and again after their meal at six o'clock, buying, selling, bearing news, and doing business generally." (Williams 1937: 157). In 1600 Baron Waldstein made similar comments about "the Merchants' house or Bourse", noting that it "forms a quadrangle just like the one at Antwerp, and is used for commerce and banking" although he also observed "a further gallery upstairs in which all kinds of merchandise are on sale" (Groos 1981: 175). As well as being described in journals, the Royal Exchange was the subject of an engraving by Wenceslas Hollar, who in 1644 depicted a woman selling cheap print in the busy central courtyard, as well as two Dutchmen and two Turks, their inclusion hinting at the gender balance as well as the national and ethnic diversity of the merchants and retailers who frequented the venue (see chapter 6, image 6:5).

Although a diverse range of individuals frequented the Royal Exchange, obtaining a spot from which to sell goods was expensive. In December 1597 the City Corporation and Mercers' Company laid down rents of £7 for shops on the north, £8 on the east and west, and £10 on the south, figures which by December 1656 had risen to £15 or £20 for the north, £22 for the east, £20 for the West, and £24 for the south. In May 1598 rents from 120 shops around the Pawn (upper storey) were calculated to bring in £819 10s, and after the vaults beneath the walkways were converted from storage units into shops by adding windows they were leased out at £30 per annum. Shops in the Pawn measured 5 by 7½ feet with signs hanging out into the corridor depicting animals or birds. Many retailers complained that the booths were too small and poorly lit, and early in 1601 it was agreed that rentals for inner corner shops were to be reduced by half. Nonetheless it was not difficult to find candidates to take vacant outlets and by the late 1590s a waiting list had developed, partly because 21-year leases had become the rule. In the first volume of the Gresham Repertories 224 retailers were listed, with haberdashers, mercers, painter-stainers, merchant tailors, and grocers accounting for over half the occupants. Other trades present included leathersellers, clothworkers,

stationers, girdlers, drapers, goldsmiths, vintners, barber-surgeons, scriveners, notaries, embroiderers, milliners, upholsterers and smiths. There was also a bookseller, ironmonger, pewterer, armourer, joiner, saddler, salter, barber and doctor of physic, as well as a range of street-sellers who invaded at regular intervals, and animal baiters turned up sporadically to advertise forthcoming fights. Bells were rung to signal when trading should begin and cease, and in March 1599 discussion began about the provision of a clock to serve the same purpose, which was completed by Randolfe Bull the following year. The cleanliness of the Royal Exchange was of concern too: the paving was swept regularly, the New River Company supplied water, scavengers patrolled the venue, complaints about houses of office and smoke pollution were responded to, and in August 1654 plasterers and painters were employed to whiten the Upper Pawn and brush, wash and cleanse the statues and walls (Saunders 1997b: 85-98).

In 1609 James I opened the second mall, the New Exchange, on the south of the Strand close to the royal court and aristocratic townhouses in St Martin in-the-Fields. Financed by Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, and with lower rents than its competitor, the New Exchange had a 200-foot frontage, 21 feet wide and 17 feet high on the ground floor, and consisted of a large courtyard surrounded by two decorated galleries in which traders retailed high-end and exotic wares from Europe and Asia. Salisbury and his manager Thomas Wilson sought to create a distinctive shopping experience by grouping together similar types of retailers, opening the venue for between 10 to 12 hours per day depending on the season, and demanding shopkeepers behaved in a professional manner and maintained their outlets to a high standard, restricting when they were able to light fires, what signage they were able to display, and how they might dispose of waste. Passers-by and weary shoppers resting on seats and benches around the exterior of the venue would have been able to gaze through the plate glass windows which many shops were acquiring, but the most prized outlets were in the corners of the upper floors which measured 15 feet in length as opposed to the average of 10-11 feet. Similar in layout to boutiques in the Parisian Palais de Justice, and nicknamed "Britain's Burse" and "England's Rialto", the New Exchange was the first major metropolitan retail outlet to be located outside the walls and in June 1608 the London Mayor and Aldermen had written to Salisbury to express concern that this new venue would draw customers and traders from the City to the West End, and such concerns were mocked in the entertainment written by Ben Jonson entitled *The Entertainment for Britain's Burse* which was performed for the king, his wife Anne, and their son Henry at the opening of the New

Exchange, in which a shop boy listed the numerous goods available within the new retail complex. However, the anxieties of the city fathers were somewhat overstated. By the mid-1610s Salisbury was having difficulty filling the outlets, and Wilson suggested that this was due to the small size of the outlets, the difficulties retailers faced in finding accommodation close-by, and a lack of shoppers residing in the immediate vicinity. In the 1620s the upper floors were converted into flats, but by the 1630s retailers were renewing their leases and in 1638 the Privy Council ordered that the residential tenements be reconverted into shops. During the civil wars of the 1640s trade deteriorated but continued, and the Exchange continued to be a fashionable space in which to shops and socialise from the 1650s onwards (Archer 2000: 174-8; Merritt 2005: 156-9; Peck 2005: 42-61; Baer 2007: 37-41).

As Claire Walsh has demonstrated, part of the reason why the Exchanges were fashionable was because entrance was policed to create a distinctive space for elite shoppers. Hesitant potential consumers were discouraged from entering by intimidating architecture, and beadles were employed to keep out those deemed likely to disrupt the carefully cultivated atmosphere of the venue. Designed to offer the wealthy, discerning shopper an exclusive experience which was distinct from that available in other outlets, the galleries marketed themselves as being at the apex of the metropolitan retailing hierarchy, and were laid out to downplay differences between individual outlets. The forms of signage which were used by most retailers to advertise themselves and their goods were prohibited, and instead of showcasing the diversity of shopping opportunities, the exchanges were designed to draw in visitors by emphasising the unity and grandeur of the venue as an enclosed space defined by its fashionable, opulent and distinctive architecture, customers and commodities. Rather than offering the widest range of goods possible, or the best value for money, those who worked in the shops offered wealthy shoppers the opportunity to view curated displays of luxurious, fashionable items. Drawing inspiration from the long picture galleries of aristocratic houses which social elites walked along leisurely while talking and admiring the aesthetics, shoppers in the exchanges were expected to perambulate leisurely around the galleries, observing and inspecting goods while (particularly, as Anu Korhonen has argued, in the case of women) being watched and commented upon themselves (Korhonen 2008: 339). Customers were encouraged to engage in such practices by the inclusion of terms such as “walk”, “gallery” and “mall” in guidebooks and travel accounts which described the venue, preparing visitors for the retail experience they were to indulge in. The exchanges, like the professional theatres which began to open in the 1570s, thus functioned as novel commercial spaces which

provided stages for performativity and enabled age-old traditions (shopping, acting, socialising) to continue in new forms, with intermingling of different sorts of people occurring in both despite the best efforts of venue managers to hybridisation (Walsh 2003: 58-70).

Despite the opening of the exchanges, within the walls Cheapside remained the principal destination for shoppers. During the century prior to 1550 rents in the area remained stable, and from the 1520s many high-end properties underwent repairs and rebuilding work as landlords attempted to attract tenants to properties in locations such as Honey Lane, Soper Lane and Bow Churchyard, although these developments appear to have been at the expense of the smaller retail outlets which had flourished in the fourteenth century, but which had disappeared or been left to decay (Harding 2012: 138-43). Cheapside Row was 400m long and at least 15m wide, linked to the waterfront by narrow roads with side-streets such as Bread Street, Honey Lane and Milk Street running off it. Deriving its name from the Old English word *ceap* ("market"), often Cheapside was referred to as West Cheap to distinguish it from East Cheap, a market neighbourhood at the eastern end of the city, and individual buildings were identified by a name and sign, or by distinctive architectural features such as coats of arms, animal symbols, or mythological figures. Premises varied in size and layout, but most were four- or five-storey short-fronted buildings subdivided into retail spaces, cellars, counting houses, storerooms and warehouses which were furnished with benches, chests, cupboards and painted cloths. Most functioned as integrated units, but it was possible for premises to be subdivided, particularly after the death of the owner, or if part of the building started to be rented out to raise additional funds. Although renowned as a space in which to purchase luxurious and fashionable goods, retail opportunities in Cheapside were diverse: the east contained food markets and textile dealers; the west housed stationers, booksellers, notarial services and goldsmiths; and by the 1660s dealers in fashionable stockings, hose, lace and bodies operated on the south side. City governors sought to demarcate citizens and their wives, who sold high-end goods from shops, from incoming retailers from the metropolitan hinterlands who vended wares from market stalls, but population growth, increasing demand for food, and the diversification of middlemen and peripatetic traders operating in streets, alleyways and buildings made such efforts at policing difficult. During the 1570s and 1580s the Aldermen sought to restrict the sale of certain goods temporally, spatially and from being sold at specific hours, while in the periods 1619-24 and 1634-42 the Goldsmiths' Company, Crown and City discussed the eviction of "mean"

traders and street-sellers who disrupted the visual unity of the rows along Cheapside and Lombard Street, and who were suspected of selling fake jewels and stolen plate. Such people were to be replaced by drawing back those goldsmiths who had migrated to the West End, but these plans were unsuccessful since the extramural exiles stayed put, claiming that rents in the rows were too high, or that they had been offered unsuitable premises in "darke and narrow" places (Griffiths 2000: 176-96; Keene 2006: 125-9; Harding 2006: 155-70).

Medical Marketplaces

The remainder of this chapter focuses on how inhabitants of and visitors to London shopped for medicines and medical treatments in the metropolis. Shopping as a leisure activity played a smaller part in the acquisition of medical products than in other branches of retailing since need rather than want was the priority in many transactions, but nonetheless historians of medicine have deployed the term "medical marketplace" to discuss collectively the multiple sources of medical advice and treatments available within societies which were becoming increasingly urban and consumer-driven. Some of this scholarship has been criticised for describing rather than analysing how such services and commodities were acquired, as well as for overplaying the commercial imperatives of practitioners and the agency of patients, and in the last twenty years historians have become more attentive to how consumption was limited by the social and economic resources of patients; how the language used to promote products and services was shaped by legal, moral and religious frameworks; and how knowledge, treatments and practitioners moved within and between different geographic and cultural communities (Jenner and Wallis 2007: 1-23). Taking these issues into consideration, the following section outlines the places from which medical items and assistance could be obtained; the geographical origins of the raw materials from which medicines were fashioned; and how cheap printed texts operated as spaces in which such commodities and services were sold to a range of shoppers via advertisements, a phenomenon which foreshadowed (and may have encouraged) the advertising of a wide range of consumer goods during the long eighteenth century.

Within the City the Royal College of Physicians sought to control how and where medical commodities could be purchased from. Incorporated in 1518 with the designation 'Royal' added later at an unknown date, the College was in some respects a guild for doctors, but unlike barber surgeons and apothecaries who qualified by practical apprenticeships, licensed physicians saw themselves as professionals, and ideally were to have acquired a classical

university education after which their medical competency would be tested by the College's own examinations. The College prioritized knowledge and skills of the ancients over research into the new, and many of its members believed novel ideas and surgeons' practices to be beyond the limits of what they considered to be "true" medicine. The governors of the College sought to manage medical practitioners through a licensing system which included some disciplinary controls, and in 1533 an act of Parliament enlarged the powers and duties of the College by requiring it "to survey and examine the stocks of apothecaries, druggists, distillers and sellers of waters and oils and preparers of chemical medicines", but its authority was never absolute within the City and did not extend outside London as bishops had the power to license medics within their own dioceses, while Statute 14 of the reign of Henry VIII required higher qualifications on physicians in all England apart from London and its environs, which remained governed by the charter of the College (Urdang 1944: 4–6). As a result, compared with provincial England London was well-supplied with medical practitioners, with one broad estimate suggesting that in the first half of the seventeenth century there was one physician per 4000 Londoners compared with a national average of one per 10000. However, such numbers were inadequate to meet demand, not least because wealthy patients from among the gentry and the middling sorts also used the services of metropolitan-based physicians, either writing to obtain advice, travelling to the capital to take treatments, or requesting that physicians ride into the provinces to visit them at home, all of which reduced the amount of time such medical practitioners could spend treating sickly Londoners (Evenden Nagy 1988: 4-13).

Given the small number of physicians in London, most inhabitants of the metropolis turned to other practitioners in the medical marketplace if they fell ill, such as barber-surgeons and apothecaries. Margaret Pelling has counted and mapped the locations of barber-surgeons in London, revealing that in 1537 they were the strongest of the City companies, with 185 freeman householders as members, remained in this preeminent position until they merged with the surgeons in 1540, and by 1641 had grown in number to 293, all but 30 or so of whom lived overseas or in the provinces. The Barber-Suregons' Hall was located on Monkswell Street in the north-west of the City, within 500 yards of St Paul's and convenient for access to the increasingly wealthy western suburbs, but by the early 1640s members of the company were located across the intramural areas, often in locations which enabled barber-surgeons to operate side-lines, such as retailing alcohol and tobacco, or provide spaces from which prostitutes could operate. Some barber-surgeons clustered in wharf-side parishes south

of Thames Street as well as around the Royal Exchange and St Paul's, with 28 living within 300 yards of the cathedral, close to the booksellers and publishers whose wares were available to browse in the shops of barber-surgeons. Around a third (88) were to be found in the West End, with 34 in the suburbs or Westminster, close to pawnbrokers and fortune-tellers on Fetter Lane, as well as mercury baths on Leather Lane near Holborn, the latter used by syphilitic patients who may have resorted to the barber-surgeons for treatment too, while a final cohort was based to the east in Gravesend, Greenwich, Ratcliffe and Wapping, with many operating near brewhouses, docks, and execution sites (Pelling 1986: 84-7).

Pelling observed that the geographical spread of barber-surgeons contrasted with that of the apothecaries, who tended to cluster in specific areas. This view has been modified by Patrick Wallis, who has demonstrated that from their inception in 1617 following a split from the Grocers' Company apothecaries were clustered in Cheapside and Bucklerbury, but that by the 1640s some were practising further west along the Strand and Fleet Street as well as in Holborn and the Old Bailey, while by the 1690s their reach also extended eastwards along the major thoroughfares running through All Hallows Staining and St Andrew Undershaft, as well as to Cornhill and London Bridge. In terms of numbers, in 1617 122 London freemen were incorporated into the Society of Apothecaries, with another 52 joining by 1620, and numbers continued to rise across the seventeenth century, holding steady relative to the overall population at around 1 apothecary per 2000 Londoners. Many apothecaries lived above their shops, which were located on the lower levels of three- or four-storey town houses, and on average nearly 40 per cent of the total value of the shops was made up of the fixtures and fittings, which consisted of mortars and pestles; weights and beams; sieves, stills, alembics and presses; and furnaces, kettles, and pans, many of which included the coat-of-arms of the Society of Apothecaries or the initials of the owner. Such symbols were intended to confirm the identity, reputation and reliability of the apothecary, and were used also to decorate the numerous drug jars which were prominently displayed where potential shoppers could see them as they passed the shops. Made of maiolica or glass, most jars were decorated with baroque scrolls incorporating leaves, seeds, birds, angels and classical figures such as Apollo, although some included images which hinted at what was contained, such as a picture of man smoking a pipe. Such decorations encouraged shoppers to equate the cost of the jars with the value of the commodities therein, and by displaying them in large numbers the apothecary sought to demonstrate (or at least suggest) to customers that any medicine the shopper desired was available to be purchased. The exotic fruits and stuff fish and reptiles

which were hung around the shop or suspended from the ceiling also served to enhance the reputation of the apothecary, with some used as medicinal ingredients, but most being placed on display to draw in genteel visitors with interests in natural philosophy by ensuring the fittings of the shop resembled a privately-owned collection of wonders. Countering the arguments of Fisher, who suggested that retail came to dominate production within the City during the early modern period, Wallis has argued that prior to 1700 the premises of apothecaries and other shopkeepers such as goldsmiths continued to be dual purpose, although by 1650 manufacturing work was confined to the rear of the building, with distilling equipment usually located outside, in cellars, or in kitchens to reduce the risk of fire and prevent unpleasant smells entering the retail area, with those production processes that took place in the front of the shop, such as weighing drugs and rolling pills, linked closely to sales and taking place primarily for the benefit of the customer (Wallis 2008: 26-53).

The proliferation of medical practitioners within and beyond the walls of the City which Pelling and Wallis have tracked meant that by 1650 inhabitants of London from all ranks of society would have been able to locate individuals close to their places of residence from whom medicines and treatments might be purchased. Knowing where to locate medical practitioners and products depended on information being shared verbally, but increasingly across the long sixteenth century readers were able to access such information through cheap print. An early example from the mid-sixteenth century can be found in *The Byrth of Mankynde*, in which Thomas Raynalde informed readers that his "trosickes & emplasters" could be obtained ready-made at the Sign of the Doves in Bucklersbury from William Normevyll

> in whose shop I have caused the sayde things faithfully to be made, for because that I am certayne that he is one of the most fydell & faithfullese Apothecaries in London: And suche as wyll not spare for any cost to acquire and obtayne of the best and most singular symples and droges in there kynde, that may be gotten for money (Raynalde 1545: final two pages (unpaginated) of the second book).

From the 1580s such adverts often appeared in almanacs, where they were seen more frequently by a wider range of readers than those in the earliest newspapers dating from the 1620s, helping to create brand awareness and fuel demand for commercial medicines. Individual titles targeted specific sorts of readers based on their imagined literacy, location

and occupation, and the number of adverts for medicinal drugs, services, appliance and books rose from 4 (in 1640-44) to 111 (in 1655-59), an increase which mirrors the rise in adverts for other products, which grew from 8 to 224 in the same period. Books of all kinds were by far the largest type of goods advertised in almanacs, and readers eager to obtain the latest publications about health and well-being might be told where new works could be purchased. In 1610 Arthur Hopton used his almanac to inform readers that the astrological text he had been writing was in press and could be obtained from The Sign of the Crown in St Paul's Churchyard, an area of the City familiar to keen bibliophiles. Those who needed to obtain drugs were provided with similar instructions, and in 1659 Edward Buckworth used an advert in an almanac to inform potential customers that if they wished to buy his lozenges they should visit him at home "in the great piazza" of Covent Garden, but that those who lived within the walls of the City might prefer to collect the drugs from Richard Lownds, a bookseller at the White Lyon in St Paul's Churchyard (Curth 2006: 30-7, 41-2).

Single-page bills intended to be distributed as handouts or pinned on walls and posts provided similar information. In 1603 a single-sheet advert for "a most excellent pill" against the plague included at the bottom of the page a blank section detailing that the remedy could be obtained "at the hows of", and a surviving copy in the Canterbury Cathedral Library has been completed by hand with the words "frauncis Wall barber chirurgeon dwellinge in tower streete". Two years later the surgeon Nicholas Bodwen commissioned a similar advert outlining his ability to cure various ailments and help induce labour in pregnant women, which included a blank space at the bottom where his address was to be added (Fissell 2010: 423-4). However, not all such information about the location of retailers was included with the intention of encouraging sales, and Thomas Johnson, writing in 1633 in a reissued version of *The Herball* of John Gerard, warned readers about the "ignorant women" in Cheapside who sold the hemlock water dropwort "to people more ignorant than themselves by the name of Water Lovage" (Pavord 2005: 351).

As this comment reveals, whatever the product, whoever was selling it, and wherever it could be obtained, one of the key developments of shopping in the long sixteenth century, no less for medicine than for other products, was a growing awareness among retailers (and perhaps consumers) of vocabulary and language as tools of successful marketing. With the explosion of new products and innovative variations of the old, not to mention the development of better means of printing, language became more important than ever as a means of fostering

sales. All commodities, new or old, imported or home produced, needed to be marketed, and throughout the long sixteenth century it was common for textiles to be named after their place of origin, whether that was provincial England (in the case of kendals, kerseys, tauntons, worsteds and worcesters) or mainland Europe (in the case of dowlas, ghentish, handovers, lockram, minsters and oulderons). The situation became more complicated during the seventeenth century as commodities which previously had been made outside England such as braid, garters, inkles, and ribbons came to be produced in London by manufacturers whose family origins lay in France and the Low Countries, developments which led to the anglicization of such labels as well as, in some cases, alterations to the products themselves (Cox 2015: 27, 88-9). In this respect, medical products were no different from any other.

The importance of place in the language of advertising is evident in one of the earliest texts to advertise medicine. Published in April 1563, the anonymous poem supposedly by the *Marchaunt called Dives Pragmaticus* contained a substantial list of commodities available in London shops including generic medicines like "fyne Waters [and] fine Oyles, of odour excellent", but also "fine Triacle of Genes (i.e. Genoa), the plague to preuent". The latter was the only medical product specifically named and the only one for which its supposed effectiveness was spelled out (Anon. (1563): sig. Bi^{v}). Genoa treacle appears to have been no different from Venice or London treacle, but as a Londoner Dives named it after an alternative site of production, a risky gamble since not all consumers would have known where (or indeed what) Genoa was, and if they did, may have been suspicious of a remedy produced outside the English realm. Just over half a century later similar issues arose with the *Pharmacopœia Londinensis*, first published by the Royal College of Physicians in May 1618 only to be withdrawn, revised and republished seven months later in December due to the poor quality of the first edition. By issuing a compendium of receipts in English the College was seeking to regulate standards of medical care by establishing a body of orthodox medicines, and all English apothecaries (not just those in London) were ordered to use it (Urdang 1944: 25). Part of the challenge in compiling the work involved providing vernacular translations of Latin and Greek antidotes, but not all such labels were translated, meaning that readers who lacked a classical education would have been left in doubt as to what exactly such substance were. Sometimes original terms were retained because the substances had various vernacular labels, a good example being Theriac, which was known as Venice treacle, London treacle, and even as Galene after Galen, who promoted its use heavily (Griffin 2000: 317–25). References to "London" treacle were probably more

common outside than within the metropolis, just as "Venice" treacle was probably more commonly labelled there as "Genoa" treacle, which suggests that medicinal nomenclature was little different from that of other products in the market, in that specific exotic place names were included in labels to make them attractive to buyers rather than to clarify what the substances were.

One of the principle means by which literate people (of whom there were more in London than in the English provinces) gained knowledge of the properties and origins of medicines was through herbals. Authors such as William Turner (1508–1568), John Gerard (1545–1612), and Nicholas Culpeper (*c*.1616–1664) did much to lay open the plant world with detailed descriptions and accurate illustrations, including names of species, the places where they grew, and their possible uses (Pavord 2005: 252-71, 330-46). Most of the plants they discussed could be obtained in England or from Western Europe, but increasingly specimens from the wider world began to be included in such texts too. The inclusion of American plants in herbals was part of a growing interest in the climate, geography, livestock and peoples of the New World, and as Catherine Armstrong has demonstrated, by the early seventeenth century authors writing about American flora were evaluating the fertility of the soil, calculating how much labour was required to make land productive, encouraging exchange of species across the Atlantic, and arguing that specific crops improved human health or comfort, developments which were to have significant implications for what and how medicines were retailed (Armstrong 2007: 83-104).

The expansion in the range of places from which medical commodities were sourced enabled European patients to have access to an unparalleled range of remedies for their ailments, but this globalisation of medicine (and of consumer goods in general) created difficulties for retailers both within and beyond London who needed to provide these exotic commodities with vernacular names which would appeal to consumers who knew little if anything about them. To some degree the development of books of rates helped by listing goods which were traded regularly, but such texts risked creating further problems if they included different labels to refer to the same product (as happened with "rhubarb"), and the discovery or creation of new commodities meant that the books needed to be update regularly. Sometimes an indigenous word was adapted so that it resembled a vernacular one (as happened with "chocolate"), while on other occasions the process worked in reverse (as happened with "vanilla"), with a European word adapted to provide a new label for a commodity that

originated in another part of the world. On other occasions a term which was used for one sort of product was transferred to another, such as when "pepper" was used to refer to capsicum, or when Brazil, which originally referred to East Indian dyewood, was used to label the territory where similar dyewoods grew. As the references to "rhubarb", "vanilla" "chocolate" and "pepper" suggest, problems of translation were most acute when it came to labelling commodities which were held to have medicinal properties. As European invaders advanced into and colonized the American mainland during the long sixteenth century much Amerindian medical knowledge was destroyed, but some survived in mediated form. Nicolas Monardes (1493–1588), a physician and botanist who compiled a list of drugs from the New World despite never having visited the Americas was one collector who sought to transmit knowledge between cultures. Translated into English by John Frampton in 1577 as *Joyfull Newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde*, the text included descriptions of more than fifty medicines, but Monardes (and later Frampton) struggled to decide on appropriate names for many since Amerindian language was unfamiliar to European readers, so many were relabelled using terms derived from words familiar to Old World readers, and the authors emphasised how Amerindian plants resembled European ones in terms of appearance or smell, seeking to locate the new species within a Galenic humoral framework (Cox 2000: 200-1, 207-8; Cox 2015: 76-82).

Conclusion

This chapter has ranged widely across various spaces and places relating to shopping in London between 1450 and 1650. Medievalists have accumulated evidence to suggest that the City was a site of conspicuous consumption as early as the late thirteenth century (earlier perhaps than even the Italian city states and coterminous with the commercialisation of urban centres in the Low Countries), but the transformations in the land market and the growing cost of foodstuffs, coupled with the emergence of a sedentary royal court in Westminster and the drastic expansion in the range of goods available, suggest that sixteenth-century metropolitan consumer culture was novel in scope and style, unique in a British if not a wider European context. As in previous centuries products flooded in from across England and northern Europe, but by the early seventeenth Mediterranean goods were more readily available in London than previously, while American and Asian commodities were attracting buyers too. By 1650 only Amsterdam and Paris could match London for the number and variety of places to shop in a single capital city, although outside Western Europe Istanbul and Edo may have had more.

Overseas visitors such as Alessandro Magno and Thomas Platter, both of whom had visited many towns and cities across Western Europe, were impressed with what shoppers in London could buy and where they could shop, but if the long sixteenth century was a golden age for shoppers, for shopkeepers it was a period of instability as demographic growth fuelled topographic transformations. The suggestion made by Fisher that processes of manufacturing and retailing were carried out for the most part in separate places by 1650 has been critiqued by Wallis, but competition for retail spaces (whether on the streets, in marketplaces or under the roofs of fixed shops) was increasing within and beyond the walls of the ancient City, with increases in rents (if not wages) during the century of inflation prior to 1640 exacerbating the difficulties faced by retailers while possibly making it easier for shoppers to locate desirable items at a price they could afford. Modelled on similar establishments in the Low Countries, new retail venues such as the Royal and New Exchanges offered unprecedented shopping experiences for wealthy Londoners and new opportunities for ambitious retailers who had the ability to claim a spot in these malls, but such changes put pressure on many shopkeepers, particularly those based in the City, as many consumers flocked to the developing West End for their retail therapy.

By 1650 shoppers in London knew much about spaces of retail, both in terms of where shops were located across the metropolis, but also how such sites of consumption might be laid out and navigated, with London being a draw for visitors to and from England seeking to indulge in retail therapy just as Amsterdam was in the Dutch Republic. Knowledge of such shopping venues was acquired primarily through walking the streets of London, the experience of which was determined by social rank, gender, age, and perhaps also race, although no historian has considered how the latter might have impacted the experience of shopping. However, by 1700 if not earlier engagements with cultural representations of retail spaces offered individuals other means to plan a shopping trip, allowing a shopper to minimise the amount of time spent getting to and around the venue, or enabling the agoraphobic (or, given the bustle of the markets and exchanges, claustrophobic) buyer to issue detailed instructions to a proxy shopper. During the first half of the seventeenth century the Royal Exchange was memorialised by Wenceslaus Hollar and referenced in various stage performances, developments which, as Sophie Pitman discusses in her chapter, were part of a trend across Western Europe by which grand shopping spaces were celebrated. However, more popular spaces of consumption became well known through media depictions too. Pitman notes that

Ben Jonson set one of his plays in Bartholomew Fair because the site was familiar to many Londoners, but it also provided those who had never frequented the fair insights (albeit through a satirical lens) into how commerce was conducted there.

Where items were sourced from was becoming common knowledge too, especially when it came to ceramics, foodstuffs, glassware and textiles, with even recent arrivals to London such as Grenade aware of how stock arrived at markets such as Billingsgate and Leadenhall. Such awareness of the origins of goods was spreading in part because of how such items were marketed, either through the cries of hawkers or in the earliest printed advertisements, but the latter posed challenges as well as offering opportunities to retailers, particularly those operating within the medical marketplace. Rather than physicians, sickly Londoners turned to barber-surgeons and apothecaries when they fell ill, and awareness of where these practitioners were based, as well as where treatments could be obtained, circulated through word-of-mouth and in adverts placed in almanacs and on hand-bills. However, advertising medicines was fraught with difficulty because of the places where many such commodities were sourced from. Some consumers may have been suspicious, even fearful, of purchasing medicines with exotic names which came from places of which they knew little, retailers of these products had to use language carefully, using familiar terminology to market unfamiliar wares, or making claims about the origins of their goods which were dubious if not utterly fraudulent. Overall by 1650 Londoners has a greater range of spaces and places from which to choose and buy domestic and exotic goods than ever before, and some had greater financial resources than their ancestors to enable them to make such purchases, but selecting where, what and how to do so was more complicated in 1450 than it had been in 1650.