

The British Fair Trade Movement, 1960 - 2000:
a new form of global citizenship?

By

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Abbreviations

ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific countries
ATO	Alternative Trade Organisation
CA	Consumers' Association
CAFOD	Catholic Action for Overseas Development
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CI	Consumers International
CU	Consumers' Union
CWS	Co-operative Wholesale Society
DFID	Department for International Development
ECRA	Ethical Consumer Research Association
EFTA	European Fair Trade Association
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
FLO	Fairtrade Labelling Organisation International
FTF	Fairtrade Foundation
FTM	Fairtrade Mark
HbS	Helping by Selling
ICA	International Coffee Agreement
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IFAT	International Fair Trade Association <i>(formerly International Federation for Alternative Trade)</i>
IOCU	International Organisation of Consumer' Unions (later CI)
ISEDC	International Small Enterprise Development Centre
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
NEWS	Network of European World Shops
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
MNC	Multinational Company
OA	Oxfam Activities
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OT	Oxfam Trading
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
STABEX	Stabilisation of Export earnings
TEAR Fund	The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund
TWIN	Third World International Network
TNC	Transnational Company
TUC	Trade Union Congress
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCL	World Confederation of Labour
WFTO	World Fair Trade Organization
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Introduction

A New International ‘Moral Economy’?

Fairtrade has been hailed as one of the retail success stories of the past decade. Sales of Fairtrade products have significantly out-performed retail analysts' most optimistic predictions in recent years, reaching £500 million in 2007.¹ Britain is now firmly established as the leading European Fairtrade market,² fuelling media speculation as to why Fairtrade has taken root so firmly. Many commentators have looked to the British consumer in answering this question. Journalists have reported that, 'Britons over the past decade have become a nation of ethical shoppers.'³ Some have looked to investigate, 'How consumer power sparked a Fairtrade revolution on our high streets.'⁴ Fairtrade's success in mobilising consumer support has certainly been impressive, but is this the full story?

This thesis will question whether consumer demand alone can really provide an adequate explanation for the growth of Fairtrade in Britain. By adopting a methodology that looks beyond the 'ethical shopping trolley', a wider Fair Trade social movement is revealed, grounded in the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and alternative trade organisations (ATOs).⁵ I will argue that the emergence of Fair Trade in late twentieth century Britain has only partly been the result of 'the market' responding to consumer demand. Of greater significance, although often overlooked, was the role of the social movement that successfully began to integrate political consumerism within its international development campaigns.⁶

Public surveys of consumer behaviour in relation to Fair Trade and ethical foods have attempted to define 'the ethical consumer' based on socio-demographic factors such as

¹ Mintel, *Attitudes Towards Ethical Foods*, Market Intelligence, (August 2006).

² See Appendix Figures 1 and 2.

³ L. Jones, 'How Fair Trade hit the mainstream', *BBC News* (2 March 2004).

⁴ T. Macalister, 'How consumer power sparked a Fairtrade revolution on our high streets', *The Guardian* (8 March 2006).

⁵ A note on terminology: *Fair Trade movement* refers to the collection of civil society groups, producer organisations, certification bodies and consumers that work on or participate in Fair Trade initiatives involving agricultural products and also non-food items including handicrafts. *Fairtrade* or *FAIRTRADE Mark* relates specifically to the Fairtrade Foundation (the certifying body in the UK).

⁶ A. Nicholls, 'Strategic options in Fair Trade retailing', *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 30, 1 (2002), pp. 6 – 17.

age, gender and social class.⁷ Market research studies tend to describe the purchase of Fair Trade products as a lifestyle choice for those that can afford it, highlighting the importance of the more affluent ‘middle-classes’, with high disposable income.⁸ Consumers may be asked about price, quality, brand image and product attributes, but surveys rarely gain a sense of the consumer’s ‘world view’. Published quantitative surveys do not include broader questions about a Fair Trade shopper’s political views, religious beliefs or the extent of their involvement with related organisations and networks. But as I will argue in this thesis, it is these factors that are essential in gaining an understanding of the driving forces behind the Fair Trade movement.

It is difficult to know whether the absence of questions about religious and political motivations has been a deliberate omission; is it that these influences are too complex, or are not perceived to have commercial marketing applications? This thesis will argue that it is essential to look at the role of the consumer within the context of social networks, in spite of the complexities. By broadening the scope of the analysis beyond the individual consumer, the presence of a Fair Trade social movement based on a network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), alternative trading organisations (ATOs) and religious groups is revealed. This movement has contributed to all aspects of Fair Trade from launching international trading ventures, providing assistance to producers, setting up church stalls, campaigning on the streets and lobbying government.

The main focus for much of the recent academic work on Fair Trade has been either on supply chain analysis or impact assessment of Fairtrade certification on the livelihood of producers in the global South.⁹ But this has led to something of an imbalance in terms of understanding the workings of Fair Trade companies and campaigners. There is now a need for detailed academic study of those organisations involved in Fair Trade in the global North. This thesis does not set out to provide a business history of Fair Trade, although there is scope for further research into the practical experiences of Fair Trade

⁷ The Co-operative Bank, *The Ethical Consumerism Report* (2007).

⁸ Mintel, *Attitudes Towards Ethical Foods*.

⁹ S. Barrientos & C. Dolan, *Ethical Sourcing in the Global Food System*, (London: Earthscan, 2006); D. Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*, (Berkeley: University of California Press 2007); L. Raynolds, D. Murray and J. Wilkinson, *Fair Trade: The challenges of transforming globalization*. (London: Routledge, 2007).

companies in Britain. Instead, this thesis looks to understand the political, religious and intellectual ideas behind the movement.

One of the objectives in constructing a historical assessment of the Fair Trade movement in Britain is to shed some light on the key contemporary dilemmas facing the movement. These questions include: should Fair Trade constitute an alternative to the market or act as a transformative force within the market; what is the relationship of Fair Trade to the wider global justice movement; how can Fair Trade expand its market recognition and still maintain its founding values? In order to approach these questions it is vital to have a sound understanding of what motivated those organisations that have pioneered the modern Fair Trade movement. This thesis will explore how a surprisingly broad spectrum of civil society groups came to identify with Fair Trade from the early 1970s. Led by development agencies, faith-based groups and campaign organisations, Fair Trade was formulated as a powerful critique of global trade relations and promoted as a genuine opportunity for reviving international development efforts. Many within the NGO community believed that they would find natural allies in the co-operative movement, the trade unions and consumer organisations. But as will be shown, the relationship that emerged between these groups was complex and potentially even stood to undermine the ambitions of Fair Trade as a social movement.

Most surveys of Fair Trade include some overview of the formation of the Fairtrade Foundation and the standard biographical details are reasonably well-known: the Fairtrade Foundation was set up in July 1992 by CAFOD, Christian Aid, New Consumer, Oxfam, Traidcraft Exchange and the World Development Movement, and later joined by the Women's Institute. The role of the Fairtrade Foundation is to monitor and license the Fairtrade Mark in the UK.¹⁰ The Fairtrade Foundation identified its joint goals: 'to challenge the conventional model of trade, and offer a progressive alternative for a sustainable future.' And, 'to empower consumers to take responsibility for the role they play when they buy products from the third world.'¹¹ Beyond these details there seems to be a limited understanding amongst academic researchers and Fair Trade

¹⁰ Green & Blacks Maya Gold chocolate was the first product to receive the FAIRTRADE Mark, in March 1994. The certification of Cafédirect coffee and Clipper tea followed shortly.

¹¹ Fairtrade Foundation, *Introducing Fairtrade: A guide to the Fairtrade Mark and the Fairtrade Foundation*, (London, 2000).

practitioners about the nature of the roles played by these founding organisations. Although many of these organisations are to some extent household names, others are not (in particular New Consumer).¹² This leads to questions as to how these groups became members of the Fairtrade Foundation and to what extent they were qualified to act as guardians of the movement. Being able to provide answers to these questions about its membership are central to Fairtrade Foundation's credibility particularly given growing scepticism about the proliferation of social labels.¹³

It is not only sceptical consumers that the Fairtrade Foundation needs to appease, but also multinational companies (MNCs), that increasingly have a choice between social labels. The Fairtrade Foundation may increasingly need to demonstrate its value and credibility before these MNCs will agree to pay license fees in order to put the Fairtrade Mark on their brand.¹⁴

There are also signs that some long established ATOS are not averse to challenging the Fairtrade Foundation's credentials. People's Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance Foundation (PREDA), have been running a Fair Trade programme in the Philippines since 1975.¹⁵ PREDA had been selling 'Fair Trade' dried mangoes to Sainsbury's from 1998 to 2006.¹⁶ But in 2006, Sainsbury took the decision to remove PREDA mangoes from the Fairtrade section. Although the product was still stocked, it was no longer visible to consumers and sales dropped by 80 per cent, resulting in orders for two containers of dried mangoes to be cancelled.¹⁷ Father Shay Cullen, the founder of PREDA, believed that Sainsbury's decision to move their mangoes was the result of pressure from the Fairtrade Foundation; an accusation the Foundation has strongly denied. This dispute raised wider issues about the role of FLO, the international

¹² New Consumer was a charitable, consumer research organisation established by Richard Adams in February 1989. It has no direct links with the current New Consumer magazine. For more details see Chapter 5.

¹³ A recent report by Consumers International looked at the different certification schemes for coffee. In addition to Fairtrade, these included: Organic, Rainforest Alliance, Bird Friendly and Utz Kapeh. Consumers International, *From Bean to Cup: how consumer choice impacts on coffee producers and the environment*, (London: CI, December 2005).

¹⁴ The license fee is applied at the last point of wholesale supply and ranges from 1.8% to 0.7% depending on level of sales. A 50% reduction is given for 100% Fairtrade companies.

http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/business_services/product_certification.aspx.

¹⁵ S. Cullen, *Passion and Power*, (Westmeath: Killynon House, 2006), p. 141.

¹⁶ Father Shay Cullen, 'Fair-trade controversy: Did FLO plan to cause problems for PREDA?' (2006).

<http://www.preda.net/article/a06092101copy2.htm>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Fairtrade Labelling Organisation.¹⁸ Cullen argued that, 'No one knows where the authority to make and impose their rules on others came from. They seem to be self appointed.'¹⁹ Cullen argued that the Philippine and Asian Fair Trade organisations were, 'tired of being lectured and dictated to from the North countries. The labelling companies have to be challenged because the power they have to exclude small producers is awesome. To be certified by them is success in the markets to be refused or shunned is a one way ticket to oblivion.'²⁰

Intellectual origins of the Fair Trade movement

The politicization of consumption in Britain has a long and well documented history dating back to the eighteenth century. E. P. Thompson in 'The moral economy in the English crowd in the eighteenth century,' developed an analysis of traditional rights and customs that would lead many academics to rethink their interpretation of 'food riots'. The concept of the 'moral economy' has been applied to research in numerous fields and historical periods. The study of Fair Trade is no exception. Although Thompson himself was uneasy about the extension of the concept beyond 'eighteenth-century crowd action' it has proved a valuable tool for numerous academic debates.²¹ Gavin Fridell has argued that, 'Whereas the old moral economy in England described by Thompson asserted the right of the poor consumers to gain access to the means of life, the new international moral economy of Fair Trade asserts the right of poor producers to get a fair price for what they sell on the market.'²² Rather than the threat of riot as its political force, the Fair Trade moral economy is seen to rely on activist and consumer pressure and the threat of bad publicity towards MNC's brand image.²³

¹⁸ Fairtrade Labelling Organizations (FLO) International is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder association involving 23 Labelling initiatives (including the Fairtrade Foundation). Set up in 1997, FLO develops and reviews Fairtrade Standards and provide support to Fairtrade Certified Producers . FLO-CERT GMBH is responsible for the inspection and certification of producer organisations.

<http://www.fairtrade.net/home.html>.

¹⁹ Father Shay Cullen, 'Fair Trade logos and marks must benefit the poor and not the rich', (2006).
<http://www.preda.org/archives/2006/r06032901.html>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ E. P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 50 (Feb., 1971), p. 78.

²² G. Fridell, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market Driven Social Justice*, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2007), p.285.

²³ Fridell, p. 285.

If crowd action in Thompson's 'moral economy' had primarily been about consumers imposing their rights to food at fair or 'customary level', social thinkers during the nineteenth century started to articulate a concept of consumer duty. John Ruskin, the nineteenth century social thinker, believed that strengthening relations between the consumer and producer was central to moralising the market. He saw it as the duty of the consumer to, 'Consider first what conditions of existence you cause in the producers of what you buy'.²⁴ It was this simple sounding lesson that was at the heart of the Fair Trade movement philosophy. Ruskin believed that value of goods and human labour had been undermined by the industrialisation of production and he did not trust the market to reflect the true value of goods or labour. Ruskin wrote in *Unto This Last* (1862), 'What anything is worth it [the market] can not tell you; all that it can tell is the exchange value'.²⁵

Taken together the concepts of, 'failure of the market' and 'consumer duty' have been fundamental to Fair Trade campaigns. The failings of international markets have been highlighted by fluctuating commodity prices which at times have left producers receiving less for their goods than the cost of production. Ruskin saw the relations between consumer and producer breaking down; with the introduction of the factory system in England the home was no longer the centre of production. The Fair Trade movement also looked to bridge the gap between consumer and producer but in the global markets of the twentieth century this meant reconnecting with producers in the 'Third World'.

William Morris' philosophy was heavily influenced by Ruskin. He believed the desire for profit was responsible for society's disregard of the environment. He wrote, 'It is profit which draws men into enormous unmanageable aggregations called towns . . . profit which won't take the most ordinary precautions against wrapping a whole district in a cloud of sulphurous smoke; which turns beautiful rivers into filthy sewers'.²⁶ Profit was also seen by Morris as the reason for the poor working conditions he saw in factories. 'To compel a man to do day after day the same task, without any hope of escape or

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.116.

²⁵ J. Ruskin, *Unto This Last: Four Essays on the First Principles of Political Economy*, (London, 1862), p. 165

²⁶ W. Morris, *How We Live and How We Might Live*, (London, 1885).

change, means nothing short of turning his life into a prison-torment. Nothing but the tyranny of profit grinding makes this necessary'.²⁷

There is one nineteenth century character that has had a particularly lasting influence on the international Fair Trade movement, Max Havelaar. Although a fictional character, the novel *Max Havelaar* is semi-autobiographical. Published in 1860, the novel uncovered the realities of Dutch colonial policy and was reported to have 'sent a shiver through the country'.²⁸ The main character, Max Havelaar, was a Dutch colonial administrator (as was the author, Eduard Douwes-Dekker) who sought to improve conditions for coffee farmers in Indonesia, but was hindered in his mission by the indifference shown by the Dutch colonial government and coffee traders. The main object of Havelaar's criticism was the Kultuurstelsel (Cultivation System) which was used by the Dutch to justify the compulsory cultivation of export crops. The book was discussed in the Dutch Parliament and was championed by those already opposed to the Cultivation System. By 1862, two years after the publication of *Max Havelaar* the Cultivation System was abolished for pepper, in 1863 for cloves and nutmeg, in 1865 for tea and in 1866 for tobacco. But one remnant of the Cultivation System persisted into the twentieth century - the compulsory cultivation of coffee, which continued until 1917.²⁹ Interest in the story of *Max Havelaar* was renewed when the first Fair Trade certification scheme, set up in the Netherlands in 1988, choose 'Max Havelaar' as the name for their certification label.

Peter Gurney has argued that co-operatives demonstrated that, 'people's purchasing decisions could be harnessed effectively to create a more humane and democratic economic and social order'.³⁰ From the early nineteenth century, Gurney argues that co-operators had developed, 'a democratic, ethical model of consumption – a "moral economy of co-operation" – that depended on an associated, active membership rather than the gullible mass consumers preferred by capitalist manufactures and advertisers'.³¹ Gurney here can clearly be seen to be drawing on an analytical discourse outlined by E. P. Thompson. 'The moral economy of the crowd took longer to die: it is picked up by

²⁷ W. Morris, *Useful Work Versus Useless Toil*, (London, 1884).

²⁸ Multatuli (Douwes-Dekker) *Max Havelaar: Or the Coffee Auctions of a Dutch Trading Company*, first published 1860, (London: Penguin Classics, 1986), p.12.

²⁹ W. H. Frederick and R. L. Worden, (eds.) *Indonesia: A Country Study*. (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1993).

³⁰ P. Gurney, *The Battle of the Consumer in Postwar Britain*, *Journal of Modern History*, 77 (2005) p.984.

the early co-operative flour mills, by some Owenite socialists, and it lingered on for years somewhere in the bowels of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.³² A number of revisionist studies have sought to highlight the persistence of the co-operative ideology. Stephen Yeo stated that, ‘The fact the world did not go their way should not be allowed to conceal what Holyoake called the ‘world-making’ project of co-operators’ and that, ‘results need not be allowed to erase struggles, nor need defeat be equated with failure.’³³

Building on this understanding of the co-operative movement as a pioneer of ethical consumerism, recent studies on Fair Trade have frequently looked to the Co-op in their historical assessment of the movement. Tim Lang and Yiannis Gabriel situated the Co-operative movement within the first wave, of what they describe as ‘active consumers’. In Lang and Gabriel’s model of consumer activism the first wave, ‘took note of, helped and began to adopt the vitality and appeal of the fourth wave [alternative consumerism] by making new commitments to position co-operatives as more trustworthy sources of the necessities of life.’³⁴ Alex Nicholls and Charlotte Opal have developed an alternative model for assessing Fair Trade based on the commercial growth of the market. Within this model the Co-operative Group is also identified as a ‘naturally sympathetic retail business’ and situated in the third wave of development, building upon the work of alternative trade organisations (ATOs).³⁵

Frank Trentmann, in his history of Britain as a free trade nation, has argued that, ‘the moral view of the world according to Fair Trade has a historical blind spot’.³⁶ This, he argues, is illustrated in the failure of the Fair Trade movement to recognise that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, ‘morally energized civic-minded consumers opted for Free Trade’.³⁷ But there is little evidence that Trentmann set out to address the historical deficiencies he identified in the narrative of Fair Trade in Britain. Information on the Fair Trade movement does not appear to be based on archive research and consists of only of a few paragraphs. This does not provide a good grounding for a

³¹ P. Gurney, The Battle of the Consumer in Postwar Britain, *Journal of Modern History*, 77 (2005) p. 960.

³² Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy’, p. 136.

³³ S. Yeo (ed.), *New Views on Consumer Co-operation*, (London: Routledge, 1988), p.7.

³⁴ T. Lang & Y. Giabriel, ‘A Brief History of Consumer Activism’, in R. Harrison & D. Shaw et al. (ed.) *The Ethical Consumer*, (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2005). p.51.

³⁵ A. Nicholls & C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*, (London: Sage, 2005). p.20.

³⁶ F. Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain*. (Oxford University Press, 2008), p.359.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

historically contextualised study of Fair Trade. But this is not the objective of this study. References to the Fair Trade movement seem to be included mainly to provide legitimacy to the free trade consumer campaigns. And although Trentmann acknowledges that ‘there is no direct line between this kind of racial stereotyping and the ethical consumerism of more recent years’, he still contends that the Buy Empire Goods campaign ‘occupies an intermediary stage towards Fair Trade’.³⁸ He concludes his description of Empire Day in Oxford in 1927, by declaring that, ‘here was an imperial precursor to the international Fair Trade movement that would spring up half a century later’.³⁹ But these attempts to demonstrate an element of continuity from the consumer support for the Empire Marketing Board to Fairtrade Foundation seem to be fruitless exercise.

In attempting to demonstrate the continuity between free trade and Fair Trade consumer campaigns Trentmann underplays the extent to which the Fair Trade movement of the late twentieth century represented a ‘switch [of] moral tracks’.⁴⁰ Trentmann argues that Fair Trade needs to be placed in ‘a longer more troubled genealogy of consumption and power’.⁴¹ This may be true but at the same time Fair Trade’s origins as a protest movement need to be clearly articulated. Fair trade did not develop *from* the Buy Empire Goods campaign rather Fair Trade emerged (somewhat belatedly) *in opposition* to this ‘conservative imperial consumerism’. Fair trade developed an historically specific, internationalist vision that was shaped by the experiences of the anti-apartheid movement, was motivated by solidarity with socialist countries such as Nicaragua, was informed by liberation theology and was articulated in consumer activism such as the fair tea prices campaign.

If Trentmann’s account seems to offer little insight into the historical origins of the modern Fair Trade movement, what it does provide is a valuable demonstration of the complexities of any study into consumer politics. Despite extensive academic research and media coverage, the concept of ‘the consumer’ remains problematic. Tim Lang and Yiannis Gabriel have shown that , ‘consumers come in millions of forms, broken down

³⁸ F. Trentmann, ‘Before “Fair Trade”: empire, free trade and the moral economics of food in the modern world’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25 (2007) p.1086.

³⁹ Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation*, p. 234.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.359.

⁴¹ Trentmann, ‘Before Fair Trade’, p.1080.

and divided by class, income, family, gender, taste, lifestyle, aspirations, etc.'. They argue therefore that this diversity makes it misleading to talk of 'the consumer'.⁴²

Daniel Miller, commenting on this growing trend in consumer studies, stated that, 'consumption has become the vanguard of history'.⁴³ Miller was optimistic about the potential of ethical or 'progressive consumption'. He stated, 'what is required is a "middle-range" morality, which re-inscribes on to the surface of commodities their consequences for producers, often from the developing world'.⁴⁴ He argued this would require a 'transformation of consciousness with the acceptance of wider responsibilities among the middle classes of the First World'.⁴⁵ Despite this insight, Miller seemed unaware that it was exactly this form of 'middle range morality' that was already the basis of the Fair Trade movement, and that NGOs had been working to encourage a 'transformation of consciousness' among British consumers for at least the previous 20 years.

Matthew Hilton has argued that, 'consumerism has shown its greatest potential as a movement for historical change when it has attached itself to a broad set of social democratic principles that coalesce with other interests in society'.⁴⁶ In recent years, partly as a result of the growth of organic and Fair Trade movements, Lang and Gabriel have revised their interpretation. They now suggest that 'ethical consumption maps one clear path for consumers, a route for translating consumerism into citizenship, consumer/citizen being one conventional ideological contrast'.⁴⁷

Challenging the existing chronology of Fair Trade

With few exceptions current historical writing on Fair Trade has tended towards a teleological narrative that charts the 'rise of the Fair Trade movement'. This approach has underplayed the tensions and complexities of Fair Trade in favour of a narrative that

⁴² Y. Gabriel and T. Lang, *The Unmanageable Consumer: Contemporary Consumption and its Fragmentation*. (London: Sage, 1995).

⁴³ D. Miller, (ed.) *Acknowledging Consumption*, (London: Routledge, 1995) p. 1.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ M. Hilton, *Consumerism in 20-Century Britain*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 23.

focuses on the triumph of a model that had been dismissed by the corporate world. By overlooking many of the debates the Fair Trade movement has faced in its short history the modern movement may be failing to grasp those valuable lessons that could help shape its future.

Michael Barratt Brown, in *Fair Trade: Reform and Realities in the International Trading System*, explores the, ‘many varieties of supportive, compensatory, centrally planned, supplementary and complementary, and parallel systems of trading in order to find a way to help Third World countries and organisations to strengthen their position in the world market and embark on upon a path of independent development’.⁴⁸ This detailed study of the development of international trade, from the origins of the slave trade in the sixteenth century to the spread of capitalism in the twentieth century, only includes only one brief chapter on alternative trade networks in the late twentieth century. Given Barratt Brown’s involvement with the Fair Trade movement this seems something of a missed opportunity.⁴⁹

Gavin Fridell closely follows the approach taken by Barratt Brown and sets out with the ambitious task of studying, ‘the structures of global capitalism’ and providing ‘a framework for situating Fair Trade within the “big questions” of a historically informed development theory’.⁵⁰ Fridell is right to identify the need for a historically informed approach to the study of Fair Trade but his understanding of the theoretical origins of Fair Trade seems confused. Fridell distinguishes between the ‘Fair Trade movement’ which he defines as encapsulating, ‘a variety of initiatives headed by Southern government, international organizations and NGOs with the purpose of radically altering the international trade and development regime in the interest of poor nations in the South’.⁵¹ And the ‘Fair Trade network’ which refers to, ‘a formal network of NGOs that connects peasants, workers, and craftspeople in the South with partners in the North through a system of Fair Trade rules and principles’.⁵² To define this broad international

⁴⁷ T. Lang and Y. Gabriel, ‘A Brief History of Consumer Activism’ in R. Harrison, T. Newhom and D. Shaw (eds.), *The Ethical Consumer*, (London: Sage, 2005), p. 53.

⁴⁸ M. Barratt Brown, *Fair Trade: Reform and Realities in the International Trading System*, (London: Zed Books, 1993).

⁴⁹ Michael Barratt Brown, was the founding Chair and Director of Twin Trading.

⁵⁰ G. Fridell, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market Driven Social Justice*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), p. 7.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²*Ibid.*

trade and development lobby as the ‘Fair Trade movement’ leads to unnecessary confusion and appears to influence Fridell’s assessment of the chronological development of what he defines as the ‘Fair Trade network’.

Fridell defines the development of the ‘Fair Trade network’ into two phases. Firstly, the 1940s-1980s where ‘Fair Traders were significantly influenced by the arguments advanced by Latin American structuralists. . . and had a commitment to a vision of an alternative world trading system’.⁵³ He describes the second phase, 1980s to the present, as the period in which, ‘the network abandoned its earlier vision and reoriented itself towards more market friendly goals’.⁵⁴ But Fridell has created a false distinction between the periods by presenting an idealised version of the 1940s-1980s. He suggests that ATOs during this early period did not seek to make profits, any remaining profits would be returned to Southern producers.⁵⁵ But this was not the case for Oxfam UK during the 1960s and neither was this the model followed by Community Aid Abroad during the 1960s.

In terms of providing a chronological overview, this thesis divides the period into three phases. Firstly the 1960s, which was the period that certainly witnessed a growing awareness of the scale of Third World poverty and led to calls for governments to increase their international aid and development budgets. It was also recognised that long term development would be more likely achieved through ‘trade not aid’. But despite these insights, there was little progress made towards restructuring North-South trade relations. The second phase saw the emergence of a genuine Fair Trade movement: it was during the 1970s that Oxfam set up Bridge; Christian Aid developed a critique of cheap tea and Traidcraft was established. With these initiatives, Oxfam, Christian Aid and Traidcraft pioneered an alternative model of trade and the networks that emerged between them would become the basis of a Fair Trade social movement. The third phase, beginning in the late 1980s, saw Fair Trade move towards the mainstream. The Fairtrade Foundation, established in 1992, set out to, ‘empower consumers to take responsibility for the role they play when they buy products from the third world’.⁵⁶

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁵⁶ Fairtrade Foundation, *Introducing Fairtrade: A guide to the Fairtrade Mark and the Fairtrade Foundation* (London, 2000).

The 1960s: ‘trade not aid’

The majority of academic research on Fair Trade follows the official NGO institutional histories and looks to date the origins of the Fair Trade movement from the 1960s. There are two main focuses either the first international trading ventures by NGOs or the international trade and development programme of the United Nations. But in reality the international programmes of the 1960s were little more than a catalyst for a Fair Trade alternative.

The launch of the first UN Development Decade raised hopes that the 1960s would witness a transformation in the Third World on a scale comparable to the Marshall Plan’s post-war European reconstruction. But rather than being an off-shoot of these state-led initiatives, Fair Trade developed (during the 1970s) as a response to failings of international governments on issues of trade justice, aid and debt. The second UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD) had set a target for official aid of 0.7 per cent of donor GNP, but there was little evidence that governments were committed to reaching these targets. In 1968, France (with official aid at 0.72 per cent of GNP) was the only nation to have met this target, whereas Britain although not at the bottom of the table, had only contributed official aid to a value of 0.42 per cent of GNP.⁵⁷ This contribution was further undermined by the fact that 43 per cent of Britain’s aid was wholly tied and another 16 per cent was partly tied.⁵⁸

It was also during this period that the phrase ‘trade not aid’ was coined, a term that some authors have seen as synonymous with Fair Trade.⁵⁹ But international trade did not have a particularly good track record when it came to Third World development. Between 1953 and 1967, world trade as a whole increased by an average of 6.9 per cent per year, but the gains from international trade continued to be amassed disproportionately by the industrialised countries of the North.⁶⁰ As a result, low-income countries’ overall share of export earnings declined from 27 per cent in 1953 to 19 per cent in 1967.⁶¹ For example, between 1953 and 1961 Brazil expanded its coffee exports by 90 per cent in volume, but

⁵⁷ L. Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 148.

⁵⁸ Aid figures for 1965 in, Ministry of Overseas Development, *What is British Aid?* (London: HMSO, 1967).

⁵⁹ M. K. Goodman, ‘Reading Fair Trade: political ecological imaginary and the moral economy of Fair Trade foods’, *Political Geography* 23 (2004) p. 903.

⁶⁰ L. Pearson, *Partners in Development*, p. 45.

revenue fell by 35 per cent.⁶² But the modest target of five per cent annual growth rate in the incomes of the poor countries was only achieved by a handful of countries and even in those countries the benefits of economic growth were still not felt by the very poorest.

The 1970s: Alternative trade

By the early 1970s there was a growing consensus amongst the international development community that if trade was really going to lift Third World countries out of poverty it would require a restructuring of North-South trade relations. In responding to the failure of the first UN Development Decade, Oxfam, Christian Aid and Traidcraft looked to develop an alternative approach that would help kick-start the development process. Fair trade emerged as NGOs looked to fill the vacuum that was left when government and business were reluctant to engage consumers on issues of international trade and development.

Akira Iriye states that the growth of NGOs has been, ‘one of the most impressive developments of twentieth-century world history’.⁶³ But he argues that in general historians have been extremely slow to recognise their contribution. The history of the British Fair Trade movement has been left to be catalogued by the internal histories of those NGOs involved. Sometimes these provide valuable sources, but often they only serve to highlight the absence of a collective memory within these organisations.⁶⁴ The limited attention Fair Trade has received from academic historians is surprising because historical research into Fair Trade as a social movement holds particular value since it spans the intersection of consumer politics and NGO campaigning. In part this oversight may be because the emergence of the Fair Movement does not fit neatly with the frequently accepted characterisation of the 1960s as *the* socially progressive decade.

The 1980s: Building a movement

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Haslemere Committee, *The Haslemere Declaration* (London, 1969), p. 9.

⁶³ A. Iriye, ‘A Century of NGOs’, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Summer 1999).

⁶⁴ P. Burnell, *Charity, Politics and the Third World* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

Gavin Fridell's work examining the political-economic impacts of Fair Trade argues that the 1980s marked the emergence of, 'a distinctly different development model for the Fair Trade network based on the abandonment of its statist orientation and the strengthening of its neo-Smithian market orientation to conform to the demands of neoliberal globalisation'.⁶⁵ Fridell further argues that, 'the social and political objectives of Fair Trade have, ultimately been subject to the imperatives of global capitalism. These imperatives have imposed significant limits on the network, and have eroded, and will likely continue to erode, the Fair Trade programme over time'.⁶⁶

The Fair Trade movement did not abandon its statist orientation, since this was never a position it held. Fair trade was a micro level response aimed at supporting small farmers and co-operatives disadvantaged by the failings of inter-governmental economic policies. The movement was not state sponsored but led by international development agencies, campaign groups and Christian agencies.

The 1980s is more accurately characterised as a period of increased international networking, with the first European World Shops conference taking place in 1984, and by the end of the decade the foundation of EFTA (the European Fair Trade Association, in 1987) and IFAT (the International Federation of Alternative Trade, in 1989). EFTA is an association of the 11 largest importing organisations in Europe; IFAT is a global network that has grown to represent over 250 organizations. Both these organizations played an important role in building a global Fair Trade movement.

1990s: Mainstreaming Fair Trade

The majority of academic work on Fair Trade has focused on the post 1990s and has looked to understand how Fair Trade has established itself within the mainstream. Laura Raynolds, Douglas Murray and John Wilkinson have investigated some of the most pressing challenges for Fair Trade as it moves into mainstream markets and engages with multinational corporations (MNCs) on a daily basis.⁶⁷ Three key issues are highlighted: how can the Fair Trade movement engage with MNCs without undermining the position

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

of 100 per cent Fair Trade companies; does there need to be a moratorium on further Fairtrade certification of plantations in order to protect small farmers; does the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation International (FLO) need to restructured to allow for fuller representation by producer groups?⁶⁸

Alex Nicholls and Charlotte Opal's, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption* is characteristic of much of the business focused research on Fair Trade. Nicholls and Opal define Fair Trade as, 'a consumer-driven phenomenon, underpinned by the growth of "ethical" consumption more generally'.⁶⁹ They further argue that, 'Fair Trade is entirely a consumer choice model, it operates within the larger free trade model of unregulated international commerce'.⁷⁰ This focus on consumer demand as the main driver for Fair Trade leaves little room for a full discussion of the wider Fair Trade movement. There is only limited discussion about the networks of NGOs and ATOS that shaped the historical development of the Fair Trade movement.

Recent research undertaken by Clive Barnett, Nick Clark, Paul Cloke and Alice Malpass challenges this apparent triumph of market logic. They argue that, 'the growth of ethical consumerism is not simply about spontaneous changes in consumer demand being met by more or less elastic market supply; nor is the politics of this activity primarily about the aggregation of myriad privatised preferences'.⁷¹ They have attempted to develop a broadly political, rather than a narrowly economic approach to Fair Trade and ethical consumerism. This has led them to highlight the role of organisations involved in Fair Trade which seek to embed ethical purchasing in wider programmes of mobilisation, activism, lobbying and campaigning. Using the activities of Traidcraft as an example, they argue that 'agency needs to be located not in the activities of consumers but in the articulation of intermediary organisations, social networks, and everyday practices of social reproduction'.⁷²

⁶⁷ L. Raynolds, D. Murray & J. Wilkinson, *Fair trade: The challenges of transforming globalization*. (London: Routledge, 2007).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ A. Nicholls & C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market Driven Ethical Consumption*, (London: Sage Publications, 2004), p. 13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁷¹ C. Barnett, N. Clarke et al., 'The Political Ethics of Consumerism', *Consumer Policy Review* 15:2 (2005). p. 50.

⁷² C. Barnett, N. Clarke et al., 'The Political Rationalities of Fair-Trade Consumption in the United Kingdom,' *Politics and Society* 35:4 (2007). p. 602.

Ultimately, they argue that NGOs have utilised Fair Trade to, ‘raise awareness of campaigns, before enrolling ordinary people in more “active” forms of political engagement, like donating, joining as a member, or volunteering’.⁷³ Whether donating can really be classified as a more active form of political engagement than purchasing Fair Trade products is debatable; but none the less this work has made a valuable contribution in highlighting the agency of those organisations involved in campaigning for Fair Trade, a theme that this thesis will develop within a historical framework.

Sources and thesis outline

This thesis has drawn on a wide range of sources in order to establish the relative contribution of the different organisations that form the Fair Trade movement. The research project has involved tracing the involvement of these organisations on issues of international trade and ethical consumerism in order to judge their relative contribution towards developing a model of Fair Trade. For each organisation covered in the research I have endeavoured to cover as wide a range of sources as possible in order to gain the most representative picture.

Sources for this thesis ranged from campaign leaflets and published journals to committee minutes and personal correspondence. I have also been in the fortunate and rare position for a historian to have been able to conduct a number of interviews with key individuals from some of these organisations. As already stated, the main focus of this work is on exploring Fair Trade as social movement, and as a result, many of the most fruitful sources have been either correspondence between organisations or campaign publications that directly refer to one of the other organisations. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it has not always been an organisation’s own archive that has provided sources that prove most revealing.

The conference papers of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) held at the ICA offices in Geneva proved an important source for mapping the scope and potential of

⁷³ Barnett, Clarke et al., ‘The Political Ethics of Consumerism’.

international co-operation in relation to Fair Trade and particularly the contribution of the British movement. In addition, *The Co-operative News* proved useful in gauging the opinion of Co-op members and the wider Co-operative movement.

The boycott of the apartheid regime in South Africa is one of the most noteworthy consumer campaigns of the twentieth century and it forged supporter networks which the Fair Trade movement would later draw upon. The success of the South African boycott encouraged Fair Trade campaigners to increasingly focus on consumer activism as a means of making a political impact. The archives of the Anti-Apartheid Movement now held by the Bodleian Library at Rhodes House, Oxford, were drawn on extensively for this research.

The majority of sources for this thesis are print-based (both published and unpublished documents) but on occasions other media sources have been drawn upon. For instance, two World in Action programmes provided a valuable insight into the impact that television reports could have on raising general awareness of an issue such as the plight of Third World producers.⁷⁴ The first of these programmes was titled *Cost of a Cup of Tea* and was broadcast in September 1973, this was followed up in March 1975 by *Tea: the Deadly Cost*. These programmes uncovered the intolerable working and living conditions on tea plantations in Sri Lanka and led NGOs such as War on Want, the World Development Movement and Oxfam to launch campaigns demanding that tea manufacturers in Britain ensured that conditions were improved for tea workers in Sri Lanka. Tea also became one of the first commodities that campaigners used to highlight to British consumers the wider socio-economic impacts of their shopping choices.

The Oxfam archives proved a key resource throughout this research not solely for records relating to Oxfam campaigns, but also to the wider Fair Trade movement. Although Oxfam's general history has been reasonably well documented, this thesis will provide the first archive based historical study of Oxfam's Fair Trade activities. By studying the extensive collection of reports, committee papers and correspondence it has been possible to build up a detailed picture of the principles and philosophy behind Oxfam's Fair Trade initiative. Of particular interest was the correspondence between

⁷⁴ This research was also supplemented by interviews with the producer on both these programmes, David Hart (April 2009).

Oxfam and producers in the South which provides a historical insight into the impact of Fair Trade as well as some of the practical difficulties of trying to implement an alternative model of international trade.

Of the Christian development NGOs covered in this thesis, the Christian Aid archive (the majority of which is held at SOAS⁷⁵), provides the most comprehensive collection of documents and publications. Although less complete, the records held by CAFOD and the Methodist Development and Relief Fund provided valuable insight into a network developed between these organisations in order to campaign in support of Fair Trade.

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) archives held at the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University provided an extensive record of the workings of the TUC's international committees. In particular, papers relating to ICFTU (International Confederation on Free Trade Unions) conferences provide detail on the TUC's response to the international labour issues of the day.

The Fairtrade Foundation's own records, although not as extensive as many of the other organisations studied, contain a complete record of committee minutes from the first meeting of the Foundation. These minutes make interesting reading and provide sufficient detail to provide a good outline of the trajectory of the Fairtrade Foundation's development. In addition it is possible to clearly map the roles taken by the different organisations and also to some extent the influence of the characters within these organisations.

The archives of Community Aid Abroad (now called Oxfam Australia) and Tradewinds provided material for a comparative study of the Australian Fair Trade movement and labelling scheme. This study, in August 2006, involved archive research and interviews with staff at Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand.

Thesis outline

⁷⁵ The School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

The structure of the thesis is essentially thematic but also broadly reflects the chronological development of the movement. Chapter one considers whether the Co-operative movement could really be seen as ‘naturally sympathetic’ to Fair Trade as is often suggested.⁷⁶ This chapter explores the tensions that existed within the Co-operative movement over how to conduct its international trading. From the late nineteenth century, the consumer co-operative members of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), such as the British movement, expressed a desire to realise the ideals of international co-operation. But it seems that when it came to a choice between demonstrating solidarity with producer co-operatives from the South and maintaining the consumer dividend, invariably it was the producer co-operatives that lost out. Faced with increased commercial pressure from supermarkets during the 1960s and 1970s, the Co-op resisted moves by its members to support NGO led campaigns such as the Anti-Apartheid movement or the fair tea campaign. It was not until the early 1990s that the Co-op management recognised that Fairtrade was a viable proposition and would allow them to conduct international trade in a manner that was compatible with the ideals of the movement.

Chapter two is a reassessment of Oxfam’s involvement in Fair Trade and provides an opportunity to revisit the question of ‘what is Fair Trade’. The story of Oxfam shops in 1959, selling pincushions made by Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, is often identified as the beginning of Fair Trade in Britain.⁷⁷ But, as the chapter will argue, if we understand Fair Trade to mean more than just charities running commercial trading ventures then it was not until the early 1970s that Oxfam developed a genuine model of Fair Trade. This reassessment should not detract from the significant contribution of Oxfam, but again challenges a chronology that depicts the 1960s as a uniquely progressive period of history. From the early 1970s, Oxfam undertook a restructuring of its trading practices and the initiative that evolved (although not as progressive as some within the organisation were promoting) became the model for future Fair Trade operations.

Chapter three looks to establish the role of Christian teachings and agencies in the context of the emerging network of organisations that was the Fair Trade movement. The main focus is on the work of Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tear Fund and Traidcraft.

⁷⁶ Nicholls and Opal, *Fair Trade*, p. 20.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

This chapter argues that in Britain from the 1960s, a number of Christian NGOs played an important role in the developing what has become the Fair Trade movement. In doing so, they reasserted the relevance of Christian values to the ‘secular’ fields of global trade and international aid development. But the significance of Christian NGOs continues to be underplayed in current literature reinforcing the characterisation of post 1960s Britain as a society facing terminal religious decline.⁷⁸ One of the wider aims of the chapter is to reveal an additional complexity to the historical discourse of religion in modern Britain.

Chapter four considers the role of the TUC on the international stage, particularly in relation to conditions of workers in the Third World. By using Fair Trade as a case study, this chapter looks to understand how (and if) the TUC incorporated the concerns of Third World workers into its international agenda. The central theme of this chapter is the discrepancy between the ideals of international trade unionism, which articulated a philosophy consistent with the main principles of the Fair Trade movement, and the reality of the TUC’s international programme that prioritised the job security of its members at the expense of workers in the Third World. This resulted in a situation whereby NGOs and Fair Trade campaigners, largely unaware of the TUC’s internal politics, believed that the TUC would be receptive to campaigns focused on raising international labour standards. But as will be shown, those organisations that expected the TUC to show leadership in supporting workers in the Third World were to be left disappointed.

Chapter five looks at how the concept of the ‘ethical consumer’ became a contested site within the Fair Trade movement and how this shaped character of the Fairtrade Foundation. The decision to certify Nestlé’s Partners Blend is examined within the historical context of Fair Trade’s move towards mainstream markets. This was not the first time that the Foundation had entered into negotiations with a multinational company (MNC), nor was it the first time that the movement seemed to be facing a ‘crisis of identity’. This chapter will focus on the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period that laid the foundations for the Fair Trade movement to move from the ‘margins to the mainstream’.

⁷⁸ C. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000* (London: Routledge 2001).

What these case studies suggest is that there is a need for a more nuanced approach towards the role of the consumer if we are to fully understand the reasons behind the growth of Fair Trade in modern Britain. I will argue that ‘ethical consumers’ did not emerge fully fledged but were shaped through the campaigns and experience of alternative trade pioneered by ATOS and NGOs. Ultimately, Fair Trade developed as an alternative approach that filled the vacuum left by government and business reluctance to engage consumers on issues of international trade and development. Arguably, the omission of NGOs from much of the recent commentary on Fair Trade could be a reflection of the Fairtrade Foundation’s own efforts, over the last decade, to cultivate an identity distinct from that of its member organisations. The Foundation has worked to distance itself from the ‘alternative label’ that had defined much of the pioneering initiatives of its founding members and in the concept of the ‘ethical consumer’ it found a valuable ally.

But arguably this focus on the ‘ethical consumer’ has proved something of a mixed blessing. It has allowed the Fairtrade Foundation to publish annual sales figures demonstrating in a measurable way the impact and growth of Fair Trade. But it has also encouraged ever closer engagement with MNCs and supermarkets in order to sustain this growth. And moves such as certification of Nestlé’s Partners Blend in 2005, have threatened an identity crisis within the movement.⁷⁹ The Fairtrade Foundation may look to rediscover the NGO origins of the movement as a way of differentiating itself from other corporate backed initiatives.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Jaffe, *Brewing Justice*.

⁸⁰ Consumers International, *From Bean to Cup: how consumer choice impacts on coffee producers and the environment*, (London: CI, December 2005), p. 29.

1 ‘Cost of a Cup of Tea’: Fair Trade and the British Co-operative Movement

In recent years, the Co-op has claimed to be the ‘Champion of Fairtrade’ in the mainstream.¹ The figures go some way to support this claim: in 2004, the Co-operative Group accounted for one third of all Fairtrade sales through grocery outlets and sold more Fairtrade coffee than any other supermarket retailer in the UK.² Total Fairtrade sales at the Co-operative have risen from £100,000 in 1998 to £40 million in 2006.³ In recent years, this has contributed to returning £1.25 million annually in Fairtrade premiums to the producers. The Co-operative Group has also been clear about its future commitment: ‘Our goal is that, eventually all Co-op products from developing countries will be fairly traded and that fair trade ingredients are used more and more in our standard products.’⁴ From the early 1990s Fair Trade has been central to identifying the ‘Co-operative difference’ and promoting a market position separate from the supermarkets.

The influence of the co-operative model on the Fair Trade movement can be seen in a number of ways. Most clearly this is through the Co-operative Group’s retail support for the Fairtrade label, but also in the Fairtrade Foundation’s preference for supporting producer co-operatives. At the more abstract level, the apparent ethical and moral links between the original principles of the Rochdale Pioneers and Fair Trade values have been emphasised. Given that the Co-operative movement is now at the heart of the Fair Trade movement and has been identified by some commentators as ‘naturally sympathetic’, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the Co-operative movement would have been a pioneer of alternative - or fair - trade when it developed in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵ But, as this chapter will argue, the idea of the Co-operative movement as ‘naturally sympathetic’ to Fair Trade overlooks the internal contradictions and debates within the movement that took place during the 1960s and 1970s.

¹ ‘Fairtrade choc’, *Co-operative News* (5 April 1994).

² *Co-operative News* (16 October 2004).

³ <http://www.co-operative.coop/food/Fairtrade/theco-operativeandfairtrade/>, 16 June 2006.

⁴ ‘Fair Trade A Cooperative Revolution’, *Cooperatives UK Magazine* (Issue 3, 2004).

⁵ A. Nicholls and C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption* (London: Sage, 2005). p. 20.

In investigating the Co-operative movement's response to issues of Fair Trade, this chapter will engage with a number of discussions prominent in current Co-op historiography.⁶ In particular, it will explore Co-op employee workplace representation and the tensions that existed over labour relations in British Co-operative Retail Societies. By incorporating an international dimension into this field of research, this chapter will widen the discussion to take account of the Co-op's treatment of workers employed in the global South. The tensions between the national leadership and the ancillaries of the movement will also be examined, specifically the Women's Co-operative Guild (WCG) and their ability to draw on the ideals of the movement to promote a 'radical' or 'socially progressive' campaign. This chapter will uncover the role of the WCG in the consumer activism of the 1960s and 1970s and show that the WCG was at the forefront in campaigning for fair tea prices and in calling for a boycott of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

This chapter will demonstrate that, from the outset, tensions existed within the Co-operative movement over how it should conduct its international trading. From the late nineteenth century, the consumer co-operative members of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), such as the British movement, expressed a desire to realise the ideals of international co-operation. But when it came to a choice between demonstrating solidarity with producer co-operatives from the South and maintaining the consumer dividend, invariably it was the producer co-operatives that lost out. In practice, the British movement was operating its trading ventures along the same lines as any other major commercial importer. It was not until the early 1990s that the Co-op management recognised that Fairtrade was a viable proposition and would allow them to conduct international trade in a manner that was compatible with the ideals of the movement.

What is required, in light of the emergence of the 'ethical consumer' and the Fair Trade movement, is a reassessment of the Co-operative movement's values and principles in its international development and trading programme from the 1960s. The Co-op's capacity to support ethical consumerism during this period was limited by four factors: firstly, its focus on competition from the supermarkets; secondly, its complex structure with numerous independent individual societies; thirdly, its failure to recognise the

⁶ L. Black and N. Robertson (eds.) *Taking Stock: The Co-operative Movement in Twentieth Century Britain*, (Manchester University Press, 2009).

significance of the consumer-producer dynamics within the movement; and finally, its lack of communication with its membership. From the early 1980s it was the Co-op's ability to positively address these same factors that allowed it to realise the potential of Fair Trade in defining the 'Co-operative difference'. Ultimately it was the Co-op management's recognition of 'ethical consumers' within the Co-op membership and wider society that convinced them that there was a market for ethical banking and retailing.

There has yet to be an historically focussed academic assessment of the Co-operative movement's approach to ethical - or fair - trade in the twentieth century. In part this is maybe a reflection of the limited academic attention to the Co-op more generally. Some within the movement have argued that this was a reflection of the declining dynamism of the Co-op. Rita Rhodes, Education Officer of the ICA, stated that, 'Both in terms of trading practices and democratic appeal, the movement is not seen to be as radical as once it was. Increasing academic indifference reflects this.'⁷ Studying the Co-op in relation to the emerging Fair Trade movement in the 1960s and 1970s provides an opportunity to explore further an under-researched aspect of the Co-op, the significance of Co-operative values and principles in its international trade relations with developing countries.

By the early twentieth century the established opinion among scholars on the left was that the Co-operative movement had arrived at a position quite different from the idea with which it had begun. Fabians such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb argued that the movement had grown on the basis of self interest and had idealism grafted on to it.⁸ This opinion was reinforced by G. D. Cole who believed that the Co-op was, 'a satisfactory grocer's shop and a good savings-bank, but no self-respecting revolutionary would believe that it would ever make a breach in the walls of capitalism'.⁹ Sidney Pollard developed this critique when he identified two distinct phases of co-operation.¹⁰ The first, 1820 to 1846, was dominated by Robert Owen and his commitment to establishing the Co-operative Commonwealth that would form the basis of a 'new moral world'. The

⁷ 'Where have all the academics gone?', *Co-operative News* (6 November 1990).

⁸ Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *The Consumers' Co-operative Movement* (London: Longman, 1921).

⁹ *New Statesman*, (15 January 1921).

¹⁰ S. Pollard, 'Nineteenth-Century Co-operation: from Community Building to Shopkeeping', in A. Briggs and J. Saville (eds.), *Essays in Labour History* (London: Macmillan, 1960).

second phase was initiated by the Rochdale Pioneers and was characterised by a drift from the ideal of the Co-operative Commonwealth and a preoccupation with shopkeeping and the principle of the consumer dividend.

In recent years, the Fabian interpretation of the Co-op has been increasingly challenged. Stephen Yeo has argued that the fact the world did not go the co-operators' way, was not academic justification to dismiss their commitment to a 'world-making' project.¹¹ Yeo showed that as late as 1893 co-operators such as Holyoake were committed to the practical realisation of the Co-operative Commonwealth. And Peter Gurney has argued that Co-operative ideals were not squeezed out of the movement as a result of the success of the dividend. He maintained that, 'late nineteenth century co-operation produced its own brand of utopianism based on the principle of the dividend'.¹²

These debates over the ideals of the Co-op have so far focused almost exclusively on the domestic situation of the movement and have neglected a thorough assessment of the international 'world making' potential of the original ideals. The concept of international co-operation between co-operatives is essential to linkages between the Co-operative movement and Fair Trade, and is an area that remains under-researched. Other work has looked at how different strands of co-operation, (consumer, worker, credit) have developed throughout the world to form an international movement; but they have not engaged with this debate over the extent of idealism within the movement.¹³ W. P. Watkins looks more thoroughly at the international links between co-operatives, but has not extended this assessment past the 1970s.¹⁴ Contemporary literature on political consumption has to some extent recognised a role for the Co-operative movement in the emergence of the 'ethical consumer' in the late twentieth century, but that role is yet to be fully defined and these linkages require further research particularly in relation to the Fair Trade movement in the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁵

¹¹ S. Yeo (ed.), *New Views of Co-operation* (London: Routledge, 1988).

¹² P. Gurney, *Co-operative Culture and the Politics of Consumption in England, 1870-1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

¹³ J. Birchall, *The International Co-operative Movement* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ W.P. Watkins, *The International Co-operative Alliance 1895 – 1970* (London: ICA, 1970).

¹⁵ Nicholls and Opal, *FairTrade*; M. Hilton, *Consumerism in 20th Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); R. Harrison, T. Newholm & D. Shaw, *The Ethical Consumer* (London: Sage Publications, 2005).

The CWS tea plantations scrutinised and the campaign for fair tea prices

In 1902, The Co-operative Tea Society (CTS) purchased estates in Sri Lanka, and tea soon became a major import. Tea was virtually the only product imported by the Co-op from developing countries where the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) maintained direct control over the entire supply chain. By 1972, the CTS was making a profit on its operations of £1.1 million, and paid a dividend to the Co-operative Wholesale Society and the Scottish CWS of £650,000. This gave tea a particular significance within the movement and made it the clearest example of the Co-op's international trading principles in practice. So, when the conditions on CWS tea plantations in Sri Lanka and India were openly criticised in the media, in the mid 1970s, many ordinary Co-operative members were shocked by the allegations and some were jolted from their complacency into action. Tea became the focus of consumer campaigns, led by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and joined by many Co-op members, for fair wages for the tea pickers. The politicisation of tea led to a wider questioning of international trade relations, which in turn dealt with many of the issues relevant to the emerging Fair Trade ideology.

The CWS tea plantations were forced onto the agenda by the public outcry in response to a 1973 World in Action television programme '*Cost of a Cup of Tea*'.¹⁶ The programme was an exposé of the intolerable working conditions on the tea plantations in Sri Lanka, owned by many of the household brands including the CWS. The programme stated that, in 1973, tea was about the only item on the shopping list that was still as cheap as in 1970; World in Action set out to 'investigate what it costs others to keep the cost of a packet of tea unchanged'.¹⁷ The Mahouvilla estate, owned by the Co-operative Tea Society, was identified by World in Action as having housing that was 'marginally worse' than the Brooke Bond estates, and similarly poor wages and living conditions that resulted in malnutrition, hook worm, vitamin deficiency and high child mortality.¹⁸

It seems that the international trading obligations and responsibilities of the Co-operative movement had for some time been misunderstood, or idealised, by the membership.

¹⁶ World in Action: 'Cost of a Cup of Tea' (Granada: September 24th 1973).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

One Society member stated that he had, ‘always understood that it was in order to ensure that our tea workers were properly paid that the co-ops were obliged to purchase from their own tea plantations’.¹⁹ This, unfortunately, was never the case; primarily any obligation to buy from CWS plantations came from the commercial motivation to maintain a consistent supply of cheap tea. Co-op members believed that the CWS should operate its trading practices in keeping with Co-op values and principles and not be dragged down by competition with big business. One member responded, “These are slave conditions which we expect from capitalism and private enterprise, but to see them linked with the co-operative movement is something which just cannot be left without violent protest.”²⁰ The scandal of the Sri Lankan tea plantations led to the realisation among some members of the true priorities of the CWS and they responded, ‘we don’t want cheap “99” tea at that price!’.²¹

During the 1970s, the conditions on tea plantations proved a significant convergence issue for many consumer activists and NGOs (ten years later coffee would play a similar role). Several reports were published exposing the poor working conditions on tea plantations, particularly in Sri Lanka.²² All the big household names came in for serious criticism including the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The activist group, War on Want, called for British manufacturers, retailers and consumers to ‘accept responsibility for the conditions which estate workers have to endure’.²³ In 1977 an Oxfam report, *A Bitter Taste to your Cuppa*, was featured in the ICA journal, *Consumer Affairs Bulletin*.²⁴ The report described how thousands of housewives all over Britain had signed a petition declaring their willingness to pay ‘a fair price for tea in order to help poor people in tea growing countries’.²⁵ Oxfam further stated that public opinion in Britain was sending a message

¹⁹ M. Gillard, ‘Ceylon’s starving tea girls’, *Observer* (23 September 1973).

²⁰ ‘Tea slaves’, *Co-operative News* (12 October 1973).

²¹ ‘Sri Lanka horror’, *Co-operative News* (5 October 1973).

²² War on Want, *The State of Tea* (London: 1974); Cambridge World Development Action Group, *Tea: The Colonial Legacy* (Cambridge: 1975); Oxfam, ‘A bitter taste to your cuppa’ in *Consumer Affairs Bulletin* (No. 7, 1977); World Development Movement, *The Tea Trade* (London: 1979).

In 1976 the idea of an International Tea Agreement was supported by the fourth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Tea was included as one of the 18 commodities in its Integrated Commodities programme, which aimed at establishing a stable price on a range of products from developing countries.

²³ War on Want, *The State of Tea* (London: 1974).

²⁴ Oxfam, ‘A bitter taste to your cuppa’ in *Consumer Affairs Bulletin* (No. 7, 1977).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

to the government that, ‘the days of cheap tea at the expense of the poor should be over for good’.²⁶

The Co-operative seemed a natural ally for NGOs and consumer activists looking to restructure traditional supply chains, since the ‘Co-operative difference’ meant that it controlled its own brand products from raw material to shelf. The Co-op claimed that, ‘no other retailer had the same degree of control over the source of its product’.²⁷ But despite calls for fairer prices for tea, the Co-op, in order to compete with the supermarkets, continued a policy of price cutting. In November 1977 they cut tea prices by 6p per lb and again in March 1978.²⁸ At the time their adverts ran with the slogan, ‘The Co-op: the place to go for a bargain beverage.’²⁹ As the World Development Movement (WDM) found, the Co-op’s price cutting policy was not easy to align with an ethical trading programme. They commented that, ‘It has not proved any easier to change the policies of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.’³⁰ After numerous requests from the WDM and pressure from Co-operative members, the CWS finally met with the WDM in November 1980. But the meeting achieved little. The WDM were left with the impression that by this stage the Co-op simply wanted to ‘get rid of its estates and responsibilities as soon as possible’.³¹

As shown above, the politicisation of tea played an import role in the wider understanding of ethical trade issues among members of the Co-operative movement. Co-op members, in the objections they raised about conditions on CWS tea plantations, frequently focused on the trading values and principles as established by nineteenth century co-operators, such as Robert Owen and the Rochdale Pioneers, and emphasised how the movement had departed from these ideals. But did conditions on CWS tea plantations in the 1970s genuinely demonstrate a break from established Co-operative values and principles? Or was this critique the result of an idealised notion of the origins of the Co-operative movement’s international trading philosophy? What is needed to

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ ‘Biggest ever share of the tea market’, *Co-operative News* (16 November 1977).

²⁸ ‘Tea prices are cut’, *Co-operative News* (9 November 1977) and ‘Co-op cuts tea price again’, *Co-operative News* (8 March 1978).

²⁹ *Co-operative News* (16 November 1977).

³⁰ World Development Movement, *The Tea Trade* (London, first published 1979, second edition 1982).

³¹ *Ibid.*

further explore these questions is a reassessment of the nineteenth century international trade relations between the British Co-op and co-operatives in developing countries.

International Co-operative trade and the ICA 1895 – 1970

The British Co-operative movement was a founding member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) in 1895 and, for the first 50 years, was the dominant force in the organisation. By 1907, over half the affiliated societies were British and they provided over three-fifths of ICA income.³² The ICA was established as a networking organisation designed to promote co-operation between co-operatives. Membership of the ICA brought the British consumer Co-operative into direct contact with other forms of co-operative including worker and agricultural co-operatives. It was this networking between consumer and producer co-operatives that had the potential to become a model for Fair Trade, had it been given the opportunity to further develop in the 1960s and 1970s.

At the Paris Congress in 1896, it was agreed by ICA delegates that consumer societies should give preference to industrial and agricultural co-ops when purchasing supplies, provided that quality and prices were the same.³³ The International Co-operative Wholesale Society (ICWS), established in 1924, marked the first serious attempt by the ICA to facilitate international trade in the twentieth century, (previous attempts had been hampered by political and economic instability, the result of war and economic depression).³⁴ But the ICWS was not itself an active trading organisation – it remained solely as a facility for information exchange. Albin Johansson, an ICA delegate, was frustrated at the ICA's inability to challenge capitalism's dominance in international economics. He believed that the ICA had to 'take a step forward from the passing of resolutions to true international constructive work'.³⁵

Margaret Digby, Co-op historian and secretary of the Plunkett Foundation, shared Johansson's belief in the potential of international co-operative trade.³⁶ In 1928, Digby argued for the 'complete interlocking of the trading interests of producers and

³² Birchall, *The International Co-operative Movement*, p. 46.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³⁴ Watkins, *The International Co-operative Alliance*, p. 143.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

consumers,’ whereby, ‘no consumers’ society would purchase goods “outside the movement” while there existed a co-operative marketing society capable of supplying them’.³⁷ Digby found that, for the most part, a full assessment of the origins of goods imported by the British Co-operative movement was restricted by the inadequacy of the record-keeping. She concluded that, with the exception of tea, it was ‘impossible to say how many may be of co-operative origin; others must be from private sources’.³⁸ The very fact that the CWS were not distinguishing between imports from private suppliers and co-operatives, demonstrates in itself that, in practice, the philosophy of international co-operative collaboration was not prioritised by CWS buyers. This discrepancy between ideology and practice in the CWS’ international trade relations was evidence of the failure to overcome the consumer-producer dichotomy within the movement. Digby argued that nationally the issue of relations between the two sides was being tentatively worked out, but she acknowledged that, ‘internationally, it has got little further than the stage of discussion’.³⁹

In 1938, the ICA established the International Co-operative Trading Agency (ICTA). This was a direct trading body, but it only traded for two years before the onset of war forced it to suspend business. After the war, the ICTA merged with the ICWS and resumed business in 1946. But in May 1952, the ICTA ceased trading; it had not been receiving sufficient support from its members to cover its expenses.⁴⁰ Despite these setbacks, the idea of international co-operative trade remained appealing to many within the ICA and at the 1954 Paris Congress one of the major themes was: ‘International Co-operative Trade, the Possibilities of Practical Collaboration between National Organisations and its Development by the Alliance.’⁴¹ In 1966, at the Vienna Conference, the ICA renewed its commitment to international co-operative collaboration.⁴² But these statements of intent meant nothing without the support of the

³⁶ The Plunkett Foundation, established in 1919 by Horace Plunkett, works to support the development of rural co-operatives in the UK and world-wide.

³⁷ M. Digby. ‘Producers and Consumers’, *The Year Book of Agricultural Co-operation in the British Empire* (London: Plunkett Foundation, 1928).

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ M. Digby. ‘Producers and Consumers’.

⁴⁰ Watkins, *The International Co-operative Alliance*, p. 264.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁴² ICA Conference, Vienna, 1966.

ICA's membership, particularly the British movement.⁴³ In practice, by the end of the 1960s international co-op to co-op trade between ICA members was still very limited.

Multinational co-operatives: an alternative to multinational corporations in the 1970s

The Co-op's trading policy during the 1970s was characterised by attempts to increase efficiency and drive down costs in response to increased competition from supermarkets and multinational corporations (MNCs). But a different response to the MNCs was also considered by the Co-operative movement that could have led to greater co-op to co-op trade and a genuine structure for 'alternative trade.' Johann Brazda has argued that rapidly integrating markets and fierce retail competition might have provoked, 'a new era of international co-operation, with the most active movements engaging in rescue operations for their most endangered counterparts'.⁴⁴ For instance, at the 1972 ICA congress in Warsaw, in response to the growing economic power of MNCs, delegates resolved to, 'explore the concept of expanding multinational co-operatives to handle commodities in international trade so as to more closely link producer and consumer co-operatives'.⁴⁵

Some within the British movement believed that the Co-operatives' own label goods could provide the model for restructuring the movement.⁴⁶ For instance, in 1972, the CWS own label food range extended to over 665 varieties and had sales of £106 million at wholesale prices. Thirty five of these varieties were made in CWS factories.⁴⁷ Charles Job, Director of Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society, argued that the Co-op was undermining itself by stocking numerous goods made by multinationals when CWS alternatives were available. He pointed out that the Co-op's own label instant coffee, which was a best seller, was actually made by Tenco, a subsidiary of the US giant, Coca Cola. He voiced his concern at Congress that this was not 'a policy which indicates a

⁴³ 'Britain has by far the largest and most powerful co-operative movement in the capitalist world... There can be no effective international co-operative alternative to the Multi-national Corporations without the determined and whole-hearted support of the British movement,' C. Job, (Director of Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society), *Multi National Corporations, The Co-operative Alternative* (Warsaw, ICA Congress, 1972).

⁴⁴ J. Brazda and R. Schediwy (eds), *Consumer Co-operatives in a Changing World* (Geneva: ICA, 1989).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Job, *Multi National Corporations*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

move towards a Co-operative Commonwealth'.⁴⁸ His solution was for the CWS to manufacture more or buy more from co-operatively owned enterprises abroad.

It seemed that despite initial optimism the practical realities of international co-operative trade were not to be easily realised. One of the main reasons identified by the ICA for the slow growth of inter-co-operative trade was, 'the lack of interest shown by co-operatives in developed countries in finding co-operative trade partners from developing countries'.⁴⁹ Some international co-op to co-op trade took place, but consumer societies, such as the British Co-op, tended to deal solely with producer co-operatives from developed countries. For instance, there were long-standing trade links between the CWS and the New Zealand Dairy Co-operatives.⁵⁰ One exception was the Japanese consumer co-operative which 'voluntarily sought out trade partners from within the co-operative movement' and 'helped developing co-operatives to improve their international trading capabilities'.⁵¹ For instance, in 1962 UNICOOP Japan agreed on a trading arrangement to import Thai maize from the Thailand COPRODUCT (Bangkok Co-operative Farm Product Marketing Society).

By the late 1970s, the Plunkett Foundation, having consistently called for greater co-operation between co-operatives on the issue of international trade, was clearly frustrated by the limited progress. A 1978 report on the extent and prospects of international co-operative trade in Asia concluded that: 'No one would expect co-operatives in developed countries to trade with developing co-operatives on terms less favourable than those offered by competitors in the field. . . However if a buying co-operative does not give due consideration to the competitive offers of other co-operatives because of its reluctance to change trade partners, then there is not much chance for inter-co-operative trade to prosper where developing co-operatives are involved.'⁵²

The general lack of interest shown by consumer co-ops, including the British Co-op, to deal with co-operatives from developing countries restricted the co-operative

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ M. V. Madane, 'International Co-operative Trade in Asia Retrospect and Prospect,' *The Year Book of Agricultural Co-operation* (Oxford: ICA and The Plunkett Foundation, 1978).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

movement's ability to form an alternative international trading structure that could challenge the growing influence of MNCs. But despite the lack of commitment shown by the Co-op in supporting developing co-operatives, this did not prevent it becoming a focal point for NGOs and consumer campaigns throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

New internationalism: the 1960s and 1970s

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the co-operative ideology and organisation gained many supporters and promoters among civil society, including anti-apartheid campaigners, development NGOs and alternative trading organisations. Each group saw in the values and principles of the Co-operative movement an alternative vision of society. In turn they looked to the British Co-operative movement, with its 13 million members, for direction and leadership. Many of these groups believed the Co-op would be 'naturally sympathetic' to their cause, but were ultimately to be left disappointed by the Co-op's limited commitment.⁵³ During this period the Co-op continued to operate much as a commercial business and prioritised supplying consumers with cheap products over and above ethical trading concerns. The following section will explore why, despite real potential to unite these differing interests, the Co-op failed to show genuine leadership or commitment to these campaigns.

I Boycott of South Africa

The calls for a boycott of South Africa were interesting because they allowed different consumer and NGO groups to converge on a single issue and advocate consumption as a political act. The Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), the main coordinator of British campaigns, identified the Co-op as potentially sympathetic to their call for sanctions against South Africa. But Co-operative Union declined to be involved in the AAM's campaign stating that 'they [did] not think that it [was] practicable or advisable to pursue a policy of boycott of South African goods'.⁵⁴ But this did not discourage AAM from trying to gain the support of local Co-operative Societies, and here they had more success most notably with the London, Manchester and Surrey Societies. Some Co-op members

⁵³ Nicholls and Opal, *Fair Trade*, p. 20.

⁵⁴ Bodleian Library, Oxford, MSS.AAM1, 'Letter to Mr Okunnu from J. Bailey Co-operative Union Secretary' (14 July 1959).

championed the calls for a boycott in the Co-operative press and appealed to the ideals of the movement to look beyond the profit motive. They argued that, ‘The South African people naturally look to our movement as one that has greater ideals than merely seeking profit and supplying goods whatever the consequences for others less fortunate than ourselves.’⁵⁵

In 1973, the Co-operative Bank’s decision to offer its customers Barclaycard credit cards, rather than Access, made it the focus of consumer action. Barclays was one of the biggest banks in South Africa, officially its stance on apartheid was ‘neutral’, but, in practice, only one in 45 of its clerical bank staff in South Africa were black and it did nothing to oppose apartheid. Activist members of the Co-op stated that, ‘Until the bank alters this dangerous decision, we must all refuse to take credit cards through the bank.’⁵⁶ This action demonstrated an innovative form of consumer boycott. The *Co-operative News* was also targeted for its continued promotion of South African goods. The CWS had argued that its role was simply to supply a range of goods and let the consumer decide what to buy depending on their own criteria. But campaigners argued that adverts for goods such as Outspan Oranges were, ‘aimed at creating a need’.⁵⁷ Those that wanted a complete boycott believed that an end to advertising was an important first step. They stated, ‘To that end, we firstly want to see an end to promotion of these goods.’⁵⁸

The British Co-operative movement, despite considerable pressure from the membership, maintained that, ‘it is unfair to ask the movement to take the lead in this matter when many societies are facing trading difficulties’.⁵⁹ Ultimately securing a consistent supply of produce and maintaining market share was prioritised over the ethical concerns of trading with the South African apartheid regime. Consumer activism centred on calls for boycotts of South African products increased awareness among some Co-op members of the wider implications of their consumer choices. This same consumer activism would also prove central to demonstrating a demand for Fair Trade goods. This was particularly significant given that neither Fair Trade organisations nor the Co-operative movement had either the marketing budgets or the inclination to

⁵⁵ ‘Promotion of S. African goods should stop’, *Co-operative News* (29 August 1975).

⁵⁶ ‘Co-op Bank – supporters of apartheid?’, *Co-operative News* (19 January 1973).

⁵⁷ There are some parallels with V. Packard, *Hidden Persuaders* (London: Longman, 1957).

⁵⁸ *Co-operative News* (29 August 1975).

⁵⁹ ‘S. African boycott move has mixed reception’, *Co-operative News* (4 April 1964).

employ the services of the so-called ‘hidden persuaders’.⁶⁰ Growing awareness of Fair Trade instead relied on a diverse, if somewhat conservative, range of grassroots campaign methods from leafleting and letter writing to petitions and public meetings.

II Co-operative development and NGOs

Many of the NGOs that were active in campaigns for a boycott of South Africa during this period were shifting their focus from relief aid to long term development. In an article on the *Role of Voluntary Aid Agencies*, Graham Alder assessed the quantity of funds going towards development projects compared to immediate disaster relief.⁶¹ He reported that Christian Aid had increased development funds proportionately from 45.6 per cent in 1968-69 to 55.4 per cent in 1969-70. Oxfam’s development aid to relief aid had increased from roughly 3:1 in 1960 to 5:1 in 1970. Cafod, Christian Aid and War on Want were also identified as having shifted attention and funding towards long-term projects. This shift in thinking led many development NGOs to recognise the potential of supporting co-operative development in the global South.

Oxfam was one of the first NGOs to realise the development opportunities of the co-operative ideal and in 1966 they looked to the British Co-operative movement to support a joint venture. The ‘Help the Hungry to Help Each Other’ campaign was launched on March 4th 1966, in Birmingham.⁶² The object of the campaign was to raise money to establish a self-sufficient consumer co-operative in Bechuanaland (Botswana). The plight of Botswana had gained particular attention since it became known that 30,000 men chose to work in South Africa under the conditions of apartheid so that they could send their wages home to their impoverished families.⁶³ By 1966 Oxfam was already giving development assistance to 40 co-operative projects in 20 countries.⁶⁴ Bernard Murphy, Liaison Officer for Co-operatives and Trade Unions, stated of the Oxfam programme in 1966, ‘We do not say that we are the advance guard for co-operative development in the underdeveloped countries but we do say that we have sown the seeds for the nurturing

⁶⁰ Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders*.

⁶¹ G. Alder, ‘The Role of Voluntary Aid Agencies’, *Co-operative Review* (18 March 1972).

⁶² B. Murphy, *Help the Hungry to Help Each Other* (Manchester: Co-operative Press, 1966).

⁶³ K. Mayhew, *Catholic Herald* (5 August 1966).

⁶⁴ Oxfam Archive, Bicester, (hereafter OXFAM), R1492 27(3) 1, report by the Information Office, ‘Oxfam Aid to Co-operative Schemes’ (March 1967).

of the co-operative philosophy.⁶⁵ But Oxfam was clear that this was to be a Co-op led initiative: they announced that, ‘it is for the British Co-operators to prove the relevance of the co-operative ideal 122 years after the Rochdale Society opened its doors in Toad Lane’.⁶⁶

By 1970 the programme had achieved its main goals, but it had not run completely smoothly.⁶⁷ Twenty months after the launch of the campaign, the Co-operative was still short of the £30,000 they had promised Oxfam. Some within the movement, such as Tom Taylor, President of the Scottish CWS, believed that the Co-operative’s image had been severely tarnished by its half-hearted approach to the joint programme with Oxfam. Taylor stated that the ‘co-operative movement should have some concern for our self-respect and the discharge of our moral responsibilities’.⁶⁸ It was proposed that individual Co-operative societies could allocate a share number to Oxfam, a practical and innovative way to raise funds. It was also acknowledged that it could be valuable for the movement to ‘identify itself more positively as an organisation with a social conscience’.⁶⁹ But the Co-operative management did not share this view of the movement and rejected the plan for an Oxfam dividend. Furthermore they questioned the feasibility of the whole programme at a time of ‘almost unprecedented trading difficulty’.⁷⁰ Potentially, this could have been a forerunner to the Fairtrade Social Premium, a dividend on purchase to support Oxfam development projects.

The Botswana campaign demonstrated two main features of the Co-op during this period that limited its ability to lead or even work with development NGOs effectively. Firstly, the structure of the movement was such that it made it almost impossible to run a well co-ordinated national campaign. Bernard Murphy, Oxfam’s Co-op and Trade Union Liaison Officer, commented that, ‘despite the fact that (numerically) the Co-operative Movement represents the largest pressure group in the country (13.5 million) it is probably the most difficult to work with’.⁷¹ Secondly, the Co-op management did not

⁶⁵ Murphy, *Help the Hungry to Help Each Other*.

⁶⁶ OXFAM, R1492 27(3) 1, report by the Information Office, *An Ideal Lives* (March 1967).

⁶⁷ OXFAM, BOT 6 2011 VOL I, report by M. R. Harris, Field Director Central and Southern Africa (2 July 1968).

⁶⁸ ‘£21,000 cheque for Oxfam’, *Co-operative News* (3 June 1967).

⁶⁹ ‘Divided Views on Oxfam Divi’ *Co-operative News* (5 August 1967).

⁷⁰ *Co-operative News* (3 June 1967).

⁷¹ OXFAM, R1492 27 (3) 10, report by B. Murphy, ‘Progress Report of the Co-operative Project Appeal’ (1967).

seem to be able to give the same level of support to this type of campaign as the general membership. The ancillaries of the movement, such as the Co-op Party, the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Education Department and the Woodcraft Folk, were all noted by Oxfam for their contributions. But Murphy stated that, 'If there has been cause for thought it has been that the response from Management Committees has, in the main, been very poor.'⁷² The reason given for this was that many societies were 'fighting for survival' and managers were forced to concentrate their energies on 'keeping them afloat'.⁷³

The Co-op's limited contribution explained: the 1960s and 1970s

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the Co-op found its market position increasingly undermined by the big supermarkets. In 1961 the Co-op accounted for 10.4% of the total retail turnover, but by 1980 this had fallen to 6.5%.⁷⁴ But this increased retail competition did not necessarily lead the Co-op to become isolated from the rest of civil society. As argued above, there were other paths that the Co-op could have taken, such as the exploration of 'multinational co-operatives'.⁷⁵ It was the assessment of the Co-op's management committees that was responsible for shaping the commercial trading policies of the movement. This resulted in a victory of the 'businessmen' over the 'ideologues'.⁷⁶ They believed that they had to compete on the same terms as supermarkets and focused their full attention on cutting the costs of products to the consumer. This commercial outlook prevented the Co-op from connecting with an ethical trading programme or a broader development agenda.

The organisational structure of the movement with individual societies fiercely protective of their independence meant that it was hard to implement or even devise a national strategy. This proved a significant weakness when the Co-op was discussing possibilities of co-op to co-op trade. Hugh Todner, Chairman of the UK Co-operative Union, commented on the isolation that existed within the national movement, 'Our movement has 38 separate business plans, all with their own separate buying, marketing,

⁷² Murphy, *Help the Hungry to Help Each Other*, p.5.

⁷³ Murphy, 'Progress Report of the Co-operative Project Appeal'.

⁷⁴ Brazda and Schediwy (eds), *Consumer Co-operatives in a Changing World*, p. 131.

⁷⁵ J. Craig, *Multinational Co-operatives: An alternative for World Development* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1976).

administration and transport facilities. . . No two societies operate the same marketing strategy, and as a result we are not achieving the benefit of our size.⁷⁷ This was not a sound basis on which to develop an international trading strategy. The structural organisation of the Co-op also proved a hindrance in its campaign with Oxfam to support co-operatives in Botswana. Bernard Murphy was clearly both surprised and frustrated that no one person in the movement could speak or act on its behalf and that all decisions were taken at management committee level. He remarked, rather disparagingly, that, ‘any suggestions made on behalf of the movement by the Union Executive can only be suggestions and are not binding on each Society’.⁷⁸

The British Co-operative movement failed to recognise the significance and the extent of the consumer-producer dichotomy within international co-operation. This meant that it was not in a position to attempt to bring together consumer and producer interests. Despite laudable speeches about the merits of international co-operative collaboration and co-op to co-op trade, in practice, co-op to co-op trade remained barely significant. Evidence of the British Co-operative movement developing international co-op trade links are limited to a handful of cases and none of these involve producer co-operatives in ‘Third World’ countries. In failing to understand the differing origins of the two sides of the movement (the consumer movement tracing its origins to the Rochdale Pioneers whereas the farming and thrift sectors traced their lineage to Raiffeisen) they were unable to overcome the basic dilemma of price.⁷⁹ As Dr. Saxena, former Director of the ICA, stated in 1996, ‘Consumer organisations are generally interested in the lowest prices, while farmers want the highest.’⁸⁰ But it seems that, for the most part, the British Co-operative continued to conduct international trade at an arms length and made no attempt to verify whether or not products had come from a co-operative supplier.

Most significantly, the Co-op management, in its failure to communicate with the membership, underestimated the importance individual members attached to the values

⁷⁶ Brazda and Schediwy (eds), *Consumer Co-operatives in a Changing World*.

⁷⁷ S. K. Saxena, *The World of Co-operative Enterprise* (Oxford: The Plunkett Foundation, 1996), p. 7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ In 1864, Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen, set up the first thrift and loan Society in Heddesdorf, Germany. This is often credited as being one of the first rural co-operatives. Raiffeisen’s, *Credit Unions as a Remedy for the Poverty of Rural and Industrial Workers and Artisans*, published in 1866, was considered by many as the manual for rural co-operative development.

⁸⁰ Saxena, *The World of Co-operative Enterprise*.

and principles of the Co-operative movement. The management committees believed that the predominantly working class membership was solely concerned about value for money. This led the management to believe that there was no market for tea that returned a fair price to the producers, that a boycott of South Africa goods would result in members shopping elsewhere and that the dividend was too precious to give up for an Oxfam campaign. But for a significant number of Co-op members the Co-operative values and principles had a growing relevance in the late twentieth century. A greater awareness of these ethically motivated consumers within the Co-op membership would become crucial in motivating the Co-op to reassess its trading priorities.

The ‘Co-operative Difference’ - an ethical approach: the 1980s and 1990s

By the early 1980s, there was a growing recognition within the Co-operative movement that a pre-occupation with economic survival had led to neglect of its social roots.⁸¹ Hedley Whitehead, President of the Co-operative Union, called for a ‘radical re-thinking of the Movement’s social purpose’.⁸² He argued that otherwise the Co-op may, ‘succeed in maintaining a significant stake in UK retailing but on basically no different terms from any of our most prominent competitors’.⁸³

An increased awareness of environmental issues such as global warming and acid rain, within the movement and the general population, proved a turning point for the Co-op and led them to reposition themselves as ‘green’ retailers.⁸⁴ They pioneered a number of initiatives such as converting all aerosol products to CFC-free propellants, phasing out plastic egg boxes and promoting the use of biodegradable carrier bags. Lloyd Wilkinson, Chief Executive of the Co-operative Union, stated that, ‘the issues surrounding green consumerism give the movement an unrivalled opportunity to show what “the Co-op difference” really is’.⁸⁵ In 1985, the Co-operative Retail Services adopted a statement of social goals that outlined its determination, ‘to do everything in its power to protect the

⁸¹ H. W. Whitehead, ‘President’s Address’ (Co-operative Union Congress, 1981).

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Two books particularly influential in promoting environmental awareness and green consumerism were: R. Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1963) and J. Elkington and J. Hailes, *The Green Consumer Guide* (London: Gollancz, 1988).

⁸⁵ ‘Green Issues – opportunity knocks for the Co-op’, *Co-operative News* (16 January 1990).

environment and ensure the efficient use and protection of natural resources'.⁸⁶ The Co-op believed that the consumer could be a positive force for change and highlighted the political nature of consumption. The CWS' *Co-op Action Guide for the Environment* reminded consumers that, 'every time you take your supermarket trolley for a spin you're taking part in a referendum about the future of the planet'.⁸⁷

For those outside the movement, the Co-op's complex structure continued to prove an obstacle when it came to assessing their green strategies. For instance, *The Ethical Consumer*, in its May/June 1989 edition confirmed the Co-op as 'the nearest thing we would recommend as a best buy'.⁸⁸ But this praise was somewhat undermined when they conceded that it was hard to generalise about the Co-op policy or practice because it was 'made up of about 100 independent Co-operative societies which collectively operate 1,475 supermarkets and 63 superstores'.⁸⁹ Peter Crouchman, Co-op Member Relations Officer and a Friends of the Earth director, also recognised the shortcomings of the Movement's structure. He bemoaned the fact that 'no one person can co-ordinate what we [the Co-op] do. This leads to missed opportunities when centrally-created ideas are lost at the level that matters most – locally'.⁹⁰ As a result the Co-operative lost out to the big supermarkets that proved much more effective at national marketing campaigns that highlighted their commitment to environmental initiatives.

It was the Co-operative Bank that (re)introduced initiatives that incorporated not only environmental issues but wider social values into the business practices of the movement. In May 1992, they became the first UK bank to publish an 'Ethical Policy'. The Ethical Policy stated that 'given our origins as part of the co-operative movement and its basic values, it is perhaps not surprising that we should be the first bank to respond to people's growing concerns about the quality of life here and in the rest of the world'.⁹¹ Arguably what was more surprising, for many Co-op members, was that the Co-operative Bank had not responded sooner, and through the 1960s and 1970s had

⁸⁶ 'The Co-op movement and the environment', *Co-operative News* (22 January 1991).

⁸⁷ *Co-op Action Guide for the Environment* (Manchester: Co-operative Press, 1989).

⁸⁸ *Ethical Consumer Magazine* (ECRA Publishing Ltd, May/June 1989).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ P. Crouchman, 'Exit the "green" consumer - enter "green" citizens', *Co-operative Retail Marketing and Management* (June 1990), p. 4-6.

⁹¹ 'Bank woos the carers', *Co-operative News* (5 May 1992).

continued to operate no differently from their competitors.⁹² The Co-operative Bank management was finally convinced of the need to prioritise co-operative values in its business mission after conducting market research that revealed 84 per cent of their members felt the bank should have a clear ethical policy.⁹³ The issues of greatest concern were human rights, armament exports and animal experiments, followed by the fur trade and tobacco manufacture.

In May 1992, the Co-op became the first major UK food retailer to stock Cafédirect coffee. Launched in 1992 as a joint initiative by: Twin Trading, Traidcraft, Oxfam Trading and Equal Exchange; Cafédirect represented a reassessment in the message behind the sale of coffee towards ‘people’ and away from ‘origin/cause’ profile.⁹⁴ It was far from an immediate success; by September 1995 Cafédirect only accounted for 1.8 percent of CWS Retail’s ground coffee sales and only 0.1 per cent of the instant coffee market.⁹⁵ But despite some doubts the CWS Retail, encouraged by the success of the Co-operative Bank, was convinced that as consumers became more aware of ethical and welfare issues there would be a future for products such as Cafédirect.⁹⁶ The Co-op was pioneering the mainstream retailing of Fairtrade products. Its support for Cafédirect came two years before the launch of the Fairtrade Mark in the UK and had the Co-op decided to drop Cafédirect after initial trials, then this could have had serious implications for the mainstream viability, not only of Cafédirect, but the Fairtrade Mark. With the introduction of Fairtrade products into all 1,450 grocery stores in 1999, the Co-op became the largest stockist of Fairtrade products in Britain.⁹⁷ This hugely increased the availability of Fairtrade products and almost overnight propelled Fairtrade from ‘the margins to the mainstream’.⁹⁸

⁹² As was seen in its decision to operate Barclaycard despite pressure from anti-apartheid campaigners.

⁹³ T. Thomas, ‘The Co-operative Bank’s Ethical Stance’, *Review of International Co-operation*, 86:4 (1993), p. 71-75.

⁹⁴ OXFAM: Cafédirect File, ‘Establishing a New Ethical Coffee Brand for the UK’ (1 November 1990).

⁹⁵ ‘Customers don’t want Fair Trade products’, *Co-operative News*, (26 September 1995).

⁹⁶ *Co-operative News* (5 May 1992).

⁹⁷ CWS, Press Release, ‘Co-op Boosts Fairtrade Products’, www.co-op.ac.uk (1999).

Conclusions

The ideology of an international co-operative movement had existed from the early nineteenth century. Robert Owen had declared his ambition for an ‘Association of all Classes and all Nations’ and in 1895 it appeared, with the establishment of the ICA, that Owen’s vision had become a reality.⁹⁹ But early attempts at encouraging international co-op to co-op trade had soon ended in failure and it was not until the 1960s that there was genuine renewed interest from within the movement and beyond. During this period, the Co-operative movement, with the international network of the ICA, had enormous potential to develop an alternative trading policy between consumer societies in the ‘developed’ countries of Europe and producer co-operatives in ‘developing’ countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. But the Movement was not able to rationalise the dichotomy between consumer and producer in a way that could make this proposition work. Instead, the British Co-operative movement limited its involvement in international co-op to co-op trade to developed countries, such as New Zealand.

Despite the limitations of the trading policies adopted by the Co-op management during this period, what remains interesting was the commitment shown by many Co-op members to international co-op to co-op trade along ethical lines. When the Co-op’s failings were highlighted by the national media or the Co-operative press there was a strong response from the membership. Here we see a contrast with the nineteenth century, where it has been argued that the leadership held on to Co-operative values whereas the average member was more concerned about making ends meet.¹⁰⁰ In the mid to late twentieth century it seems that, for some members at least, the co-operative values proved increasingly relevant, while for the management (particularly during the 1960s and 1970s) their prime concern was ensuring the survival of the retail store.

From the 1980s the Co-op began to adopt a more clearly ethical stance and connect more closely with civil society. As discussed above there were a number of factors that led to this change in direction: firstly, there was an awareness among the Co-operative Union that as a result of solely focusing on the economic retail competition it had

⁹⁸ M. Newman, *The Financial Times* (11 October 1990).

⁹⁹ Watkins, *The International Co-operative Alliance*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ Pollard, ‘Nineteenth-Century Co-operation: from Community Building to Shopkeeping’.

become distanced from its values and principles; secondly, although there was not a ‘single Co-operative Society for the UK’, the movement was becoming more streamlined; thirdly, and most significantly, there was a genuine effort to understand the ethical opinions of the membership and the wider public. This demonstrated there was a market for green and ethical products, and from the late 1990s Fairtrade became central to the Co-operative’s positioning as a mainstream retailer with a social goal.

With the introduction of Cafédirect into its stores in 1992, the Co-op for the first time was supporting producer co-operatives in the global South including Mexico, Peru and Costa Rica. It is perhaps an indication of the true extent of the Co-op’s preoccupation with economic survival during the 1960s and 1970s that Fair Trade (a model of trade that owed so much to the principles of co-operation) was ultimately pioneered by development organisations, Christian agencies and Alternative Trade Organisations rather than the International Co-operative Alliance. But through its support for the Fair Trade model, the Co-op was able to overcome many of the consumer-producer dichotomies that had proved stumbling blocks in the past. And in situating Fair Trade at the heart of its ethical trading policy, the Co-op was able to reconnect the movement with its nineteenth century ideals of a Co-operative Commonwealth engaged in a ‘world making project’.

2 Oxfam: Helping by Selling? Fair Trade and International Development

In 2000, the Oxfam Fair Trade Company, with a turnover of €10.7M, was firmly established as one of the ‘big four’ European Fair Trade importers.¹ With 1,700 product lines stocked in 400 of its high street shops, Oxfam Fair Trade Company represented over 15 per cent of the total UK Fair Trade market.² But by the end of 2002, Oxfam Fair Trade products had been removed from Oxfam shops and the trading company had been wound up. At the time, Oxfam chose not to make a public statement explaining its decision to supporters and the general public. The story was only picked up, somewhat belatedly, by the *Observer* in January 2003. Arguably, the *Observer* article did little to clarify Oxfam’s position and raised more questions than it provided answers to. The article reported that, ‘Oxfam had decided to scrap the brand for “commercial” reasons’.³ Retail analyst, Alison Clements, was called upon to provide an explanation. She argued that, ‘persistent public indifference to ethical concerns had finally proved insurmountable’.⁴ It was noted that just three per cent of UK shoppers regularly bought Fair Trade products, despite the majority being aware of the scheme. Clements concluded that, ‘price is becoming more important than ever’. This interpretation was challenged by the Fairtrade Foundation. They stated that sales of Fair Trade goods in the UK had grown from £43 million in 2001 to £53 million in 2002 and they argued that, ‘Oxfam’s decision is not because there isn’t an interest in the market, it’s because the market has grown’.⁵

So was Oxfam bowing to market indifference or was its decision an indication that Fair Trade was coming of age? Neither of these explanations seems to fully account for this apparent change in strategy by Oxfam. This chapter will look to put these questions into a historical context in order to provide a clearer assessment of how Oxfam’s involvement in Fair Trade has evolved over the last 40 years. The main assertion of this chapter is that ‘commercial reasons’ are only partly an explanation for the change in Oxfam’s Fair Trade programme. By failing to recognise the particular significance of handcrafts to Oxfam’s

¹ <http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2001.pdf>, see Fig. 5

² *Ibid.*

³ M. Townsend, ‘Oxfam bows to market and scraps Fairtrade brand’, *The Observer*, (19 January 2003).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Fair Trade Company, many commentators have misinterpreted the commercial pressures on Oxfam. In turn, this has lead to a critique that does not necessarily fit with the experiences of the wider Fair Trade movement or the Fairtrade Foundation.

This chapter will also argue that it is not possible to fully appreciate the characteristics of Oxfam's Fair Trade programme without reference to the limitations placed on it by the Charity Commission. But by establishing an independently operated Fair Trade company allowed Oxfam to launch international trade campaigns and support models of socio-economic development which would otherwise have been deemed too political to be charitable.

A reassessment of Oxfam's historic involvement in Fair Trade reveals that many of the tensions between Oxfam's commercial activities and its campaigning role have always been present. Arguably, Oxfam's shift in focus over the last six years is probably not as dramatic as it may first appear. Few academic studies have looked at Oxfam in sufficient detail to uncover the nature of the internal debates that surrounded the definition and objectives of Oxfam's Fair Trade programme. This seems to be something of a missed opportunity because these discussions provide the opportunity to reflect on some of the contemporary debates within the Fair Trade movement, such as: how efficient is Fair Trade at delivering international development; is Fair Trade able to engage with the poorest producers; to what extent is Fair Trade 'charity'?

In general this thesis has argued that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been overlooked in much of the academic literature on Fair Trade in favour of a narrow economic focus on consumer demand. But Oxfam has maintained a significantly higher profile than most NGOs. The Charities Aid Foundation's, popularity ranking of charities (based on voluntary income rather than Government grants) consistently places Oxfam within the top three alongside the National Trust and Cancer Research.⁶ This has led academics such as Peter Burnell to state that 'Oxfam is an impressive charity almost regardless of the yardstick chosen'.⁷ It is not that Oxfam's role in establishing Fair Trade in Britain has been neglected, but that existing research has failed to critically engage with the empirical evidence. The result has been a focus on two themes, both of which prove

⁶ <http://www.cafonline.org/default.aspx?Page=7684>.

⁷ P. Burnell, *Charity Politics and the Third World*, (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf 1991), p. 51.

only of marginal relevance to the historical development of Oxfam's Fair Trade programme: firstly Oxfam's pioneering trading activities during the 1950s and 1960s, and secondly the significance of Oxfam's chain of charity shops.

Internal Oxfam histories trace its trading activities back to 1959 when pincushions made by Chinese refugees in Hong Kong and were sold in the two shops run by Oxfam at that time.⁸ In December 1964, these relatively ad-hoc trading arrangements were formalised with the formation of Oxfam Activities Ltd. And in 1967 Oxfam's imports from the 'Third World' were consolidated to form Helping by Selling (HbS). This chronology has been accepted within the current academic literature and has been frequently used as a case study of the origins of the Fair Trade movement in Britain. As will be shown, this history provides an overly simplistic outline of Oxfam's trading activities and leads to an idealised interpretation of the 1960s as the heyday of Fair Trade.⁹

Alex Nicholls and Charlotte Opal have stated that 'in the first wave Fair Trade began to take shape after the Second World War, when charities in Western Europe – most notably Oxfam – began to import handicrafts from producers in Eastern Europe to support their economic recovery'.¹⁰ Gavin Fridell, states that, 'In Europe, Oxfam UK was at the head of the Fair Trade network. . . In 1950, it began selling crafts made by Chinese refugees, and in 1964 it created its first alternative trade organisation (ATO) to import crafts and commodities directly from artisans and producers in continental Europe'.¹¹ These two extracts demonstrate some discrepancy between the exact dates of formation but broadly agree on the significance of Oxfam's involvement during the 1950s and 1960s.

This chronological framework has been the result of and contributed to an analysis of Oxfam's trading operations largely based on speculation. Fridell has argued that from the late 1940s, Northern ATOS did not seek to make a profit that would accrue to private pockets, but instead sought to cover operating costs and direct all remaining profits into

⁸ OXFAM R0570: R. Wilshaw, 'Bridge in context: the history and development of the bridge concept and its implementation', (September 1991).

⁹ G. Fridell, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market-Driven Social Justice*, (University of Toronto Press, 2007), p. 39.

¹⁰ A. Nicholls and C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*, (London: Sage, 2005), p. 19.

¹¹ Fridell, *Fair Trade Coffee*, p. 40.

the hands of Southern producer groups'.¹² William Low and Eileen Davenport have also argued that: 'The principal of linking income generation for marginalized groups through the sale of their own handcraft products had become the dominant paradigm by the late 1950s. Oxfam, for example, used a network of second hand shops to raise money for its relief efforts, and in the late 1950s started to sell crafts made by Chinese refugees alongside second hand goods'.¹³

Oxfam's growing network of shops, from only four in 1962 to 136 by 196, has been identified as a significant factor in driving Oxfam's Fair Trade programme. Burnell suggests that, 'The Oxfam shops, which sell Third World handcrafts as well as donated goods, are crucial. Not only do they help shape the general public's perception of the charity, but they also consistently generate around 30 per cent of its income'.¹⁴ Maggie Black, in writing Oxfam's official history argued that, 'in opting for shops as the fundraising way forward, Oxfam subconsciously made a choice about what kind of organisation it would be in terms of character of its support and broad public perception of its activities'.¹⁵

The role of Oxfam shops in relation to Fair Trade is far more problematic than is often reported. Ultimately, the majority of Third World products displayed in Oxfam shops, during the 1960s, were sold to raise funds for Oxfam aid and development projects. But a detailed evaluation of the terms of trade operated by Oxfam Activities and Helping by Selling during the 1960s reveals a commercial outlook incompatible with modern definitions of Fair Trade.¹⁶ These findings should not detract from Oxfam's contribution to the Fair Trade movement, but they suggest that there is a need for academics to shift their attention beyond the 1960s.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹³ W. Low & E. Davenport, 'Postcards from the Edge: Maintaining the 'Alternative' Character of Fair Trade', *Sustainable Development*, 13 (2005) pp.143-153.

¹⁴ P. Burnell, *Charity Politics and the Third World*, (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf 1991), p. 51.

¹⁵ M. Black, *A Cause for Our Time: Oxfam the First 50 years*, (Oxford: Oxfam 1992), p. 165.

¹⁶ Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers - especially in the South. Fair Trade organisations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising, and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.' This definition of Fair Trade has been agreed by an informal network of the four Fair Trade Organisations below, known by their initials as FINE: Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO), International Fair Trade Association (IFAT), Network of European World shops (NEWS!), European Fair Trade Association (EFTA).

1960s Formation of Oxfam Activities: false start for Fair Trade?

Arguably, the formation of Oxfam Activities in 1964 had more to do with the pressure from the Charity Commission and the Inland Revenue than it did with an attempt to pioneer ‘trade not aid’. A governmental review of charity tax exemptions included in the Finance Act of 1965 ruled that charities would be liable for income tax on trading activities, unless they set up subsidiary trading companies which would then covenant to pay profits back to the charity. Oxfam was one of the few charities that had acted relatively swiftly in forming a new trading company. The *Guardian* reported, in November 1966, that most of the 150 charities selling Christmas cards had not yet set up trading companies and would therefore be liable for 40% corporation tax on their net profits.¹⁷ An evaluation of trading operations undertaken by Jonathon Stockland in the mid 1980s recognised the significance of the manner in which Oxfam’s trading operation was launched. Stockland argued that although Oxfam’s rationalisation of its trading operations was clearly a pragmatic response, it represented a ‘missed the opportunity to explore the wide range of possibilities inherent in the trading operation that was growing out of Oxfam’s other relief work and which could, if so conceived, become a conscious extension of that work in fundamental agreement with Oxfam’s own principles of existence’.¹⁸

Many charities resented this pressure to form trading companies. Some charity organisers were concerned that, ‘Once trading companies are organised... charities may be tempted to expand trading beyond the traditional Christmas card.’¹⁹ Oxfam did indeed expand its trading activities beyond Christmas cards and in 1967 Oxfam Trading’s Third World import structure was consolidated to form Helping by Selling (HbS). By 1969, HbS was already proving a commercially successful venture with profits of £10,000 on sales of £28,000. But there were signs of tensions within the organisation. Guy Stringer, the recently appointed commercial director, noted his concern that, ‘it is necessary to persuade our organisers and supporters to be less worried about the profit from this operation and to see it much more clearly as a form of aid’.²⁰

¹⁷ ‘Few charities escaping tax on card sales’, *The Guardian*, (4 November 1966).

¹⁸ OXFAM, JS, R1106: J. Stockland, *Bridge Evaluation* (1986).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

The justification for Oxfam establishing an importing company was that it was a practical response to the desperate need for employment that existed throughout the Third World. A campaign leaflet stated that, ‘One in every three people in need of work in the so-called developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin-America is unable to get a regular job.’²¹ This led HbS to focus on handcrafts that utilized low level technology and would provide employment for large numbers of people. HbS favoured what it described as ‘appropriate “labour-intensive” rather than “capital intensive” industries.’²² These sentiments were consistent with the first UN Development Decade’s focus on ‘trade not aid’. However, simply buying from producers in the Third World did not represent an alternative model of trade, even if it was an NGO that owned the trading company. Indeed, this uncritical acceptance of the mutual benefits of trade with the Third World resembled arguments used by multinational corporations (MNCs) to justify their presence in oppressive regimes including South Africa.²³ HbS was trading along essentially commercial lines; products imported from the Third World were to be stocked in Oxfam’s growing network of shops and were sold for a profit which would then contribute towards Oxfam international development budget.²⁴ By 1974, HbS profits had reached £90,000 on sales of £343,564.²⁵

HbS set out to help producers in the Third World, but there few guidelines as to how this would happen. What was required was a clear framework that would allow Oxfam to assess its own performance and provide greater transparency for supporters and shoppers. The failure of HbS to operate an international trading venture that was consistent with Oxfam’s development philosophy provides a valuable case study for further understanding the need for a rigorous assessment criteria and independent monitoring of the Fairtrade Mark.²⁶

²⁰ Directors report to the Executive (January 1970).

²¹ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: *Oxfam as an importer: Why; How. An explanation for our customers* (1973).

²² *Ibid.*

²³ A. Spandau, *Economic Boycott Against South Africa* (Johannesburg: Juta & Co Ltd., 1979).

R. Fieldhouse, *Anti-Apartheid: A history of the movement in Britain*, (London: The Merlin Press Ltd, 2005).

²⁴ Oxfam’s network of shops rapidly expanded throughout the 1960s, from only four shops in 1962 to 136 by 1967.

²⁵ OXFAM: Guy Stringer, Directors Report to the Executive Committee (February 1974).

²⁶ For more details see chapter five.

HbS was soon proved an important source of income, representing 47 per cent of Oxfam Trading sales by 1974 (illustrated in fig.6).²⁷ But this level of commercial success led some Oxfam staff to begin to question the trading principles of HbS. In 1972, Roy Scott, an Oxfam Trading manager, began work on creating a new type of trading venture. Scott believed that HbS was only, ‘a very limited “fair-trade” importing programme’.²⁸ He argued that HbS was too close to the trading values of commercial importers and, in a drive to make profit, they were ignoring the development potential of international trade. Instead, he argued that Oxfam’s trading operations should act as a practical demonstration of, ‘the kind of socially “ideal” trade system most supporters of the Third World believe is necessary’.²⁹ It was through Scott’s critique of Oxfam’s existing trading programme and detailed proposals for an alternative, that the concept and principles of Fair Trade were established.

Scott put forward three proposals to the Oxfam Executive for consideration. The name of the new trading venture would be Oxfam Bridge, but how this would fit within Oxfam’s existing structure was a contentious issue. Three descriptions highlighted alternative visions for Bridge: ‘Bridge as an Oxfam enterprise’, ‘Bridge as an Oxfam programme’, or ‘Bridge as an Oxfam initiative’.³⁰ The first proposal, ‘Bridge an Oxfam enterprise’, argued to keep the HbS structure intact and prioritised HbS’ fundraising function. Oxfam’s trading partnership was seen as ‘a means not an end’ and the argument was put for an extension of ‘Helping by Selling without any major new policies or structural changes’.³¹ Proposal two, ‘Bridge an Oxfam programme’, was for a totally independent organisation established with an Oxfam aid grant but then expected to be self financing.³² The management board would be made up of democratically elected representatives of producers and consumers. This proposal was sold as a ‘brave independent movement liberating producers entirely from continuing charity support’.³³ The third proposal ‘Bridge an Oxfam initiative’ was a compromise. A new subsidiary

²⁷ OXFAM: Guy Stringer, Directors Report to the Executive Committee (February 1974), see Fig. 6.

²⁸ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report by R. Scott, ‘What, Why, How: Bridge Summarized’ (1973).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: *The development of the Oxfam handicraft operation*, (1975).

³¹ OXFAM, INFORMATION DEPARTMENT: E. Stamp, *Future of the Helping by Selling Project*, (1 August 1972).

³² Under this proposal Bridge would only be an ‘Oxfam programme’ in the short term, then would operate entirely independent of Oxfam.

³³ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: R. Scott, *How can international marketing be best organised to give maximum opportunities and benefits to the participants (producers & consumers)?* (24 March 1975).

company would be established with its own board of management. But control would remain firmly with Oxfam.

It was the second proposal that Scott believed had the greatest potential. He argued that the limiting factor for Third World development was not simply lack of jobs, but a trade system weighted against the poorest, which revealed remnants of colonial exploitation. Scott maintained that, ‘The present international trade structures prevent the average producer in the Third World from gaining even his minimum living from the work of his own hands.’³⁴ Scott’s solution was to remove the middleman and form an international co-operative, ‘a “bridge” linking worker-producers of very poor countries with the ordinary shopper here in Europe’.³⁵ The role of the consumer was not envisaged by Scott as charity or paternalism. He argued that Bridge should, ‘guarantee a fair price to producers, and the availability of their products also at a fair price to the common man in the consumer’s country’.³⁶

Under this proposal, the organisational structure would eventually lead to Bridge being run jointly by the consumers and producers independent of Oxfam. Scott outlined four stages of development, from the initial phase when the Board of Trustees represented the joint interests of all producers and consumers, through to the theoretical absolute situation, whereby a poll of Bridge producers counted for 50 per cent of the total vote and equally Bridge consumers would make up 50 per cent of the voting strength.³⁷ In this final model, the Board of Trustees would have no voting rights and Bridge would be organised as an independent co-operative. The equality in the proposed consumer/producer relationship was most notably demonstrated by the existence of dividends not only for producers but for consumers as well. The consumer dividend was to be 10 per cent and would be allocated by the Bridge Committee for publications and educational activities that would ‘increase internationalism, understanding and appreciation of the world community’.³⁸

³⁴ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: R. Scott, *Meeting between Oxfam and SOS*, (13-14 January 1973).

³⁵ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report, ‘Oxfam as an importer: Why; How. An explanation for our customers’ (1973).

³⁶ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report by R. Scott, ‘Agreed Joint Statement of Conclusions’ (January 1973).

³⁷ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report by R. Scott, ‘Bridge Co-operative’ (1972).

³⁸ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: *Bridge Dividend Distribution*, (1973).

When Bridge was launched in June 1975, it was as a new subsidiary company with its own board of management, but control remained with Oxfam. This was not the progressive model outlined in Scott's original vision, but Bridge did represent a genuine attempt to prioritise a more equal relationship between the producer and consumer. Bridge's mission statement from November 1975 stated it was, 'dedicated towards providing the best possible employment, earnings, working and social environments for producers; and fair prices, quality and service for customers'.³⁹ Oxfam was now committed to an international trade programme that went beyond the considerations of commercial buyers in order to ensure that those producers making goods, imported and sold by Oxfam, would receive a 'fair' return for their work. If the 1950s were something of a false start, then by the 1970s, Fair Trade was up and running.

Bridge had a three year trial period before a decision was made on its future within Oxfam Trading. The first year of trading (May 1975 - April 1976) saw sales of over £500,000 which translated to a net profit of £81,296 to be made available for dividends.⁴⁰ Oxfam's Director, Guy Stringer, described this first distribution of the producer dividend, as 'a very significant advance in the history of Oxfam Activities, and in my view of Oxfam'.⁴¹ On the surface, Bridge seemed to be succeeding in its joint aims of development and profitability. But in September 1976, Roy Scott decided to leave Oxfam, unhappy at the way the Bridge trading philosophy had been diluted.⁴² An article in the Sunday Times, on October 31 1976, covered the story of the expansion of Oxfam Trading and the departure of Roy Scott. 'The Oxfam executive charged with building up Bridge, Roy Scott, has just resigned. He feels that corruption and exploitation have, perhaps inevitably, crept into the project'.⁴³ Scott argued that Oxfam had shunned the ideals of Bridge in a bid for short-term growth. 'Oxfam couldn't cope with the idea of Bridge as an international co-operative'.⁴⁴

It is worth further considering why Oxfam did not accept Scott's original vision of Bridge. As raised by Scott, there was some trepidation within the Oxfam Executive

³⁹ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report 'The purpose, principles and motivation of Bridge' (November 1975).

⁴⁰ Source: OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Analysis of Bridge imports* (1990), see fig. 7 and fig. 8

⁴¹ OXFAM: Executive Committee Papers, 'Director's report to the executive Committee' (16 September 1976).

⁴² OXFAM, Oxfam Activities board meeting minutes (hereafter OA): G. Stringer, *Bridge Producer Dividend*, (September 1976).

⁴³ E. Harriman, 'There's more to charity than faith and hope', *The Sunday Times*, (31 October 1976).

Committee about the idea of an international co-operative. Firstly, there were practical concerns about how Oxfam would oversee the operations of the co-operative in its early years. Secondly, as shown in chapter one, by the mid 1970s doubts were being raised within Oxfam about the effectiveness of the co-operative model in promoting international development. But arguably, the decisive factor was that Oxfam recognised the value of maintaining its own international trading company. This was not judged to be purely in terms of raising income, but also that it provided Oxfam with a justification for engaging with Third World development in a manner that may otherwise have been judged to be beyond its charitable remit. From the early 1960s, Oxfam had received an increasing number of repudiations from the Charity Commission challenging Oxfam's right to provide 'development' aid and questioning the objectives of its campaigns.⁴⁵ For instance, the 1962 Charity Commissioners Report stated that, 'Propaganda and advocacy for legislation, whether in this country or overseas, have been described by the courts as political, and not charitable; so, too, has the promotion of international friendship'.⁴⁶

Although Bridge was not immune to the Charity Commission, in practice the producer dividend scheme gave Oxfam a considerably freer rein in its support for community development projects. A review of Bridge producer dividends for 1975-76 demonstrated the range of projects that were supported, including: loans for seeds and fertilizers, subsidies for sewing machines and co-operative and vocation training.⁴⁷ As the Bridge programme expanded, an increasing number of applications were submitted that called for funding for infrastructure development. In September 1980, Oxfam approved a £14,445 application for a new warehouse and workshop for the Palam Rural Centre, a group of leather workers producing leather sandals and belts in Tamil Nadu, India.⁴⁸ None of these programmes were challenged by the Charity Commission, but had these projects been directly funded by Oxfam grants, the Charity Commission could have argued that projects of this type did not reflect a sufficiently direct response to tackling 'observable poverty'.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ R. Scott interview with author. (14 September 2004).

⁴⁵ M. Black, *A Cause for Our Time: Oxfam the First 50 years*. (Oxford, Oxfam, 1992), p. 85.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁴⁷ OXFAM, ACTIVITIES: Board Meeting Minutes, Bridge Producer Dividend, 17 December 1976.

⁴⁸ OXFAM, ACTIVITIES: Oxfam Information Office, 'Making Leather Sandals and belts – Palam Rural Centre, (11 November 1980).

⁴⁹ Black, *A Cause for Our Time*, p. 89.

It was not only in supporting producer development projects that Bridge was able to make an impact on Oxfam's work; Bridge's campaigning work was also significant. A Bridge leaflet from 1975 stated that, 'the biggest reason why people earn so little is *exploitation*. With so much unemployment and poverty around it's very easy to pay people virtually nothing for a day's work... . Bridge openly admits it's here to break this: to give a better deal to the mass of ordinary working people.'⁵⁰ This type of political message would have been judged too have gone too far had it been produced by Oxfam, the charity. Bridge was able to engage with a more political argument by focusing its campaigns on the consumer.

How to support the poorest producers and be commercially viable?

As Bridge expanded, a debate developed within Oxfam about who Bridge should be buying from. The debate centred on how to support the poorest producers and still run Bridge as a viable enterprise. Jonathon Stockland, in his 1986 internal evaluation report, supported an extension of 'positive discrimination towards the least advantaged producers'⁵¹ and proposed that 'geographical sourcing is extended to Africa and the Americas'.⁵² In general he believed that Oxfam Trading should have viewed Bridge as a form of 'visible aid'. Arguably, much of Stockland's report was a restatement of the original Bridge philosophy as proposed by Roy Scott.

It was Oxfam's field staff that had the task of classifying producer groups as either 'priority' or 'non priority'. Priority groups were judged to have 'clear social objectives' and 'encouraged producer participation in the running of their organisation'.⁵³ Non priority groups did not place an emphasis on social objectives or producer participation, but were regarded by the Oxfam Trading staff as being 'reasonable employers'.⁵⁴ The distinction was reinforced in February 1988, when it was decided that only priority groups should receive dividends. But even with the best intentions, it was not always a straightforward task for Bridge buyers to determine the true merits of a particular producer. Jeremy Shaw, in his report on India, stated that he was surprised, 'how difficult

⁵⁰OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: 'Why you should shop at Bridge: an explanation for customers', (Oxfam, 1975).

⁵¹ OXFAM, JS, R1106: J. Stockland, *Bridge Evaluation*, (1986).

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: C. Wills, *Criteria for Selection of Producer Groups*, (July 1991).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

it is to determine sometimes whether a producer is “true Bridge” or commercial, even when one is actually on the site.⁵⁵ These difficulties were not unique to Oxfam, but they were given greater emphasis as a result of first hand experience in the ‘field’. This sometimes translated into heated internal debates. Bridge management accepted that producers they dealt with ‘may not be the poorest of the poor by Oxfam’s criteria in the field.’ But they argued that in the context of crafts production, orders and assistance were still being targeted to ‘very needy people indeed.’⁵⁶

Central to defining Bridge’s objectives for helping the poorest producers was the geographical focus of its trading programme. In 1980, Maurice Zinkin, a commercial consultant, was employed to investigate these issues. Zinkin’s assessment warned of the pitfalls of expanding too rapidly and reducing the effectiveness of the operation and the quality of producer assistance. Zinkin argued that ‘if we do not confine ourselves to a limited number of producers, preferably concentrated in specific geographical areas, we will find our effort is too diffused to be effective.’⁵⁷ Three years later Zinkin reiterated his opposition to further expansion into Africa and South America. Instead he suggested importing from India where there was a strong crafts tradition and skilled producers ‘who are sufficiently poor for us to do so with a clean conscience and who benefit greatly from proper quality control.’⁵⁸ For those producers where the quality of craft was inadequate for export, it was suggested that assistance with the local market should be given. Despite the commercial difficulties Edward Millard, on the Bridge Committee, continued to support further expansion stating, ‘The main argument for developing in Africa was that great need existed and few other ATOS had the resources or the will to respond.’⁵⁹

In the second half of the 1980s there was a sustained attempt to focus Bridge’s trade on those areas of geographic regions seen to be in greatest need. In 1986, when Stockland published his evaluation, South Asia had been the main source of orders accounting for 60%; India alone had made up 50.9% of all orders. In contrast, the whole of Africa only

⁵⁵ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: J. Shaw, *Report on Tour of India*, (July 1983).

⁵⁶ OXFAM, EXECUTIVE COM: R. Wilshaw, Talk given at South London Area Conference, *Why Should Oxfam Trade*, (February 1989).

⁵⁷ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: M. Zinkin, Letter to Sir Geoffrey Wilson, (15 July 1980).

⁵⁸ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM; M. Zinkin, Letter to John Pirie, (6 May 1983).

⁵⁹ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: E. Millard, *Bridge in Africa*, (December 1989).

represented 1% of orders.⁶⁰ Over the next four years, Stockland's recommendations were followed in a bid to return to the original Bridge trading ideals. By 1990, Bridge had reduced its dependence on South Asia as a reliable supplier of goods and its share of orders fell to 42.4%. Instead Bridge started to focus on supporting African producers, and their share rose to 5.2%.⁶¹

From handcrafts to food products

Food products were seen as central to Fair Trade's transition into the mainstream. Food products such as tea, coffee, chocolate and nuts could easily be stocked by supermarkets without much risk. Perishable foods were more complicated. Food products were everyday items and this was seen as relevant in bringing Fair Trade into the thinking of consumers in their everyday shopping. In contrast, handcrafts sales were in decline and were only suited to specialist retail outlets. The reason for Oxfam Trading to increase its market share of alternative food products was to further its Fair Trade goals: 'the really compelling reason for Oxfam Trading's commitment lies in the need for us to be a central participant in the Fair Trade debate. It is around food products much more than crafts that this is taking place.'⁶² Bridge management argued that farmers, 'as much as any craft group, ...desperately need marketing support, to be able to sell their product directly overseas.'⁶³ But Bridge sales remained dominated by handcrafts. By 1990, Bridge food sales only accounted for 7% of total sales, but because of the relative size of the operation compared with other ATOS, Bridge sales of £600,000 still made it one of the biggest food importers within the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA).⁶⁴

Not everyone in the alternative trading community supported the move towards Fair Trade food products, some saw this as a step backwards. Roy Scott commented: 'Bizarre isn't it, you get countries away from cash crops by arguing value should stay with the producer – and now we have the wonderful rigmarole about how great all these food products are – all that is going on is we in Europe import the raw materials and do all the

⁶⁰ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Analysis of Bridge imports (FOB value) by country*, (1990), also see Fig. 9

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Food Products: Trade and Campaigns*, (7 November 1990).

⁶³ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: E. Millard, *Bridge: Food Policy*, (9 May 1990).

⁶⁴ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: E. Millard, *Fair Trade Mark: Update Report*, (9 April 1991).

processing.⁶⁵ Scott believed that Bridge's original focus on handcrafts had been for a good reason. Unlike cash crops, most handcrafts were not subject to import duties and this meant that producers could benefit from the value added in the manufacture process. Handcrafts were also a way of supplementing earnings from home and were a particularly valuable source of independent income for women.

It is interesting to note that the background to the talks about expanding Oxfam Trading's commitment to food products came in the wake of Oxfam's decision to stop buying Indian tea. In 1989, Bridge management decided to stop importing tea from the Tea Corporation of India because it had become impossible to guarantee a 'Fair Trade' supply.⁶⁶ Due to the variation in quality from estate to estate and from harvest to harvest it was necessary to blend from different sources to produce an acceptable year round product. This meant that virtually all tea in India was sold at auction, which made it difficult to guarantee the exact origin. Buying directly from a small co-operative was equally problematic since their tea tended to be of lower quality and needed to be blended with 60% of higher quality tea from other estates. Bridge buyers were forced to admit that 'Oxfam's tea is purchased from the same tea auctions as that of multinational companies'.⁶⁷ If Fair Trade was to rely on the good will of the consumer it was suggested that Bridge should be more honest with consumers about the difficulties of international supply chains. Bridge management acknowledge withdrawal of tea would lead to questions from consumers but they remained committed to be 'as honest and open as we can about the difficulties of trading fairly in commodity industries such as that of tea'.⁶⁸

Oxfam was the first NGO to start importing tea in 1977, in response to consumer campaigns for fair tea prices.⁶⁹ This operation was one the first moves into food products for its newly formed Alternative Trading Organisation, *Bridge*. The tea was sourced from several co-operatives in Darjeeling, Assam and Nilgiris and was blended and packed in India.⁷⁰ Oxfam Trading recognised that it faced similar problems in trying to buy tea from alternative sources but decided to continue buying tea teas from

⁶⁵ R. Scott, interview with author, (14 September 2004).

⁶⁶ OXFAM, EXECUTIVE COM: Bridge Information, *Withdrawal of Darjeeling, Nilgiri and Assam Teas from the OT range*, (1989).

⁶⁷ OXFAM, EXECUTIVE COM: Bridge Information, *Withdrawal of Darjeeling, Nilgiri and Assam Teas from the OT range*, (1989).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ See chapter one for more details.

Traidcraft: an Indian Ocean blend from an approved source and a tea from Mauritius packed by an approved Bridge supplier.

The lessons Oxfam Trading learnt from importing tea from India persuaded them that a joint venture should focus on coffee, where the source would be easier to guarantee. In 1989, Oxfam worked alongside Traidcraft, Equal Exchange and Twin Trading, to develop an ‘ethical’ coffee. This was the first ever attempt by leading British ATOs to create and market jointly a product. It was to be marketed as both a ‘people-friendly’ and an ‘environment-friendly’ product.⁷¹ Inspired by Max Havelaar, Cafédirect was designed to capitalise on the existing solidarity coffee market but also impact on mainstream markets. Cafédirect was a new concept for ‘alternative’ coffee with the change of government in Nicaragua and an independent South Africa on the horizon, solidarity markets were no longer a consumer priority. The message behind Cafédirect was ‘towards people and away from “origin/cause” profile.’⁷² This meant that ‘Fair Trade’ could effectively respond to the crisis caused by the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989 and also pursue a more generalised sustainable development agenda. The significance of Cafédirect, will be explored in greater detail in chapter five.

In July 1989, Oxfam joined the International Federation for Alternative Trade (IFAT).⁷³ This demonstrated Oxfam’s commitment to external collaboration and helped to reinforce the idea of a Fair Trade movement. The Bridge committee recommended that, as the largest ATO, it seemed ‘appropriate for Oxfam Trading to participate in the movement even though because of our resources we probably had more to give.’⁷⁴ As well as linking ATOS, forming IFAT was a significant step in advancing consumer/producer relations. Producer representatives were involved in the second IFAT conference. The IFAT Secretariat described this initiative as a ‘watershed in forging more equitable North/South trading links.’⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Director General’s Report to the Executive 19 May 1977.

⁷¹ OXFAM, OA, Cafédirect File (hereafter CD), R1244: Project Document, *Establishing a New Ethical Coffee Brand for the UK*, (1 November 1990), p.1.

⁷² OXFAM, OA, CD File, R1244: Project Document, *Establishing a New Ethical Coffee Brand for the UK*, p.1.

⁷³ In 2003 The International Federation for Alternative Trade changed its name to International Fair Trade Association - although kept the same initials.

⁷⁴ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: C. Wills & R. Wilshaw, Memorandum to G. Rogers (Bridge Committee) (1 June 1989).

⁷⁵ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: H. Smit, IFAT Secretariat, Letter to Carol Wills, Bridge, (29 June 1990).

In 2000, Oxfam commissioned an independent impact assessment of their Fair Trade programme (previously called Bridge, it was re-named ‘Oxfam Fair Trade Company’ in 1996). The report, conducted by Raul Hopkins, focused on the impacts of Oxfam’s trading links with 18 producer groups. It was following this re-assessment of Oxfam Fair Trade Company that the decision was taken to wind up the company and start discontinuing products from Oxfam shops. It has been implied that this report was important in influencing that decision. Although Hopkins identified scope for improved ‘institutional learning’, overall the report recommended continuing support for Oxfam Fair Trade Company.⁷⁶

The remit of the study was wide-ranging, ‘to investigate the claim that Fair Trade alleviates poverty and improves the well being of producers and their families’.⁷⁷ The main emphasis was given to the analysis of handcrafts (in the final sample there was only one food producer group).⁷⁸ Hopkins judged that craft production was, for many families, a vital source of complimentary income to subsistence farming. For many groups the additional income received from Oxfam Fair Trade made a significant impact to their overall well being. Hopkins found that in more than 40 per cent of the producer groups, the increase in income was above 45 per cent.⁷⁹ Overall, the average increase was 28 per cent.⁸⁰

If the report revealed one major weakness of the Oxfam Fair Trade programme, it was that despite extensive efforts aimed at a capacity building, little had been achieved in terms of accessing the mainstream international market. One of the goals of Oxfam Fair Trade was that through empowering producer groups, at some stage these groups would be able to facilitate product development and deal with commercial buyers independently from Oxfam. Hopkins found that there was little sign of this diversification and many producer groups were dependent on Oxfam for at least half of the there sales. On average, 75% of sales went to Fair Trade organisations (including Oxfam Fair Trade), 21 per cent went to the domestic market and only 4 per cent went to commercial markets.

⁷⁶ R.Hopkins, *Oxfam Fair Trade Programme: Impact Assessment Study of Fair Trade*, p.vi

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁸ Originally, there had been two food producer groups involved, but one had to drop out of the study. This sample was still reasonably representative of the types of producer groups Oxfam Trading was dealing with (food imports only accounting for approx. 7%).

⁷⁹ Hopkins, *Impact Assessment*, p. 41.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Hopkins comments that that, ‘the aim cannot be limited to accessing mainstream markets but, in addition, to influence the terms in which this market operates. This implies a greater role for advocacy work within Oxfam Fair Trade agenda.’⁸¹

Conclusions

In 1979, Oxfam discussed with the Charity Commission the ‘possibility of Oxfam becoming a non-charitable body’.⁸² The Charity Commission stated that, ‘there would be serious repercussions both for Oxfam and the charitable world as whole. We hope that this step will not be taken for the sake of pursuing activities, such as land-reform, which are essentially political’.⁸³ Oxfam’s most recent book, *Power to Poverty*, is a clear example of how the requirements of charity law in Britain have changed in recent decades.⁸⁴ Outlined in Duncan Green’s book is an argument that does not shy away from a political assessment of global poverty. Support is shown for government-led redistribution and generation of employment in Taiwan, Vietnam and Brazil; and the role of progressive taxation and radical land reform is considered.⁸⁵

It was argued by Oxfam in 1990 that the introduction of Fair Trade label would be nothing new, and that the plans under discussion were simply a continuation of what ATOS had been doing for the past 15 years. Bill Yates of Oxfam Trading stated, ‘of course, Twin Trading, Oxfam Trading and other Alternative Traders are already conducting their business on these lines.’⁸⁶ He argued that the only real significance of the Mark was ‘the sheer scale of the order quantities and the number of consumers and producers who would be affected.’⁸⁷ But Yates’ comments demonstrate an internal complacency which underplays the importance of the Fairtrade Foundation’s independence and fails to acknowledge the limitations of Oxfam’s trading operations in truly pioneering Fair Trade ideals. Crucially, the criteria set for FAIRTRADE Mark certification was, in most cases, far more rigorous than the standards used by ATOs in

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁸² OXFAM, EXECUTIVE COM: T. FitzGerald, Charity Commission letter to Mr. Walker, Oxfam (2 August 1979).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ D.Green, *From Poverty to Power*, (Oxford: Oxfam International, 2008)

⁸⁵ Green, *From Poverty to Power*, p. 6.

⁸⁶ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: B.Yates, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, (September 1990).

the past. Through the formation of a new organisation, the Foundation had the potential to avoid some of the conflicting tensions that had prevented the realisation of Roy Scott's vision for a self financing model for Oxfam's Bridge in the 1970s.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

3 ‘Christian Ethics Secularised or Economics Re-sacralised?’

Christian Voluntary Groups and Fair Trade

‘Only vicars would be mad enough to buy them.¹’ This was the reason given by one supermarket chief for not listing Fair Trade products in the early 1990s. This quote reveals a perception amongst some retailers that paying a Fair Trade premium would ‘only’ appeal to a niche, Christian audience. At first glance, this dismissive sounding statement could be taken as an illustration of how out of touch some supermarkets were, in the early 1990s in their failure to recognise the growing appetite for Fair Trade and ethical goods. But arguably, there may be more truth to this perception than many commentators have recognised. As this chapter will demonstrate, the support of Christian groups played an important role in the progression of the Fair Trade movement. However, the role of religious influences has sometimes been underplayed in an attempt to ‘package’ Fair Trade in a secular form to appeal to the general consumer.

This chapter does not set out to characterise Fair Trade as an exclusively Christian mission, but looks to establish the role of Christian teachings and organisations in the context of the emerging network of organisations that was the ‘Fair Trade movement’. The involvement of religious agencies and widespread support for Fair Trade amongst their membership in the 1970s provides an extra dimension to the secularisation debate.

The involvement of religious groups (particularly Christian development agencies) has been a significant factor in the emergence of many of the earliest North-South links that developed into Fair Trade ventures. Amongst the most notable examples is the Mexico Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de la Región del Istmo (UCIRI) in Oaxaca, which was the first group to sell Fair Trade coffee labelled by Max Havelaar in 1988. This was largely due to the efforts of its founder Francisco Vand, a Dutch priest, who had established links in European markets.² The People’s Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance Foundation (PREDA) was set up in 1975 in the Philippines by

¹ Cited by Ed Mayo in R. Harrison, T. Hewholm & D. Shaw (eds) *The Ethical Consumer*, (London: Sage 2005).p. xvii.

² Laura T. Raynolds, *Poverty Alleviation through participation in Fair Trade Coffee Networks: Existing Research and Critical Issues*, (Colorado State University, March 2002).

Father Shay Cullen, an Irish Catholic priest, to export handcrafts and mango products to Europe.³

Fair Trade Organisatie, set up by Dutch Catholics, was one of the first ATO to bring coffee to Fair Trade markets in Europe.⁴ GEPA, one the largest European ATO, was jointly financed by Protestant and Catholic Churches through ‘Bread for the World’ and ‘Misereor’.⁵ In Australia, TradeWinds, (the main ATO importing tea and coffee into Australia from the 1970s), was the inspiration of a Father Emmett Devlin, a Dominican Priest and given financial backing by Australian Catholic Relief and World Christian Action.⁶

Although the work of these organisations has been mentioned in a number of academic studies there seems to have been little attempt to question the wider significance of the high proportion of Christian organisations within the movement. A number of questions about the nature of Christian agencies involvement have remained unanswered. Can the success of Fairtrade be linked to a mainstream acceptance of what were essentially Christian ethics? Or was their religious critique secularised, so that it could be expressed in the supermarket aisles as just another consumer choice? What does the significant involvement of Christians, both as campaigners and consumers, say about the potential growth of the Fairtrade market? The extent to which Christian involvement in Fair Trade challenged secular authority should not be overstated. Arguably, Christian development agencies may have simply filled the vacuum left by government neglect or indifference to ‘Third World’ development. But even so, it was still significant that it was Church agencies that played a leading role within the social movement, if only temporarily.

This chapter examines the work of the three Christian development agencies that played an important role in forming the Fairtrade Foundation: Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tear Fund. It looks to understand how their involvement has shaped the character of the Fair Trade movement in Britain. It will also compare the trading objectives and company profile of two Christian Fair Trade companies: Tear Craft and Traidcraft. It will be

³ <http://www.preda.org/home.htm>.

⁴ G.Fridell, The Fair Trade Network in Historical perspective, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, Vol XXV, No.3, (2004).

⁵ Melbourne University Archives, CAA 2/7 Box 20, Tanzania Commodity Marketing Meeting with GEPA (March 1978).

argued that Christian development agencies and particularly the Christian Fair Trade companies faced many of the same issues that challenged Oxfam's Fair Trade programme. They wrestled with the dilemmas of how to run a viable trading operation that would promote long-term sustainability and would not lead to dependency or charity. But in addition, they had to decide whether Fair Trade should be regarded as a form of Christian mission. It was this issue that led to the split within Tear Craft that resulted in the formation of Traidcraft. Fundamentally, this chapter asks whether Christian companies and Christian NGOs were still espousing Christian values as Fair Trade entered mainstream markets, or had 'worldly standards' become, 'the arbiters of Christian ethics'?⁷

The secularisation debate considered

This chapter does not seek to present a new interpretation to the secularisation thesis, but looks to draw academic attention towards a promising field of research: Christian development agencies provide examples of the persistence and transformation of Christianity as a moral social force within a socio-economic sphere often overlooked by the main exchanges regarding the validity of secularisation thesis. Christian involvement with twentieth century consumer activism in general, and Fair Trade in particular, has so far received only limited academic attention.⁸ The Fair Trade movement provides a case study of Christian involvement in voluntary organisations and their contribution to Third World development campaigns.

Frank Prochaska, commenting on the limited literature on Christian voluntary organisations, has stated that, 'Whenever one thinks about the ongoing debate on secularization, the role of charity in the equation remains something of a mystery.'⁹ He argued that the position of Christian voluntary organisations would maintain the upper hand over state assistance, 'only so long as Christianity provided a compelling explanation for the ills of society – and the capacity and commitment to combat them'.¹⁰

⁶ Trade Winds Archive, Letter to Michael Whiteley from Tom Whelan, (April 10, 1981).

⁷ A. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914*, (London: Longman, 1976), p. 129.

⁸ Work by Barnett et al. is a notable exception and will be referred to in this chapter.

⁹ F. Prochaska, *Christianity & Social Service in Modern Britain: The Disinherited Spirit*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 25.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

He argues that on the whole this was only the case up until the 1948, when ‘the creation of the welfare state signalled that there was a decisive winner in the debate over social policy.’¹¹ Prochaska recognises that some charity survived and even thrived, but he only briefly mentions Christian Aid and CAFOD, arguing that they were ‘well placed to pioneer ahead of government or to work in areas in which the state had little interest’.¹²

One of the dilemmas raised by recent research into grassroots Fair Trade activism has been the apparent disconnect between Christian supporters and a secular message. In relation to the Fair Trade movement, research by Barnett and colleagues has found that there are significant numbers of Christians among volunteers involved with local Fairtrade town initiatives.¹³ This research suggests that 70 to 80% of campaigners actively promoting Fairtrade in Bristol are Christians. But increasingly, concern that religion could hinder campaigning among non-faith based constituencies has led to Fairtrade Towns’ ‘broad dissociation of Fairtrade from any specific religious identity’ within their campaigning.¹⁴

Robin Gill has made the point that by working through separate agencies, the voluntary work of the Church has lost some of the visual presence it had in Victorian times. As a result he argued that, ‘voluntary service in Britain today can too easily be regarded as largely secularised’.¹⁵ But he maintains that, ‘The continuing high involvement of churchgoers, however, suggests otherwise.’¹⁶ This assertion is reinforced by findings of 1990 European Values Study that over 70 per cent of all volunteers described themselves as ‘a religious person’ and over 50 per cent attended church at least monthly.¹⁷

On issues of aid and development, again the European Values Study (EVS) shows that the Church is perceived to be making a significant and relevant contribution. In the 1990 EVS when asked: ‘Do you think it is proper for churches to speak out on Third World

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ C. Barnett, N. Clarke, P. Cloke & A. Malpass, *Faith in Ethical Consumption* – paper given at Countering Consumerism: Religious and Secular Responses, (21 April 2006).

¹⁴ C. Barnett, N. Clarke, P. Cloke & A. Malpass, ‘Fairtrade Urbanism? The Politics of Place Beyond Place in the Bristol Fairtrade city Campaign’, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 31, No. 3, (September 2007).

¹⁵ R. Gill, *Church Going and Christian Ethics*. (Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ D. Gerard, ‘Values and Voluntary Work’ in M. Abrams, D. Gerard & N. Timms (ed.) *Values and Social Change in Britain*. (Macmillan Press, 1985).

problems?’ Across Europe, 76 per cent of respondents answered yes.¹⁸ And in Britain, support for the Church’s public role on Third World issues was even higher, showing a level of support slightly above the European average.¹⁹ Peter Brierley’s in-depth study of church census data from 1989 also identified local church support for Third World Community Aid²⁰ as an important indicator of church vitality.²¹ Brierley found that those churches with a strong commitment to Third World development issues were more likely to show signs of an active congregation. Overall, Brierley found that only 2% of churches gave no support to Third World Community Aid.

In contrast, Callum Brown argues that the modern Christian Church has been permanently side-lined and provocatively declares the ‘Death of Christian Britain’.²² He illustrated this quantitatively, ‘in the year 2000 less than 8 per cent of people attend Sunday worship in any week, less than a quarter are members of any church, and fewer than a tenth of children attend a Sunday school . . . all figures for Christian affiliation are at their lowest point in recorded history.’²³ For Brown, secularization had already happened but he still questioned secularization theory. Instead of a gradual process emerging from the ‘Industrial Revolution’, Brown’s contention was that there was, ‘a short sharp cultural revolution of the late twentieth century which makes the Britons of the year 2000 fundamentally different in character from those of 1950, or 1900 or 1800.’²⁴ For Brown, the 1960s was the crucial period of change, witnessing the dramatic decline in Church attendance and influence. But this interpretation fails to account for the formation and successful expansion of Christian development agencies throughout the 1960s.

Grace Davie’s analysis is grounded in the understanding that there was an ‘evident mismatch between statistics relating to religious practice and those which indicate levels of belief’.²⁵ She identified this mismatch as ‘Believing without Belonging’ a phrase she borrows from David Martin.²⁶ Davie identifies membership of voluntary organisations as

¹⁸ D. Barker, *The European Values Study 1981 – 1990*. (Gordon Cook Foundation, 1991). p. 47.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁰ P. Brierley, *Prospects for the Nineties*, (London: MARC Europe, 1981).

²¹ C. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 3.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁴ G. Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), p. 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

a ‘very popular form of belonging.’²⁶ Further she states that religion is ‘a highly significant indicator both of moral outlook (on the level of attitudes) and of involvement in the caring organisations (on the level of action).’²⁷ Davie does not extend her assessment to the voluntary agencies associated with the established Christian church. Arguably if she had, she may have found that, particularly from the mid 1990s onwards, there was evidence that members of these organisations were ‘Belonging but not Believing’. What I argue is that from the mid 1990s, with the formation of the Fairtrade Foundation, Christian NGOs (with the exception of Tear Craft and Tear Fund) increasingly felt the need to downplay their Christian message in order to engage with mainstream consumers.

Hugh McLeod has challenged many of the central themes of the secularisation thesis. He has questioned the validity of secularisation as a ‘process’ and has suggested that rather it should be understood as a ‘contest’ between ‘rival world views.’²⁸ McLeod has also questioned the inevitability of secularisation and points to the substantial evidence of religious revival in nineteenth century and early to mid twentieth century Britain. But McLeod’s assessment of religious revival only extends to the 1960s, beyond which he argues that the ‘balance tip[s] more decisively in a secular direction.’²⁹

McLeod’s depiction of a contest between rival world views can be applied to the Christian agencies involvement with the Fair Trade movement. In the 1970s, support the Christian message on ‘Third World’ issues seemed to be gaining ground. But from the mid 1990s, there were signs that the balance was shifting in a more secular direction with the increasing interest of both government and private business in Third World development. Fairtrade, and the newly created FAIRTRADE Mark, from 1994 offered commercial business an opportunity to make a visible commitment to development, and for consumers to express their support for this commitment by purchasing labelled products. In parallel, the government was channelling increasing development funds via the Department for International Development (DFID), which included limited funding for Fair Trade.³⁰ Arguably, Christian NGOs success in raising international development

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁸ H. McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848-1914*. (London: Macmillan Press, 2000).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

³⁰ House of Commons International Development Committee, *Fair Trade and Development*, (14 June, 2007).

up the political agenda made it more challenging for them to gain recognition for a compelling and distinctly Christian response to the problems of 'Third World' development.³¹

Historical precedents for Christian consumer activism

As seen in previous chapters, the main objective of this thesis is to explore the historical origins of Fair Trade as a form of political consumption or 'consumer-orientated activism'.³² The involvement of Christian groups in this form of campaigning has clear historical precedents in consumer campaigns during both the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Two campaigns are of particular note: firstly, the Abolitionists' sugar boycott, which forced consumers to consider the conditions on plantations in distant colonies. Secondly, the Christian Social Union's White List, which introduced a form of retail certification of acceptable working conditions. These consumer campaigns demonstrated two issues that would be combined in the modern Fair Trade movement: the concept of 'caring at a distance' and the promotion of a certification scheme designed to reassure consumers that their purchases were produced under 'fair' working conditions.

Zerbanoo Gifford, former director of Anti-Slavery International, in her biography of Thomas Clarkson, explores the role played by Clarkson in coordinating a Christian led boycott of slave-produced sugar. Gifford notes that Clarkson was motivated by, 'a direct revelation from God ordering [him] to devote [his] life to abolishing the trade.'³³ From 1791, the Abolitionists encouraged consumers to switch to honey instead of sugar or to buy sugar from the East Indies which was free from slavery. Gifford estimates that in total 300,000 consumers abandoned slave-produced sugar. One grocer from Birmingham reported that his sugar sales halved in just four months.³⁴ Clarkson had argued that for every two families that joined the boycott one less slave would be sent to

³¹ F. Prochaska, *Christianity & Social Service in Modern Britain: The Disinherited Spirit*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 13.

³² C. Barnett, N. Clarke, P. Cloke & A. Malpass, 'The Political Ethics of Consumerism' *Consumer Policy Review*, Vol 15, No. 2, (2005).

³³ Z. Gifford, *Thomas Clarkson and the Campaign against Slavery*, (London: Anti-Slavery International, 1996) p. 13.

³⁴ M. Kaye, *1807- 2007: Over two hundred years of campaigning against slavery*, (London: Anti-Slavery International, 2005).

the plantations in the West Indies.³⁵ Whether or not the sugar boycott genuinely had such a direct impact on the levels of slavery is perhaps debatable, but what is clear is that the consumer campaign succeeded in making the slave trade an issue of public concern.

An interesting case study of Christian involvement in nineteenth-century consumer campaigns is the White List Movement implemented by the Christian Social Union (CSU) from 1887 to 1914.³⁶ Julien Vincent has argued that through the CSU involvement in the White list campaigns, ‘the Christian ideal was not secularised, but that economic life became re-sacralised, and re-enchanted’.³⁷ The White Lists were a form of retail certification that guaranteed consumers that the producers of White List goods were ensured at least minimum working conditions. They were described in 1908 by a CSU member as: ‘public lists of local tradesmen who observe the standard regulation for their respective trades’.³⁸ Crucial to the success of the White List was the idea of the informed consumer able to act as a responsible Christian and consumer. By 1908 the CSU was having a significant impact on mainstream markets; Oxford, Birkenhead, Leeds and Leicester all had White Lists of over a hundred firms. And in Manchester, the White List included seven hundred firms from forty different trades. But the expansion of the White List Movement was curtailed by the First World War and it was never successfully revived in post-war Britain.

20th Century Intellectual and Theological Origins

Liberation Theology

From the early 1970s the Church in North, and particularly Christian development agencies, became increasingly aware of theology emerging from the Global South. The World Council of Churches (WCC) stated that ‘Churches are once again realising that it is not possible to be the church of Jesus Christ if they fail to respond with love and justice to the challenge of the poor.’³⁹ Theologians in the Global South, predominantly but not exclusively from Latin America, formulated the reality of extreme poverty as an

³⁵ Gifford, *Thomas Clarkson*.

³⁶ J. Vincent, ‘The moral expertise of the British consumer, c.1900: a debate between the Christian Social Union and the Webbs’, in A. Chatriot, M. Chessel & M. Hilton (eds.), *The Expert Consumer: Associations and Professionals in Consumer Society* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 37–51.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ John Carter, *Preferential Dealing*, CSU Pamphlet, (Oxford University Branch, Oxford, Hart, 1909), p. 12.

³⁹ *Towards a Church in Solidarity with the Poor*, (WCC, Geneva, 1980) p. 17.

issue of social justice rather than charity. The concepts of ‘structural sin’ and the ‘preferential option for the poor’ were central to what became known as Liberation Theology. In Britain, Christian NGOs began to work closely with organisations founded on the principles of liberation theology. For instance, from 1974, CAFOD worked with the Bartolomé de las Casas Institute an NGO set up by Gustavo Gutiérrez, in Lima, Peru.

Gustavo Gutierrez, the Peruvian theologian, is usually cited as having first popularised the term ‘theology of liberation’ sometime between 1964 to 1968.⁴⁰ Gutierrez argued that theology of liberation was best understood not a new theme for reflection but ‘a new way to do theology.’⁴¹ He described it as ‘a theology which opens itself – in the protest against trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of humankind, in liberating love, and in the building of a new society of justice and fraternity – to the gift of the kingdom of God.’⁴²

At the 1969 SODEPAX conference in Cartigny, Switzerland, Gutierrez gave a paper on the meaning of development.⁴³ He argued that charitable support given by wealthy nations for limited projects left the distribution of resources basically untouched. Gutierrez challenged Christians in the rich world to make a genuine commitment to justice in the South. He stated that, ‘this aid might also be able to offer, at a cheap price, a good conscience to Christians, citizens of countries that control the world economy.’⁴⁴ This paper was later reworked into his influential book *Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* (1971).

In Brazil, Archbishop Dom Helder Camara called for a church that would unambiguously declare its solidarity with oppressed peoples and would accept the probable loss of state financial support. In 1964, Helder set up ‘The Church of the Poor’ and eventually this grew to number eighty-six Bishops including sixteen Brazilians.⁴⁵ Helder’s efforts to utilise the Church to advance social justice within Brazilian society did

⁴⁰J. Nickoloff, (ed.). *Gustavo Gutiérrez Essential Writings*, (Orbis Books, 1996). p. 5.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 34.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³SODEPAX, the Joint Committee on Society, Development and Peace, was set up in 1968 by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Roman Catholic Church.

⁴⁴M. Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies: The ecumenical Response to Poverty* – A Primer (WCC Publications, 1995). p. 52.

not go unchallenged. Any attempts to do more than provide charity were met with severe criticism, both from the state and the conservatives within the Church. Helder stated, ‘when I feed the poor, they call me a saint; when I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist.’⁴⁶ In, *Revolution through Peace* (1971), Helder contributed to the growing call for ‘Trade not Aid’. He argued, ‘It is not aid that we need . . . If the affluent countries, East and West, Europe and the United States, are willing to pay fair prices to developing countries for their natural resources, they can keep their aid and their relief plans.’⁴⁷

Christian Economics: Small is Beautiful

Published in 1973, E. F. Schumacher’s book, *Small is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered*, was widely acclaimed as a watershed in Third World development theory.⁴⁸ One of the most enduring ideas to emerge from this work was the concept of ‘intermediate technology.’ Essentially, Schumacher proposed that development programmes should be appropriate in scale and cost to the people using them. Despite widespread critical attention, one of the main organising themes of the book has often been overlooked – the relevance of Christian teachings to Third World development.

Schumacher’s Christianity was not always overtly expressed, but existed as a major influence in his life, as demonstrated by his conversion to the Roman Catholic Church in September 1971. He remarked that he had finally acknowledged ‘a long-standing illicit love affair.’⁴⁹ Charles Fager has described *Small is Beautiful* as ‘Nothing less than a passionate plea for the rediscovery of old time Western religion – Roman Catholic religion to be precise.’⁵⁰ Fager, in an interview with Schumacher in 1977, took the opportunity to explore the Catholic influences on the work. In discussing the most frequently cited chapter on ‘Buddhist Economics’, Schumacher acknowledged that it was

⁴⁵ D. Regan, *Why are they poor? Helder Camara in Pastoral Perspective*. (Transaction Publisher, 2000).p. 89.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁴⁸ C. Derrick in *The Times*, 9 September, 1977. Barbara Ward in *The Times*, 10 September, 1977: ‘To very few people, it is given to change, drastically and creatively, the direction of human thought. Dr Schumacher belongs to this intensively creative minority and his death is an incalculable loss to the whole international community.’

⁴⁹ J. Pearce, *Literary Converts: Spiritual Inspiration in an Age of Unbelief*, (Ignatius Press, 2000).

⁵⁰ C. Fager, ‘Small is Beautiful, and So Is Rome: Surprising Faith of E. F. Schumacher’, *Christian Century*, April 6 1977.

as much informed by Catholic writers and thinkers, but he stated, ‘Of course. But if I had called the chapter “Christian Economics” nobody would have paid any attention.’⁵¹ He then went on to explain that, ‘most people in the West are suffering from what I call an anti-Christian trauma and I don’t blame them. I went through that for 20 years myself’.⁵²

Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger

R.J. Sider made an important contribution to this discussion in *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (1977). He linked patterns of mass consumption in the ‘first world’ with poverty in the ‘third world’. He believed consumers, and particularly Christian consumers, should take responsibility for the consequences of their consumption. He stated, ‘We are implicated in a structural evil. International trade patterns are unjust ... Unless you have retreated to some isolated valley and grow or make everything you use, you participate in unjust structures which contribute directly to the hunger of a billion mal-nourished neighbours.’⁵³ Sider argued that to rectify this situation a structural change in global economic relations was required, and that Christians should be at the forefront of this change. He recommended three courses of action: the giving of tithes, the reintroduction of the jubilee principle and a commitment to fairer trade.

Sider’s main contention was the need to change the structure of international trade. He reasoned that since eighty per cent of money that flowed from rich to poor countries was through trade, and it was therefore essential to make trade fairer. This could be achieved by stopping American and European protectionist import barriers and by paying developing countries a fair price for their commodities.

Origins of Christian NGOs

Christian Aid, CAFOD, and Tear Fund are of particular relevance due to their involvement in the early years of the Fairtrade Foundation. Both Christian Aid and CAFOD were founding members of the Fairtrade Foundation and were both involved from the first meeting of the steering committee in 1989. Tear Fund, although not a

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Fager, ‘Small is Beautiful’.

⁵³ R. J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, (London: Paulist, 1977), p. 141.

founding member of the Fairtrade Foundation, is also of interest because of its own trade related campaigns and its role in the formation of two Christian alternative trade organisations: Tear Craft and Traidcraft.⁵⁴

'Christian Reconstruction in Europe', the precursor to Christian Aid, grew up as the aid and development division of the British Council of Churches.⁵⁵ It was started in 1945 as an initiative by the churches to help refugees and to rebuild church and family life in post-war Europe. From 1949, the movement became the Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service; this marked a broadening of its stated purpose to include disaster relief more generally and longer term development. In 1957, Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service held a door-to-door collection in 200 towns and villages across the UK. This was the first Christian Aid Week, and it raised £26,000.⁵⁶ The concept of Christian Aid Week proved a very effective way of raising not only funds, but awareness. Reflecting the widespread public recognition of Christian Aid Week, in 1964 the organisation changed its name to Christian Aid.

In 1961, the National Board of Catholic Women organised the first 'Family Fast Day' in response to a request from the people of Dominica for help with a mother-and-baby health-care programme. A year later, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD), was officially established by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, to facilitate Catholic participation in the Freedom from Hunger Campaign.⁵⁷

Tear Fund (The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund) owes its origins to the World Refugee Year (1959-60). Heightened awareness of the plight of refugees resulted in a flow of unsolicited donations to the British Evangelical Alliance. Many of these donations were sent with requests that the money be sent to Christian missionaries working with refugees. These donations were recorded in a file marked Evangelical Alliance Refugee Fund (EAR Fund). In 1968, the decision was taken to develop EAR Fund and go public under the leadership of Rev. George Hoffman. In November 1968 the name was changed to The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund, or Tear Fund. Initially, Alan Brash,

⁵⁴ In 2007 Tear Fund became a member and charity shareholder of the Fairtrade Foundation.

⁵⁵ The main Churches in the BCC are Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, United Reform and Church of Scotland. In 1985 the Methodist Relief and Development Fund was established as a separate agency, but the Methodist Church has remained committed to supporting Christian Aid.

⁵⁶ P. J. Burnell, *Charity politics and the Third World*, (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) p. 54.

head of Christian Aid, was sceptical about the need for another relief agency given that Christian Aid was already established as the official agency of the Churches. This dispute was soon resolved and it was made clear that Tear Fund had no intention of competing with Christian Aid. George Hoffman in the first *Tear Times*, speaking of Tear Fund's objectives, stated, 'we believe we have an added responsibility – like the Catholic and Quaker agencies to their constituencies - to arrest the attention of Evangelicals in this country, and inform them of the needs, requirements and the opportunities to help.'⁵⁸

Church investments and shareholder activism

In 1969, CAFOD and Christian Aid jointly commissioned a working group, led by the Overseas Development Institute, to address the question of, 'whether the capital accumulated in the Trusts of the Churches could be used also to benefit the economies of the less developed countries.'⁵⁹ The report, published in 1972, was titled: *A Third force for the Third World: A Study of the channels for investment of Church Trust Funds in economic development*. The starting point of the report was a resolution passed at a World Council of Churches (WCC) Conference in October 1969. This resolution set out the objective that, 'The British churches should take the lead in creating an independent fund for investment in the creation of wealth in developing countries by devoting, before the end of 1972, 5% of their invested funds for that purpose.'⁶⁰

The report concluded that the institutions that existed in the late 1960s allowed only limited scope for investment in Third World development and that there was potential to establish a trust for that specific purpose. The report stated that Church funds should be, 'something different from government investment on one hand and private investment on the other'.⁶¹ They further proposed that church investors could, 'pioneer the use of investment money with a moral purpose, and thus become a third force in the Third World'.⁶²

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁵⁸ M. Endersbee, *They Can't Eat Prayer – The Story of Tear Fund*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977) p. 88.

⁵⁹ Overseas Development Institute, *A Third force for the Third World: A Study of the channels for investment of Church Trust Funds in economic development*. (1972) CA2/D/14.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

In the early 1970s, the World Council of Churches (WCC) started to question their investment policy in South Africa.⁶³ In particular, they focused on loans to South African government. They argued that, ‘Even those that sincerely believe, unlike the WCC, that investment can benefit black South Africans are unable to make out any remotely plausible case for arguing that loans to the South African Government and its agencies can do anything but strengthen apartheid.’⁶⁴

In 1973, the WCC sent out questionnaires to ten banks to assess their involvement with South Africa. These questionnaires were essentially a form of social audit. One of the banks that responded was Midland Bank, their statement said, ‘We believe we should be guided by our responsibility to our shareholders, customers and staff.’⁶⁵ The WCC responded by closing its account with Midland Bank. The WCC justified this decision stating that, ‘banking and all commercial life - and all life itself - come under moral judgement, and there is no place where we may go and hide and say we have escaped the eye of God. The WCC has argued that corporate ethics are no different from private ethics.’⁶⁶

The campaign against loans by Midland Bank gained momentum in 1974 when End Loans to Southern Africa (ELTSA) was established by the Reverend David Haslam.⁶⁷ A campaign pamphlet from 1975 stated, ‘Midland bank has always been considered a relatively ‘clean’ bank with respect to involvement in Southern Africa and many church and anti-apartheid organisations bank with Midland for this reason.’⁶⁸ But it continued, ‘no longer is this the case – Midland, along with the whole banking system, is up to its eyes in supporting apartheid in Southern Africa.’

Then in March 1976 at the Midland Bank AGM the Methodist Church set an important precedent when it tabled a shareholder resolution to End Loans to South Africa. This was the first shareholders’ resolution to a British company or Bank to be tabled on a social issue. They succeeded in getting the support of 120 shareholders (there was a minimum requirement of at least 100), including several church bodies and institutions.

⁶³ The World Council of Churches was formed in 1948 and now represents 286 member churches.

⁶⁴ WCC, *World council of Churches and Bank Loans to Apartheid*, (Geneva, 1977), p. 11.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁶⁷ <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/rhodes/eltsa/eltsa.html>.

The resolution achieved three million share-votes (only about 6 per cent), but the action was considered a success due to the level of publicity and media interest generated.⁶⁹

‘A Look at Lifestyle from a Christian Viewpoint’

This critique was further developed by Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tear Fund in a petition to the European Community Commissioners in April 1973. They argued that as ‘the largest grouping of rich nations and the most powerful trading block in the world’⁷⁰ the European Community had a responsibility to promote: ‘an international environment where the basic needs of the majority of human mankind get the highest priority.’⁷¹ The main recommendations included: imposing limits on the operations of multinational companies (MNCs); supporting international commodity agreements and replacing the Common Agricultural Policy. But they recognised that little progress would be made in reducing the gap between rich and poor, ‘unless the EC are prepared to sacrifice the unrestricted advance in their living standards and increased consumption of resources.’⁷²

One response by Churches in the North was a call for simpler living among its members. Delegates at the 1974 Lausanne International Conference on World Evangelicalism issued a resolution that stated - ‘Those of us who live in the affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simpler lifestyle in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism.’⁷³

A Christian Aid leaflet from 1977 titled ‘*A Look at Lifestyle from a Christian Viewpoint*’ asked the question, ‘What can simple living achieve?’ In reply two main points were made: firstly, that savings could be donated to Christian Aid and ‘would bring benefit to a few of those most in need.’⁷⁴ But possibly more significantly, a simpler lifestyle was meant as ‘a sign of the sort of change we wish to see in the economic structures of the world – change designed to help the poorest.’ It was hoped that this example would

⁶⁸ CA2/D/24/4, Midland Bank Ltd A Great British Bank? (ELTSA 1975).

⁶⁹ WCC Bank Loans to Apartheid. 1977, p. 14.

⁷⁰ CA2/D/11 *The European Community and the Third World* letter to EC commissioners (25 April 1973).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ D. Edgington, *Christians and the Third World*, (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982), p. 123.

⁷⁴ CA/J/4 *A Look at Lifestyle from a Christian Viewpoint*, (1977).

contribute towards changing public opinion and Government policies on fairer trade and aid.

Christian alternative trading organisations: Tearcraft and Traidcraft

Tear Fund was the first Christian agency to become directly involved with alternative trading. Unlike Christian Aid and CAFOD, Tear Fund had taken the financially risky step of setting up its own alternative trading organisation (ATO). In 1974, in response to the unfolding crisis in Bangladesh, which had been left devastated by civil war and a cyclone, Tear Fund agreed to start importing local handcrafts to sell in Britain.⁷⁵ The programme was implemented through the work of Ian Prior, on the Tear Fund staff, and Richard Adams, a greengrocer who had been supporting farmers in the Third World by importing their surplus produce. Richard Adams flew out to Bangladesh and filled a cargo plane (on its return leg to Britain after a Tear Fund relief mission) with £10,000 worth of jute handcrafts from local producers. Tearcraft was then registered as a business on the 23rd December 1974 and the first catalogue went out in February 1975.⁷⁶

Tearcraft was committed to a Christian evangelical approach to international trade. This meant *solely* working with and through evangelicals. Stephen Rand, the Communication Director of Tear Fund, explained that: ‘a holistic view of the gospel required that each producer group should have some key input from evangelicals.’⁷⁷ Some within Tearcraft, including Adams, believed that focus on handcraft production as a practical mission of the church was overly restrictive and damaging to the commercial viability of the enterprise. Before long, these tensions led to growing disagreements and in 1979 Richard Adams left Tearcraft and established a new ATO called Traidcraft.

Traidcraft maintained a Christian outlook to its work, and its founding principles declared: ‘Traidcraft is a Christian response to poverty’ but in contrast to Tearcraft it sought to work with, ‘all those who share our commitment to fighting poverty, whatever their faith commitments.’⁷⁸ Richard Adams, commenting on the influence of Christian faith in the company, stated that there was ‘no area of our work where there was not

⁷⁵ T. Chester, *Awakening to a World of Need*, (Nottingham: Inter Varsity Press, 1993).

⁷⁶ M. Symonds, *Love in Action: Celebrating 25 years of Tear Fund* (Guildford: Eagle 1993).

⁷⁷ Chester, *Awakening to a World of Need*, p. 108.

endless scope for applying our faith yet few areas where we could lay claim to a definitive approach.⁷⁹ Although 85% of Traidcraft's staff were Christian, when operating outside Christian circles Traidcraft's approach was not overtly Christian. Adams acknowledged this and stated that, 'I was very conscious of how "Christian language" might alienate people.'⁸⁰ There are clear parallels here with Schumacher who was deeply influenced by Christian teachings but choose to express much of his spiritual beliefs in Buddhist terminology. As a result, many commentators have overlooked the Christian influences on their work.

Tearcraft continued to operate separately from Traidcraft and by 1991 it had sold £9 million worth of goods and had a turnover of £1 million.⁸¹ Although a smaller operation than Traidcraft, it was still working with 30 producer groups in 15 countries.⁸² In addition, Tear Fund was also a founder member of the European Christian Alternative Trading Association (ECATA). In comparison, Traidcraft's sales increased from a base of £100,000 in 1979 to £1.6 million in 1983/84 and £3.6 million by 1987/88. Crucial to this success was the support of Traidcraft representatives, that had grown from 120 in 1979 to more than 400 by 1982.⁸³ By 1988, 1,500 reps were active and had sold in total £1.5 million a year (41% of total sales).⁸⁴

From the early 1980s, both Christian Aid and CAFOD began to view ATOs as increasingly significant to Third World development. In 1983, Christian Aid and Traidcraft announced new links between the two organisations. A special version of the Traidcraft catalogue was sent out the sixty thousand supporters of Christian Aid.⁸⁵ *Headline*, the Christian Aid paper, highlighted the benefits of the new relationship: 'Christian Aid brings in more orders for Traidcraft, and it gets 10 per cent of the value of these orders for its own programme. So the poor are doubly helped.'⁸⁶ In 1983-4 Christian Aid received a dividend of £17,022 from its sales of Traidcraft products.⁸⁷

⁷⁸ www.traidcraft.co.uk.

⁷⁹ R. Adams, *Who Profits?* (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1989), p. 155.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 159

⁸¹ Symonds, *Love in Action*, p. 125.

⁸² *Footsteps*, No. 35, (June 1998).

⁸³ Adams, *Who Profits?*, p. 87.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁸⁶ CA/J/5 *Headline Magazine* (1984).

⁸⁷ CA/J/5 Christian Aid, *Coffee, Grounds for Concern?* (1984).

CAFOD also looked to develop links with Traidcraft and in 1984 Traidcraft produced a mail order catalogue for CAFOD. One of the items featured in the first catalogue was Nicaraguan Coffee. Commenting on its support for Nicaragua, CAFOD stated that ‘new Nicaragua’, ‘raises fundamental questions as to the role of the Church and Christians in the construction of a different kind of society outside the capitalist or communist moulds.’⁸⁸ CAFOD saw its role in Nicaragua as consistent with its wider goals of presenting Third World countries with, ‘a real alternative for development, independent of alignment with either of the power blocs.’⁸⁹ From 1987 CAFOD and Christian Aid both started making annual grants to Traidcraft Exchange, the charitable division of Traidcraft that had joint aims of consumer education and producer development.⁹⁰

From 1989, when the steering committee was set up, to 1994 when the first Fairtrade Mark labelled product went on sale, the Fairtrade Foundation had to exist without any income from license fees. During this period, it was reliant on its member organisations for financial support. In 1989, Christian Aid alone contributed £10,000 towards the running costs of the Fairtrade Mark steering group. Then from 1992 Christian Aid made regular grants: £30,000 in 1992, £45,000 in 1993, £45,000 in 1994, £30,000 in 1995.⁹¹ Undoubtedly, these financial grants helped keep the Fairtrade Foundation afloat, but what was more significant was the support Christian NGOs gave through their awareness raising and education campaigns. It was these campaigns that gradually made supermarkets realise that they had to take the idea of Fairtrade seriously or they would lose customers.

In 1990 Christian Aid launched, *Trade for Change*, a two year campaign aimed at mainstreaming support for ‘people friendly’ products in the run up to the official launch of the Fairtrade Foundation. An NOP/ Omnibus poll, commissioned by Christian Aid, showed that 74% were willing to ‘pay extra for goods produced without exploiting Third World workers’ and 78% felt that ‘trading fairly with a country was a better way to help

⁸⁸ ‘Revolution or Illusion? Nicaragua after 6 years’, *Link*, (Winter 1985).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ CA8/C/179: Christian Aid, Asia Regional Grants.

⁹¹ CA9/ER/1: External Relations Department, Development Education Grant DA 304: The Fairtrade Foundation, (1996).

that country develop than giving aid.⁹² Peter Madden, author of the Christian Aid publication *Raw Deal*, argued that Third World farmers need us all to take people-friendly shopping as seriously as take buying environment-friendly goods.⁹³ Madden highlighted the need for consumers and producers to work together to change the trading system. Drawing on comparisons with nineteenth century he added that, ‘the evil of slavery was ended when people of conviction added their voices to the slaves’ own demand for the system to be abolished.⁹⁴

In April 1993, as part of the *Trade for Change* campaign, Christian Aid encouraged its supporters to petition supermarkets to put more Fair Trade products on their shelves. Customers handed supermarket managers with vouchers that stated, ‘As a customer at your store I would like to see you stocking goods from the Third World which give poor people a fair return for their labour.’⁹⁵ The main focus of the campaign was on getting supermarkets to stock Cafédirect. Cafédirect was chosen since it was the most easily recognisable fairly traded product at the time (this was still a year before the launch of the Fairtrade Mark).

In 1997, Christian Aid led a campaign called ‘Change at the Check-out?’. Supporters were encouraged to collect till receipts and return them to supermarkets as a demonstration of the potential value supermarkets stood to loose if they ignored calls for Fairtrade. By December 1998, the total value of till receipts collected had reached £14 million.⁹⁶ CAFOD launched a co-ordinated campaign calling for a, ‘Fair Deal for the Poor’. In just 6 months, 9,000 people signed cards saying ‘I don’t just want to shop, I want to shop justly.’ Tear Fund also encouraged its supporters to purchase Fairtrade products as a way of supporting the movement as commercial viability was tested by the major retailers. An article from *Tear Times*, in 1998, stated that, ‘If each of us receiving this magazine (nearly 150,000) switched to Fair Trade coffee, we would double the amount sold in the UK.’⁹⁷

⁹² CA/PUBS-CAN/3: ‘Trade for Change’, *Christian Aid News*, No 77 (Oct/Dec 1992).

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ CA/PUBS-CAN/3: ‘Vouchers Urge Supermarkets to Help Poor Farmers’, *Christian Aid News*, No. 79 (April/June 1993).

⁹⁶ ‘Supermarkets Move Towards Ethical Trading’, *Christian Aid News*, (Winter 1998).

⁹⁷ *Tear Times* (Autumn 1998).

Conclusions

This chapter has set out to illustrate how, in post 1960s Britain, on issues of Third World development and Fair Trade Christian development agencies were able to re-establish the relevance of Christian values within modern society. Christian NGOs increasingly began to highlight the role of Christians' as moral consumers in a global marketplace. In many ways this was a revival of a campaigning tradition seen in the nineteenth century (such as the Christian Social Union's White List movement) that sought to re-sacralise economic life. But with Fair Trade this critique was inspired, at least in part, by the theology and activists of the Global South.

From the early 1960s onwards, Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tear Fund worked to popularise a Christian critique of the failings of aid and development programmes. During the 1970s, this critique was extended to North–South trade relations and Christian consumer responsibility within that system. Christian NGOs looked to move beyond their traditional role of providing charity or alms, and inspired by the teachings of liberation theology, worked towards a genuine partnership with the South.

From the late 1980s, although Christian NGOs and their supporters continued to account for the major constituency of Fair Trade campaigners, there was a shift to towards a more secular message. This was illustrated both by the concerns raised by Traidcraft that Christian language could alienate shoppers and in Schumacher's public charade that his influences were Buddhist economics. This chapter does not question the continued presence of a Christian network of supporters, but argues that the public messages portrayed by these organisations were often self-censored in order not to appear *too* Christian.

4 ‘Where Were You, Brother? Fair Trade and the Trade Union Congress

In responding to the Commons International Development Select Committee report on *Fair Trade and Development*, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) General Secretary Brendan Barber stated that, ‘Fair Trade is one way that consumers in Britain can make sure people who work in developing countries get a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work – so that everyone benefits from globalisation.¹ But in written evidence to the same Committee the TUC had argued that, ‘in the absence of a trade union and a collective agreement in the workplace, labelling the “human rights content” of goods as having been produced in conditions of respect for worker’s rights is unreliable. . . So while the trade union movement supports the Fair Trade movement’s labelling with regard to price, it believes that labelling against labour standards on Fair Trade products is as premature there as it is in ETI [Ethical Trading Initiative] member companies.² These statements highlight the paradox of the TUC’s involvement with the Fair Trade movement. By placing this relationship within an historical context, this chapter looks to uncover the motivation and extent of the TUC’s support for the Fair Trade movement, from the early 1970s to the present.

The role of the TUC in improving working conditions and securing labour rights for workers in Britain has been well documented and generally recognised.³ In contrast, the TUC’s role on the international stage, particularly in relation to conditions of workers in the ‘Third World’, has received far less academic attention and remains in some dispute. By using Fair Trade as a case study this chapter looks to understand how (and if) the TUC incorporated the concerns of Third World workers into its international agenda during this period. Drawing on a range of sources including: personal correspondence, committee minutes and published reports, the somewhat problematic nature of the links between the TUC and the British Fair Trade social movement will be pieced together.

¹ TUC Press Release (14 June 2007) <http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/tuc-13394-f0.cfm>.

² Memorandum submitted by the TUC, House of Commons International Development Committee, Fair Trade and Development, (14 June 2007), Ev. 127.

³ J. McIlroy, *Trade Unions in Britain Today*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); R. Martin, *TUC The Growth of a Pressure Group 1868-1976*, (Oxford: University Press, 1980); G. Eley, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*, (Oxford: University Press, 2002); A. J. Reid, ‘Trade unions a

The central theme of this chapter is the discrepancy between the ideals of international trade unionism, which articulated a philosophy consistent with the main principles of the Fair Trade movement, and the reality of the TUC's international programme that prioritised the job security of its members at the expense of workers in the Third World. This resulted in a situation whereby NGOs and Fair Trade campaigners, largely unaware of the TUC's internal politics, believed that the TUC would be receptive to campaigns focused on raising international labour standards. But as will be shown, those organisations that expected the TUC to show leadership in supporting workers in the Third World were to be left disappointed. It will be noted that there are some clear parallels here with the Fair Trade movement's fruitless approaches to the Co-operative movement throughout the 1970s and 1980s. But whereas the co-operative structure has been at the heart of the Fair Trade model from the outset, (even if not fully backed by the Co-operative movement until the early 1990s), the role of trade unions and the ability of Fair Trade to benefit plantation workers has been a constant source of debate within the Fair Trade movement.

This chapter will first address the question of why so many different organisations and campaign groups working on issues of international development looked to the TUC as a potential ally. Then, following a broadly chronological structure, the chapter explores how, during the 1970s, the TUC responded to: appeals by Third World trade unions, such as the Ceylon Workers Congress; calls for action from NGOs, in particular War on Want and the Trade Union Committee for International Co-operation and Development; and the funding proposals of the Ministry of Overseas Development. The next section investigates the TUC's involvement with the Brandt lobby from the early 1980s and then looks at how the TUC responded to the Greater London Council's plans to implement an alternative trade project. The final section covers the 1990s and early 2000s, and looks at whether the 'plantation vs. small producer debate' provided an opportunity for the TUC to engage with the Fair Trade movement or simply reinforced the distance between them.

In recent years there has been renewed interest in the study of international trade unions amongst a range of academic disciplines. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the growing volume of

foundation of political pluralism?" *History and Policy* (May 2002),
<http://www.historyandpolicy.org/archive/policy-paper-05.html>, (17 July 2007).

literature has produced widely varied assessments of the past contributions and future potential of international trade unions.

Patrick Pasture has argued that the international dimension has never been a priority for either the unions' leaders or their constituency. He argues that the trade union movement has worked, above all, on winning social advances within a national framework and building up national welfare states. Pasture's assessment reveals the financial fragility of international trade unionism. He states that, 'the resources that unions were and are prepared too invest in international union activity were and are, in fact, ludicrously small compared with either the needs or the resources mustered by other pressure groups.'⁴ Commenting on the future of international trade unionism, Pasture argued that it depended above all on, 'its capacity to free itself from its Western patterns of thought and ideal types.' This Pasture believed, did not seem likely, 'the international union movement has given few signs in the past of possessing just this sort of flexibility. A very Western perspective has always predominated right up to the present day.'⁵ But despite this, Pasture concedes that, 'the myth of labour-movement internationalism is a stubborn one.'6

Robert O'Brien is not alone in arguing that trade unions have a potentially valuable contribution to make in a globalised economy. He claims that trade unions are transforming from being a, 'supporter of US capitalism, to a brake on neoliberal industrial relations, to potentially advocating a different form of political economy in alliance with other groups.'⁷ O'Brien's work fits with the school of thought that argues that since trade unions' exclusion from corridors of power, the future significance of international trade unionism relies on a growing interaction with a series of social movements. O'Brien outlines the potential of trade unions to make a positive contribution to the development of social movements. He claims that, 'labour organizations, particularly trade unions, occupy strategic sectors in the global economy, possess an institutional structure that brings benefits (as well as the often cited costs) and wield traditional forms of influence and power that can complement new social

⁴ P. Pasture, 'A Century of International Trade Unionism, Review Essay,' *IRSH* (2002), p. 47.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

⁶ P. Pasture, *The Lost Perspective?: Trade Unions between Ideology and Social Action in the New Europe*, (Aldershot, 1996).

movement activity.’ He concludes by making an appeal to scholars working on new social movements and civil society to, ‘give some thought to the old social movement of labour.’⁸

Taken as a whole, O’Brien’s work gives a generally optimistic assessment of the future of international trade unionism. He proposes that the ending of Cold War has meant that it might be possible to, ‘rekindle the spirit of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century internationals’ and construct a new form of internationalism.⁹ But O’Brien’s optimism may be founded on uncertain ground. He cites the trade union presence at the anti-WTO protests in Seattle in 1999, as evidence of unions’ increasing participation with social movements. This image of trade unionists marching alongside environmentalists dressed in turtle costumes has been well-used in the media and by academics to symbolize the diversity of the global justice movement. But research is required into the nature and extent of this relationship.

Peter Waterman has extended the study of international trade unionism beyond an assessment of Cold War rhetoric to encompass global North-South relations as well as East-West. Waterman is critical of what he sees as the slow progress made by the Westocentric institutions of international trade unionism, such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).¹⁰ He highlights how the weak financial position of the ICFTU has resulted in a dependency on state funding for their development activities. During the 1990s, the ICFTU was only receiving some £7 million per year from affiliation fees of its 113 million members. In contrast, Amnesty International with only 1 million members was receiving £12 million annually and Greenpeace with its 4.3 million members had an income of £110 million a year. The ICFTU’s limited funds resulted from it only receiving 1% of membership fees from its

⁷ R. O’Brien, ‘Workers and world order: the tentative transformation of the international union movement,’ *Review of International Studies* (2000), 26, pp. 533-555.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ J. Harrod and R. O’Brien (eds.), *Global Unions?: Theory and strategies of organized labour in the global political economy*, (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 6.

¹⁰ The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was established in 1949 following a split within the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). In October 2006 the ICFTU merged with the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) to form the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

members whereas the Dutch affiliate to Amnesty allocated 38.6 % of its annual subscriptions to the international office.

Waterman argued that, ‘Given the alternative between reinventing itself as an international solidarity movement and incorporating itself into state-dependent co-operation, it is hardly surprising that the ICFTU has taken the easy option.’¹¹ But despite his disillusionment with the ICFTU, Waterman remained convinced of the potential of international trade unionism. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, writing in the *Newsletter of International Labour Studies*, Waterman argued that ‘a new labour internationalism would come with the new unionism in the Third World’.¹² This, as Waterman now admits, did not happen but he maintains that a ‘breakthrough might yet occur’ based on the new union movements in the Third World.¹³

Waterman also questions the limited recognition of trade unions within the literature on new or alternative social movements. He argued that, ‘Much of this literature, moreover, either ignores or writes off labour as an issue – and workers as a potentially progressive force – nationally or internationally.’¹⁴ But in recent years a number of sociologists have responded to this apparent gap in the literature and have sought to incorporate trade unions into studies on social movements. Donatella Della Porta argues that trade unions potentially have a valuable role to play as a counterweight and ally to new social movements. Della Porta also identifies the WTO protest in Seattle as a sign of, ‘the remobilisation of labor.’¹⁵ But taking a wider perspective, she states that, ‘Trade unions have often been an important ally for emerging actors, such as the student movement or the women’s movement, particularly in Europe. With a wide social base and a very often privileged channels of access to institutional decision-makers . . . the trade unions can increase the mobilization capacities and chances of success for social movements.’¹⁶

The prominence of research on the potential of international trade unionism as an ally for new social movements has led to a rather speculative feel to much of the current

¹¹ P. Waterman, Globalization, *Social Movements and the New Internationalists* (London: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1998), p. 113.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵ D. Della Porta and M. Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, first edition 1998, second edition 2006), p. 213.

literature. In contrast, Robert Cox has adopted a more critical approach to understanding existing relations between trade unions and social movements. This has led him to question the compatibility of trade unions and new social movements. He argues that, ‘the new social movements have often been suspicious of organized labour, fearing domination by labour’s tighter and more hierarchical organization which might not respect the social movements’ far more loosely structured and more participatory forms of organization.¹⁷ Cox is right to highlight the structural differences in organization between trade unions and social movements, but he fails to recognise the significance of the poor track-record of international trade unionism. Indeed, the reluctance of the international trade unions to implement socially progressive programmes and their indifference to NGO campaigns may be equally significant factors in accounting for suspicion within some social movements.

What remains scarce in the current literature on international trade unions are the detailed case studies that are able to explore the complex relationships between trade unions and new social movements, both nationally and internationally. In this respect, research into the Fair Trade movement can make a valuable contribution in exploring how socio-economic networks developed between trade unions, NGOs and other civil society groups.

The TUC - a potential ally?

The TUC has been described by Professor Ross Martin as being, ‘marked out as an organization of distinctive character and apparent influence by its wide-ranging policy concerns, its myriad formal and informal links with government, its close association with the Labour party, its sheer bulk in numerical terms and its capacity for attracting public attention’.¹⁸ This section will explore how NGOs and campaigners’ perception of the TUC led them to believe that the TUC could become a valuable ally in making the concept of Fair Trade a reality.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹⁷ R. Cox, ‘Civil society at the turn of the millennium: prospects for an alternative world order,’ *Review of International Studies* (1999), 25, p. 19.

¹⁸ R. Martin, *TUC The Growth of a Pressure Group 1868-1976*, (Oxford: University Press, 1980), p. viii.

The emergence of a Fair Trade movement in Britain from the early 1970s coincided with the peak of the TUC's standing both in terms of membership and political recognition. For many British NGOs, the TUC seemed to represent an opportunity to engage with a well established and influential pressure group.¹⁹ The TUC's membership expanded rapidly during the 1970s from 10 million members in 1970 to 12 million members by 1979. With 92 per cent of unions affiliated to it, in 1979 the TUC could claim that it directly represented just over half the workforce (52 per cent).²⁰ But by 1992, TUC membership had fallen to under nine million, accounting for 80 per cent of all union members and only just over a third of the total workforce (34 per cent).²¹ Despite declining numbers, the TUC's ability to accurately quantify its membership was still recognised by NGOs as important in demonstrating its political influence. Most NGOs were unable to show with any reliability their level of support beyond a core of volunteers. Instead, NGOs relied on income rather than membership as an indicator of support, but this became increasingly problematic with higher levels of state funding.

The international ideals of the TUC seemed to be consistent with the main themes of Fair Trade. Since its formation in 1919, the TUC has played a prominent role in promoting the work of the International Labour Organisation. At the Philadelphia Conference in May 1944, the ILO declared that: 'labour is not a commodity; freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress; poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere; the war against want requires to be carried on with unrelenting vigour within each nation'.²² The TUC's membership of the International Confederation of Free Trades Unions (ICFTU) from 1949 provided an opportunity to develop the work of the ILO within the increasingly global context of international trade unionism. The number of organisations affiliated to the ICFTU had grown rapidly from 67 organisations in 51 countries in 1949 to 135 organisations in over 100 countries by 1961.²³ This growth was partly explained by the membership of newly independent states. In Africa, for instance, the number of affiliates had increased from three in 1949 to twenty by 1961.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ J. McIlroy, *Trade Unions in Britain Today*, (Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 22.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

²² M. Stewart, *Britain and the ILO: The Story of Fifty years*, (London: HMSO, 1969), p. 110.

The discussion of ‘fair labour standards’ was revived at International Labour Conference in June 1971 and by the late 1970s, the idea had been incorporated within the ICFTU Development Charter. The Charter stated that ‘The trade union movement would be failing in its historic mission if it were purely concerned about economic objectives and material well-being.’²⁴ The Charter outlined the importance of unions to prospects of future equitable development. ‘The encouragement of the growth of independent and representative trade union organisations is an essential pre-requisite for a fair distribution of income and wealth in society and for sustained economic and social development.’²⁵ Drawing on heavily on the ILO, the ICFTU defined ‘fair labour standards’ as, ‘those provisions which assure the work force of reasonable protection and income maintenance through fair wages, unemployment benefit, safety, workmen’s compensation, etc.’²⁶

The plight of Sri Lankan tea workers

As shown in earlier chapters, the conditions on tea plantations were a significant factor in bringing together the Fair Trade movement. The TUC were also drawn into this controversy and could have provided an opportunity for the TUC to demonstrate its commitment to international labour solidarity and to engage with the Fair Trade social movement. But as will be shown, the TUC’s failure to act in support of Sri Lankan workers instead demonstrated to the NGO community the limitations of the TUC’s international development agenda.

The plight of the Sri Lankan tea workers was first raised in an international trade union setting at the ICFTU working party on MNCs in Tokyo in October 1973. At this meeting the General Secretary of the Ceylon Workers’ Congress (CWC) appealed for solidarity with his union’s struggle, in particular, with multinational British owned tea companies.²⁷ The CWC looked to the TUC in particular to lobby the British government,

²³ J. P. Windmuller, ‘ICFTU after Ten Years: Problems and Prospects’, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2. (Jan., 1961), pp. 257-272.

²⁴ MSS.292D/931/5 ‘ICFTU Development Charter – Towards a New Economic Order’, (17-18 May 1978), p. 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ MSS.292D/954.9/1: ICFTU/ITS Working Party on Multinational Companies, (11-12 September 1975).

challenge multinational corporations and mobilise consumers in order to win concessions for the tea workers.

For some within the trade union movement, Sri Lankan tea plantations took on a wider significance. Carl Wilms-Wright, an official at the ICFTU, argued that, ‘Helping workers in Sri Lanka fight against the abuses of multinational capital is not merely an abstract act of charity towards the Third World. It is a test case for evolving an effective world-wide countervailing trade union strategy. Tomorrow it may be necessary to call upon the same international labour solidarity to defend the interests of the British worker against the manipulations of multinational companies.’²⁸ But this did not seem to be a view that held much sway within the TUC.

The TUC failed to launch a co-ordinated campaign in support of Sri Lankan workers. In explaining its lacklustre response, the TUC argued that it was, ‘placed in a difficult situation where it is being asked to provide support when it has no substantive evidence of what the CWC, in particular, has done.’²⁹ The TUC, in an attempt to salvage its own reputation, pointed instead to the limited communications and conflicts over policy within the international trade union movement. The TUC stated that, ‘there appears to have been no co-ordinated strategy carried out by the ICFTU, IFPAAW [International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers] and the CWC in Sri Lanka itself to develop the collective bargaining strength of workers on tea plantations.’³⁰ No doubt many of the communications between the various organisations were incomplete, but this was not sufficient justification for the TUC to abandon its commitment to ‘international solidarity’. An ICFTU report concluded that, ‘The TUC kept wanting more information, even though it was difficult to obtain, even though time was pressing, and even though it was clear to everyone that the workers were in a bad way.’³¹

War on Want

One of the first NGOs to highlight the plight of the Sri Lankan tea workers was War on Want. Initially as news broke about conditions on the tea plantations, War on Want

²⁸ C. Wilms-Wright, ‘Our Unacceptable Capitalism in Sri Lanka,’ *Socialist Commentary*, (March 1975).

²⁹ MSS.292D/954.9/1: Role of International trade union movement, BGB/DG, (31 July 1975).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

looked to trade union solidarity in order to confront and resolve the issue of labour exploitation. In 1974, War on Want published a report titled, *The State of Tea*, in which they stated that, ‘it is the responsibility of the British Trade Unionists to ensure that co-workers employed by the same companies receive fair wages and are not exploited.’³² At the beginning of the decade, War on Want still believed that the trade union movement had the potential to be a, ‘countervailing force’ to the exploitation of Third World poor by multinational companies. But growing frustration over the TUC’s failure to act, led War on Want to publish a highly critical assessment of the international trade union movement in 1978 titled, *Where were you, brother? An account of Trade Union Imperialism.*³³

War on Want held the TUC responsible for allowing British companies to avoid the issue of compensation payments to Sri Lankan tea workers for the human and environmental costs of tea plantations. They stated that, ‘according to the Ceylon Workers Congress, the job in hand following nationalisation of the estates was pressure on the British government on the issue of compensation. Only the TUC had the necessary muscle to push this through.’ War on Want asked, ‘Why is it left up to charities and newspapers to expose British company maltreatment of Third World labour when, through the ICFTU, we’re meant to have a global exchange of worker information?’³⁴ They contrasted the limited role played by the TUC with the extensive campaigns organised by the TUC’s counterparts in Holland or Belgium. War on Want believed that the TUC should have tried to, ‘encourage shop floor interest and get action going against multinational Third World exploitation at the place where it would count – at factory floor level in the home base of these companies’.³⁵

The critique of international trade unions developed in *Where were you, brother?* was not limited to a critical assessment of dealings with Sri Lanka. War on Want went as far as to claim that, ‘TUC concern about the Third World is almost non-existent.’³⁶ In justifying this accusation, they highlighted the fact that Allan Hargreaves, TUC International Secretary, in his fifty-eight page report to the 1977 TUC conference included only, ‘five

³¹ MSS.292D/905.234/1: Patrick Wintour, The TUC’s ‘foreign policy’ *New Statesman*, (2 March 1979).

³² E. Bond, *The State of Tea*, (War on Want, London, 1974), p. 14.

³³ D. Thompson, *Where were you, brother? An account of Trade Union Imperialism*, (London: War on Want, 1978), p. 1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

paragraphs on ICFTU work in Latin America, one paragraph on Asian work and nothing at all about Africa.³⁷ War on Want was left with an overall impression that, ‘international exchange between worker movements is pitifully small and in most cases non-existent. When this combined with a lack of information from the leadership the effect is to drive labour movements into dangerous isolation making them vulnerable to outside manipulation.’³⁸ This stinging indictment of international trade unionism was all the more telling since War on Want had always identified itself as, ‘the only charity that openly allies itself with the Labour movement and has twelve national trade unions affiliated to it’.³⁹

Trade Union Committee for International Co-operation and Development

War on Want was not the only NGO during this period to initially assume that the TUC would be a natural ally in promoting Third World development. Formed in 1976, the Trade Union Committee for International Co-operation and Development (TUCICD) aimed to encourage international trade union networks, particularly between the North and the South. TUCICD was brainchild of Mike Brown, trade union liaison officer for the World Development Movement (WDM).⁴⁰ The TUCICD argued that, ‘the existing economic order which is based on profit must be replaced with one based on social control and planning in the interests of all peoples and nations and on an equitable distribution of wealth’.⁴¹ The TUCICD’s main objective was to encourage British trade unionists to, ‘increase their international trade union contacts and to increase the solidarity of all workers in support of the objectives of a New International Economic Order (NIEO).’⁴²

In April 1978, the TUCICD wrote to the TUC requesting formal recognition and enquiring about the possibility of TUCICD assisting the TUC in its development and

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³⁹ MSS.292D/905.234/1: War on Want, ‘Wanted One Hour of Your Pay,’ (1981).

⁴⁰ In 1992, the World Development Movement became one of the founding members of the Fairtrade Foundation in the UK.

⁴¹ MSS.292D/931/4: TUCICD ‘Submission to the parliamentary Select Committee on overseas Development,’ (21 July 1977).

⁴² *Ibid.*

education work.⁴³ The response from the TUC demonstrated an institutional rigidity that made it difficult to work with newly formed NGOs: ‘The TUC does not formally recognise outside bodies and has its own policies on international trade, co-operation and development. It would broadly support the objectives of TUCICD except that they are rather more radical, particularly in respect of the rather rigid TUCICD approach to the New International Economic order, and language it uses to describe its objectives is also rather emotive.’⁴⁴

National Government: Ministry of Overseas Development

In 1975, the Labour Government’s white paper on international development, demonstrated a ‘new emphasis’ whereby priority would be given to ‘helping the poorest people in the poorest countries’.⁴⁵ As part of this new strategy, the Ministry for Overseas Development (ODM) undertook a re-evaluation of how they worked with NGOs. One of the recommendations was that the ODM should seek to capitalise on the TUC’s ability to contribute to Britain’s international development efforts. John Grant, Parliamentary Under Secretary at the ODM commented that, ‘it is my view that the Trades Unions likewise have much experience, albeit of a somewhat different kind, which could be of great value to the developing world if harnessed in a practical fashion’.⁴⁶ Further he commented that, ‘this is a view which I have also encountered in developing countries and which has been represented to me from our own voluntary societies’.⁴⁷

In 1976, the Labour government made a grant available to the TUC to set up the Trade Union Foundation. The object of the Foundation was to promote, ‘trade union education and training and the participation of trade unions in social development in

⁴³ The TUCICD approach to the TUC focused on development education this was partly to make the most of new government funding opportunities and free WDM from covering its running costs of approximately £10,000 annually. In December 1976 the minister for Overseas Development announced the intention to allocate £150,000 annually to help finance education and information work on development matters in the UK by non-governmental organisations.

⁴⁴ MSS.292D/931/4: TUC Inter-departmental Correspondence, ‘Trade Union Committee for International Co-operation and Development (TUCICD)’, (April 19, 1978).

⁴⁵ Ministry for Overseas Development, *The Changing Emphasis in British Aid Policies: More Help for the Poorest*, (London: HMSO, 1975).

⁴⁶ MSS.292D-931.3-1, letter by John Grant, Parliamentary Under Secretary ODM, 1 September 1975.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

developing countries'.⁴⁸ This was the government's response to what it saw as the failure by the TUC and the ICFTU to prioritise Third World development. A report by Ministry of Overseas Development found that, 'In present circumstances protection of employment would seem to be the ICFTU's first priority. But what of protection for employment in the LDCs [Least Developed Countries]? There is a significant potential conflict here.'⁴⁹ The report concluded that, 'Much will depend on the extent to which the trade union movement in the developed world can provide increased training opportunities and financial assistance to the Third World trade union movement. Up to now there is not much evidence that this process has really been put in hand. However, in this connection the ODM grant to the TUC of £75,000 a year aims at stimulating precisely this kind of effort.'⁵⁰

Funding for the Trade Union Foundation began modestly at £75,000 annually and rose to £186,000 by 1979-80. Grants were primarily used for trade union training and conferences. Even funding at these relatively modest levels was attracting 'parliamentary interest' and led the ODM to question whether conference dinners were appropriate activities for the TUC to be spending Trade Union Foundation grants on.⁵¹ Some officials at the ODM were clearly disappointed with the TUC's level of commitment to the Foundation, stating that, 'they may have written us a few letters but don't let them kid you that they're really concerned about the Third World'.⁵²

From the early 1980s, with Thatcher intent on reducing the international aid budget and limiting the power of trade unions, the future of the Trades Union Foundation seemed precarious. In 1980 the funding for the Foundation was cut back to £75,000 and in 1981 there were further cuts which left the grant at £50,000 a year. By August 1982, there was speculation that both the development grant and the education grant could be cut, which would leave the TUC without Government funds of any kind. *Financial Times* reported that, 'Mr Marten is under pressure from Conservative backbenchers to save the money, on the grounds that education of union officials in developing countries is not an

⁴⁸ MSS.292D/931.3/1: Trade Union Foundation, Memorandum of Association, (December 1976).

⁴⁹ MSS.292D/931/5: Bilateral Aid and Rural Development Department, 'ICFTU Development Charter' (July 1978).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ MSS.292D/931.3/1: Letter by Anthony Beattie (ODM) to J. A. Hargreaves (TUC) re: ODM Grant, (12 February 1979).

⁵² Thompson, *Where were you, brother?*, p. 102.

appropriate object of development aid.⁵³ But the Trade Union Foundation survived international aid budget cuts and, although the Conservatives did little to develop the Foundation, it continued to receive a grant of £50,000.

The Brandt report

The *Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues*, known as the Brandt report, was presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations on the 12th February 1980 and published in March 1980.⁵⁴ The Commission's terms of reference specified three main areas of study: the past record of development in the Third World; the prospects for the world economy; and the creation of a new economic order.⁵⁵ The Brandt report's main recommendations highlighted the need to increase aid, reduce debt burdens of Third World countries and to work towards fairer international trade. The report was seen as particularly timely by many NGOs, coming as it did only weeks after the Conservative government's announcement that it intended to give greater weight to 'political, industrial and commercial considerations' when allocating Britain's aid expenditure.⁵⁶ British development NGOs did not accept the Brandt report uncritically, but they recognised it as an opportunity to engage the public in debate about Britain's role in international development.⁵⁷ The NGO community looked to the TUC as a well positioned ally, able to lobby government and ensure that international development was kept on the political agenda.

One reason for this expectation amongst British NGOs that the TUC would be a strong supporter of the Brandt report, was that there was an international trade union leader on the Commission. It seemed that trade union interests would be well represented, with Joe Morris, President-Emeritus of Canadian Labour Congress, on the Commission. From 1977 to 1978, Morris was the Chairman of the ILO Governing Body and was Vice-President of the ICFTU from 1976 to 1978. This trade union presence was regarded as particularly significant by British NGOs since no international NGO representative had been invited to sit on the Commission. But it seems that Morris was unable to convince

⁵³ J. Lloyd, 'TUC fears cut in £1.6m grant', *Financial Times*, (26 August 1982).

⁵⁴ The Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt, *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, (London: Pan Books, 1980).

⁵⁵ MSS.292D931/7: TUC, 'The Brandt Report', (March 12 1980).

⁵⁶ Ministry for Overseas Development, *The Changing Emphasis in British Aid policies: More Help for the Poorest*, (London: HMSO, 1975); Neil Marten, Hansard, 20 February 1980 Cols 464-465.

⁵⁷ MSS.292D/931/8: Report by Adrian Moyes, 'Brandt and the Poor', Oxfam (12 May 1980).

the Commission that international trade unionism was the solution to Third World poverty. On reviewing the Brandt report the TUC recognised that, ‘Throughout the report there are few references to the role of trade unions in Third World countries and the position of trade unions in promoting development.’⁵⁸

Anthony Sampson, writing in the *Observer* in December 1980, about the political impact of the Brandt report, commented that, ‘It is always interesting to observe the tides and winds of public opinion which force politicians to change their course. Something of the kind seems to be happening in the determination of Britain’s attitudes to the Third world.’⁵⁹ Sampson questioned, ‘what lies behind this undercurrent, and why should it be stronger in Britain than elsewhere in the West (except Holland)?’⁶⁰ He reflected on the diverse groups from development agencies and Christian groups to far sighted industrialist and bankers who were beginning to appreciate that the future prosperity of the North was inter-locked with the South. But in concluding, he commented that, ‘among the groups that have welcomed the Brandt report the most notable absentees have been the trade unionists, who regard imports from Korea or the Philippines as a direct threat to their livelihood’.⁶¹

The ICFTU responded to Sampson’s criticism on behalf the TUC, ‘As I am sure you are aware, newspaper coverage of trade union affairs is somewhat selective and it is not entirely surprising that work of the ICFTU, TUAC⁶², TUC and others on the Brandt report is not widely known. The TUC is the largest affiliate and has participated fully, indeed has been instrumental, in the ICFTU’s work on the Brandt report and its follow-up.’⁶³ But the TUC maintained that the Brandt report should have given specific approval, at least in principle, to the trade union proposal of a social clause. They stated that, ‘The commission’s unwillingness to give open support to the social clause idea is further confirmation of their insufficient grasp of the totality of issues concerning adjustment policy.’⁶⁴ The fact that the report did not specifically refer to the ICFTU

⁵⁸ MSS.292D/931/7: TUC, ‘The Brandt Report’ (March 12 1980), p. 10.

⁵⁹ A. Sampson, ‘Young and wise in surge to Brandt,’ *Observer*, (7 December 1980).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² TUAC, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an interface for the labour unions with the OECD.

⁶³ MSS.292D/931/8: Otto Kersten, General Secretary ICFTU, correspondence with Mr A. Sampson (10 December 1980).

⁶⁴ MSS.292D/931/7: TUC, ‘The Brandt Report’ (March 12 1980), p. 9.

Development Charter reflected the Brandt Commission's concern that the social clause could act as a protectionist measure at the expense of developing countries. The TUC's response to the Brandt report would seem to confirm the Commission's reservations about the motivations behind the Development Charter. Although the TUC welcomed, 'increasing industrialization in Third World countries both for its own sake and for the resultant increases in North-South trade it will bring',⁶⁵ it also criticised the Brandt report's failure to realise the 'importance of temporary protective action in the North to ease the transitional problems caused by structural adaptation'.⁶⁶

Despite the TUC's lukewarm response to the Brandt report, few NGOs were openly critical; instead they looked to win the TUC's backing for future campaigns. Oxfam, for instance wrote to Len Murray, General Secretary of the TUC, requesting that, 'the TUC and individual British unions may be prepared to join with us in stimulating wider discussion of the proposals in the report in the period leading up to the Summit Conference in Mexico City in June of this year'.⁶⁷ War on Want also declared its intention to, 'build a firm and constructive relationship with the trade union movement over the coming years'.⁶⁸ Terry Lacey, the General Secretary of War on Want, argued that, 'It will not be possible, therefore, to interest ordinary working people in the problems of the Third World except upon the basis of understanding the economic and social realities here in Britain'.⁶⁹

Local Government: the Greater London Council and TWIN Trading

In 1984 the Greater London Council (GLC) established a Third World project within its Industry and Employment branch. This initiative led Margaret Thatcher to remark, 'So Ken [Livingstone, the then GLC leader] proposes to have a foreign policy now, does he?'⁷⁰ But Livingstone and the GLC responded that, 'to attempt to solve the problems of

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ MSS.292D/931/8: Evan Luard, Oxfam, correspondence with Len Murray, General Secretary TUC, (20 January 1981).

⁶⁸ MSS.292D/905.234/1: Tracey Lacey, General Secretary, War on Want correspondence with Len Murray, General Secretary, TUC, (November 20th 1979).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ www.twin.org.uk/downloads/AnnualReport0405.pdf.

London at the expense of the Third World would be inconsistent and wrong.⁷¹ This philosophy led the GLC to establish Twin and Twin Trading in 1985, a networking organisation and an alternative trading venture.⁷² Twin Trading's objectives were based on the ideals of international trade unionism and labour solidarity rather than charity or ethical consumerism.

Ken Livingstone, opening Twin Trading's inaugural conference, stated that, 'London workers have a proud tradition of solidarity. They welcomed Garibaldi, and the Paris Commune. They founded with Marx the First International. They refused to load arms to supply the enemies of the Russian revolution.'⁷³ Livingstone argued that there was a need to revive international labour solidarity if unions were to counter the influence of multinational companies. He stated, 'Our problems are the same. We both suffer from unaccountable activities of the giant transnational companies. We are both seeking to find an alternative framework for international economic links and we know there is a great unexplored potential for trade and exchange between us.'⁷⁴ For some delegates such as Horacio Listo, from Mozambique, the suggestion that London and the Third World were in the 'same boat' was a fallacy.⁷⁵ But beyond the bold language, delegates agreed on the need to put into practice a viable alternative trade network drawing on international trade unionism. Twin Trading's Statement of Principles declared that, 'Trade Unions in First and Third World countries should seek opportunities for meeting together to draw up a code of labour for manufacturing industries in order to universalise best practices, such as the ILO Code.'⁷⁶

One of the main objectives for the GLC was to find ways that local authority purchasing could be directed more effectively towards socially productive goals. The supply department of the GLC purchased all the products consumed by schools and social services in a city of seven million people; schools alone served 600 million meals per

⁷¹ TWIN, *Bridges Not Fences: Report of the Third World Trade and Technology Conference*, (London, February 1985), p. 8.

⁷² Twin Trading has been responsible for a number of developments and innovations that have contributed to the growth of Fair Trade in Britain. In particular, Twin Trading helped launch two of the most successful and recognisable Fairtrade brands in the UK: Cafédirect, in 1991 and Day Chocolate, in 1997.

⁷³ TWIN, *Bridges Not Fences*, p. 11.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24

⁷⁵ Oliver Le Brun, Director of Twin Trading, *Bridges Not Fences*, (February 1985), part 5, paper 9.

⁷⁶ 'Statement of Principles For Developing Trade and Technology Exchange', adopted at closing plenary, Bridges Not Fences, (February 1985).

year.⁷⁷ The potential impact of such an initiative was clearly substantial. This was not the first time that local authorities had used their purchasing power as a political tool. But previous campaigns had been based around boycotts of particular products or countries. Tim Lang, from the London Food Commission, commented that, ‘Many progressive councils have used food purchases in the past for defensive aims (e.g. banning South African foodstuffs in schools) but rarely for progressive aims.’⁷⁸

By the time Twin Trading was established in February 1985, the GLC’s days were clearly numbered. Thatcher had returned to office in June 1983 and intended to fulfil the Conservative’s manifesto pledge of abolishing the GLC. This meant that in the short term the GLC finances were placed under increased scrutiny. From July 1984, the Conservative government insisted that all new GLC contracts over £100,000 required Ministerial consent and from March 1985 the GLC were prevented from entering into any contracts worth more than £15,000 prior to abolition.⁷⁹ But the most controversial aspect of GLC finances was so-called ‘tombstone’ funding. At the beginning of 1986, there were reports that the GLC intended to transfer £70m to a range of voluntary organisations to ensure the future funding of schemes they felt were under threat. On February 7th Anthony Scrivener, QC, stated that the, ‘GLC has no power to make a will.’⁸⁰ The Conservative controlled London boroughs, led by Westminster, moved to block tombstone funding and were granted a temporary injunction on 12th February.⁸¹ Despite this injunction, the GLC still succeeded in allocating a lump sum of £690,247 to be held in a trust which could be used to make payments to cover Twin Trading’s expenditure for its first four years.⁸²

Twin Trading’s immediate survival had been secured, but its future progress would depend on its ability to develop links with likeminded groups and organisations. The first real test of Twin Trading’s networking capacity came in 1989, after the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement. Twin proposed to develop and market a mainstream fairly traded coffee that would appeal to a wider cross-section of consumers. This

⁷⁷ Tim Lang, ‘Local Authorities’ role in food – reopening an old opportunity for trade’, *Bridges Not Fences*, (Feb 1985) part 4, paper 4.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ K. Young and L. Grayson, *Abolition: The Reform of Metropolitan Government in England 1983-86*, (Letchworth, Technical Communications, 1988) p. 80, p. 84.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

ambitious goal was beyond the reach of Twin's own limited resources, but in partnership with Equal Exchange, Traidraft and Oxfam, Twin successfully launched Cafédirect in 1991. What is particularly revealing is that despite Twin's declaration that, 'We regard ourselves as part of the movement which is today behind the GLC. The Labour and trade union movement has a key role to play in transferring technology to working in the Third World.'⁸³ It was in fact the ATO and NGO community that gave their backing to Twin, not the trade unions, and this was reflected in the model of alternative trade that came to be adopted by Twin Trading.

The plantation vs. small farmer debate

The Fair Trade movement had witnessed rapid expansion in awareness and sales during the late 1990s and early 2000s, but as it looked to capitalise further on its success in mainstream markets it faced some tough decisions. Sandra Kruger and Andries du Toit have defined this moment as one in which FLO's, 'own interpretative and ideological narratives were in crisis, and many otherwise settled issues were up for contestation'.⁸⁴ Central to these discussions was the question of how (and if) Fair Trade could successfully be expanded to include a larger number of plantation workers without undermining the principles of the movement.⁸⁵ These debates about worker representation seemed to provide an opportunity for the TUC to positively engage with the concept of Fair Trade.

When the Fairtrade label was first launched in the UK in 1994, certification of plantations was limited to those products that were not traditionally produced by small farmers. In practice, up until 2003 this meant that tea was the only plantation crop that could gain Fairtrade certification. Although the UK has traditionally been one of the largest markets for tea, sales of Fairtrade tea have been relatively modest. In 1998 tea sales accounted for £2 million or 12 per cent of UK Fairtrade market.⁸⁶ In comparison, Fairtrade coffee sales in 1998 reached £13.7 million, 82 per cent of total UK Fairtrade sales. By 2003, sales of Fairtrade tea had reached £9.5 million, but this was still only 10

⁸² *Bridges Not Fences*, (Feb 1985), part 2, paper 5.

⁸³ Oliver Le Brun, Director of Twin Trading , *Bridges Not Fences*, (Feb 1985), part 5, paper 9.

⁸⁴ L. Raynolds, D. Murray and J. Wilkinson (eds.) *Fair Trade: The challenges of transforming globalisation*, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 216.

⁸⁵ This has been referred to as the 'plantation vs. small farmer debate'.

⁸⁶ A. Nicholls & C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumerism*, (London: Sage Publications 2004).

per cent of total UK Fairtrade sales. Overall, this meant that commodities traditionally grown by small producers, which included: coffee, chocolate and honey accounted for between 80 to 90 per cent of UK Fairtrade sales during this period.

From 2003, there was increasing pressure for the FLO to make Fairtrade certification available to coffee plantations. It was argued that this would open up the benefits of Fair Trade to a larger number of workers. But it was not the international trade union movement that was calling for this change, but Italian coffee company Illy.⁸⁷ Illy, whose blends contain Brazilian plantation, coffee argued that they could not change the sourcing of the blends it had taken years to develop and that it would only adopt the Fairtrade label if it could maintain its previous suppliers. Small producers were concerned by the revelations that they could be facing competition from large plantations and argued that this would jeopardise their livelihood. With the backing of ATOS such as Equal Exchange, the small producers won assurances from FLO that coffee, cacao, cotton and honey would only be sourced from small producers. The Latin American and Caribbean Network of Small Fair Trade Producers (CLAC) argued that the plantation owners, not the workers, would be the main beneficiaries of Fairtrade certification and that only if plantations were converted to worker-owned collectives could real worker benefits be assured.⁸⁸

It was the case of South African fruit producers that finally provided FLO with an example of how plantations could be included in the Fair Trade system in a way that maintained the political objectives of changing power relations.⁸⁹ The number of FLO certified producers in South Africa rapidly expanded from 2003 to 2005 and by May 2005, of the 42 producers certified, only three were small farmer co-operatives.⁹⁰ There was growing criticism that too many of these plantations were large commercial, white owned farms. It was argued that Fairtrade certification of these farms could undermine the objectives of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 2003. During the second-half of 2004 FLO engaged South African producers and NGOs in a consultation process, the result of which was a set of Fairtrade standards specific to South Africa, which importantly included a 25 per cent minimum interest of workers in the agricultural

⁸⁷ Raynolds, et al., *Fair Trade*, p. 150.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

enterprise.⁹¹ Despite the fact this consultation process was focused on worker rights and participation, the international trade union movement were not involved.

The Fairtrade Foundation have stated that, ‘The onward momentum of the Fairtrade movement will require increased engagement with hired labour and that in turn will need improved co-operation with trade unions to ensure continued success.’⁹² But judging on the trade union’s past record, it seems doubtful whether its future co-operation can be counted on.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that although the Fair Trade movement recognised the potential of international trade unionism and labour solidarity, the failure of the TUC to engage with the concept of Fair Trade resulted in a certification scheme that largely sidelined trade unions. It was not until under pressure by multinational corporations to increase sales volumes in early 2000s that the Fairtrade Foundation was forced to re-evaluate its hired labour standards.

The TUC’s failure to openly recognise the limitations of the ICFTU seriously undermined its ability to engage constructively with the Fair Trade movement. For instance, although the ICFTU by 1959 represented 56.5 million members in over a hundred countries, three organisations constituted fifty per cent of the total ICFTU membership: the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations), the TUC and the German DGB.⁹³ In total, Third World affiliates only accounted for 24.8 per cent of ICFTU members: Asia (11.2 per cent), Latin America (11.3 per cent) and Africa (2.3 per cent).⁹⁴ Financially the ICFTU was both restricted and fully dependent on North American and European affiliates. In 1958, 95 per cent of the ICFTU’s income totalling \$800,000 was derived from Europe (55 per cent) and North

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁹² Memorandum submitted by the Fairtrade Foundation, House of Commons International Development Committee, Fair Trade and Development, 14 June 2007, Ev. 98.

⁹³ John P. Windmuller ‘ICFTU after Ten Years: Problems and Prospects’, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2. (Jan 1961), pp. 257-272.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 257-272.

America (40 per cent).⁹⁵ Given the under-representation of Third World affiliates, it is little surprise that the ICFTU failed to provide a model of progressive international development.

One explanation for the TUC's limited involvement with the Fair Trade movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s was their preoccupation with the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). Tony Young former President of the TUC argued that the ETI was, 'much more ambitious than Fair Trade. Fair Trade is only looking at one section of what's on the supermarket shelf. Great stuff, but we know that as a market percentage, it's tiny. Here we are trying to look at everything on the supermarket shelf.'⁹⁶ But it is worth noting that an Institute of Development Studies impact study of the first eight years of the ETI found that workers were being denied membership of trade unions in all of the countries chosen for investigation - the UK, Costa Rica, India, South Africa and Vietnam. The report also stated that, 'In none of the 25 sites did we find an increase in union membership.'⁹⁷ These findings question what impact (if any) the TUC's membership of the ETI has had on the development of international trade unionism.

There has been a belief amongst some trade unionists that the Fairtrade Foundation has favoured the co-operative development model at the expense of union recognition and collective bargaining. The TUC has argued that, 'Trade union support for the Fair Trade movement would undoubtedly be even greater if all processing of Fair Trade products (including that which takes place in the industrialised countries in which Fair Trade products find their main market) were to take place in unionised workplaces. It is hard for trade unions to encourage members to purchase Fairtrade products made in non-union workplaces, rather than non-Fairtrade products made in large enterprises by their own members.'⁹⁸ But if the TUC was to engage more actively with the Fair Trade movement when given the opportunity, it would then be in a better position to justify pushing for trade union representation in workplaces processing Fair Trade products. It

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 257-272.

⁹⁶ Oxfam briefing paper, *Made at Home: British homeworkers in global supply chains*, (May 2004), http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/trade/downloads/bp63_homeworkers.pdf, 20 May 2008.

⁹⁷ Stephanie Barrientos, IDS, Ethical Trading Initiative Impact Assessment, (October 2006) <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/pvty/pdf-files/ETI-impact-1-main.get.pdf>, 20 May 2008.

⁹⁸ Memorandum submitted by the TUC, House of Commons International Development Committee, Fair Trade and Development, (14 June 2007), Ev. 131.

seems that the TUC is still yet to overcome the conflict between protection of employment of its members and protection of employment in developing countries.

5 Shopping For A Better World: Fair Trade enters mainstream consumer markets

In October 2005, Nestlé announced that they would be launching a Fairtrade certified coffee – ‘Partners Blend’. Alastair Sykes, CEO of Nestlé UK and Ireland said: ‘Increasingly our consumers expect us to bring this commitment to social responsibility alive in our brands and show them how farmers can be helped to have a better life. . . We are therefore delighted to offer consumers a product carrying the approved FAIRTRADE Mark.’ This was the first time that one of the major coffee multinationals had applied for Fairtrade certification. Eleven years after the launch of the Fairtrade labelling scheme, the Fair Trade movement now had a foothold in mainstream markets, but at what cost?

Press reports claimed that Nestlé’s involvement was ‘the most serious threat the Fairtrade movement has faced.¹’ This was underlined by the response of civil society groups such as Baby Milk Action. They argued that, ‘If Nestlé really cared about suppliers in developing countries it could change its lobbying and oppressive business practices which have helped cause the crisis for coffee farmers. Perhaps refusing the mark until there was progress could have helped far more farmers in the long run.²’ The certification of ‘Partners Blend’ also prompted criticism from within the membership of the Fairtrade Foundation. The World Development Movement, in defiance of the official line, declared that, ‘the launch of Nestlé Partner’s Blend coffee is more likely to be an attempt to cash in on a growing market or a cynical marketing exercise than represent the beginning of a fundamental shift in Nestlé’s business model.³

The Fairtrade Foundation responded somewhat defensively stating that, ‘The FAIRTRADE Mark is only given to individual products and not to companies. The Mark indicates that Nestlé’s Partners’ Blend has complied with the internationally agreed standards for Fairtrade certification. It does not refer to any other product marketed by the company. This product has undergone exactly the same certification process as all

¹ *The Guardian*, ‘Society: Environment: String-along or beanfeast?: Nestle's new brand has presented Fair Trade campaigners with a dilemma. Is it a sop or a sign of genuine reform?’ (September 21, 2005), p. 8.

² Baby Milk Action Press Release, *Fairtrade Mark and infant health could be damaged by Nestlé application warn campaigners*, (6 October 2005). <http://www.babymilkaction.org/press/press6oct05.html>.

other Fairtrade products whether marketed by multinationals or smaller companies.⁴ It was left to Twin Trading to highlight the potential benefits of Nestlé's involvement, 'We are delighted that Nestlé's senior management, after many years of attacking Fair Trade, have responded to the wishes of consumers and to the wider development movement to change their trading practises. Since Nestlé accounts for one sixth of the world's international coffee trade, they have the power to help make poverty history.'⁵

This chapter does not set out to assess whether or not the decision to certify 'Partners Blend' was correct. Arguably, it may still be too soon to judge. Instead, this chapter will investigate how the decision to engage with Nestlé came to be taken and place this within the historical context of Fair Trade's move towards mainstream markets. Fairtrade certification of Nestle's 'Partners Blend', has certainly proved to be one of the most controversial episodes in the recent history of the Fairtrade Foundation. But it was not the first time that the Foundation had entered into negotiations with a multinational company (MNC), nor was it the first time that the movement seemed to be facing a 'crisis of identity'. This chapter will focus on the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period that laid the foundations for Fair Trade movement to move from the 'margins to the mainstream.'

In Britain, from the late 1980s, the tensions between a consumer-dependent and a consumer-led movement became increasingly apparent, particularly in discussions with potential Fairtrade licensees. This chapter will argue that from the early history Fair Trade in Britain in the 1970s, it was predominantly a consumer-dependent movement (or activist-led), backed by campaign groups and NGOs that looked to recruit consumers to buy Fair Trade but also to join their campaigns. As sales of Fairtrade certified products expanded, the balance began to tip towards a consumer-led movement. But who would lead the ethical consumer? And how would Fair Trade be defined in relation to consumer politics?

³ WDM Press Release, *Nestle FAIRTRADE Partner's Blend Coffee*, Friday, (7 October 2005).
<http://www.wdm.org.uk/news/presrel/current/nestle.htm>.

⁴ Fairtrade Foundation Press Release, *Questions and answers about Nescafe Partners Blend*, (7 October 2005).
<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/qa071005.htm>.

⁵ Twin Trading Press Statement *re: launch of Nestle Fairtrade Product*, (7 October 2005).
<http://www.babymilkaction.org/action/twintrading1005.doc>.

This transformation was not unique to the British Fair Trade movement. The Max Havelaar label, launched in the Netherlands in 1988, was the first mainstream Fair Trade consumer label. In only two years sales of Max Havelaar labelled products had increased the market for ‘alternative’ or ‘ethical coffee’ from 0.2 percent to 2.2 per cent of the Dutch coffee market.⁶ Max Havelaar argued that, ‘in practice Alternative Trade can only be a real alternative when the products are available in every supermarket, in every grocery store, at every street corner, there where the average consumer usually is doing her or his shopping, and not just in special Third World shops’.⁷

In the Netherlands the success of the Max Havelaar label had sparked debate about the future of ‘alternative trade’. The growing sales of Max Havelaar certified coffee in major supermarkets were seen to be threatening the trading position of ATOs and world shops. In Britain, the position adopted by ATOs varied considerably. For world shops such as Roy Scott’s One Village, Fairtrade certification seemed to offer very little and was criticised as a ‘bid for quick growth’.⁸ In contrast, Edward Millard from Oxfam, commented that, ‘I do not see this as major problem area. . . the concept of the Fair Trade mark is wholly in line with Bridge policy of seeking conventional commercial markets for producers’.⁹

The Fair Trade movement’s expansion beyond ‘alternative trade’ and involvement with mainstream markets has been praised and criticised in equal measure. Alex Nicholls and Charlotte Opal’s research investigates Fair Trade in the context of modern business.¹⁰ They define Fair Trade’s transformation in generally positive terms, stating that, ‘Fair Trade has moved from being purely activist-led advocacy and empowerment model towards being market-led commercial success story’.¹¹ Nicholls and Opal characterise Fair Trade as a ‘unique solution to the market failures in the global trading system’.¹²

⁶ ‘Now the supermarkets do what we tell them’, *Independent*, (9 March 1991).

⁷ R. Adams personal archive, FTF/Europe/EC-Fund2, ‘Fair Trade Marks: translating consumer education and consciousness into consumer behaviour through mainstream business participation’, (3 January 1992), p. 9.

⁸ R. Scott, www.onevillage.org.uk (September 2004).

⁹ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: report by E. Millard, ‘Fair Trade Mark (FTM): Update Report (9 April 1991).

¹⁰ A. Nicholls & C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market Driven Ethical Consumption*, (London, Sage Publications, 2004).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹² *Ibid.*

They further note that, ‘as a consumer choice movement, it is outside the scope of government regulation and thus cannot be criticised as an interventionist trade policy.’¹³

In contrast, Raynolds et al. have questioned whether the introduction by supermarkets of Fairtrade certified own brand products provides an opportunity to integrate Fair Trade values with the market or whether ‘it is instead leading to the co-opting of Fair Trade by the same agrofood system it was set up to oppose.’¹⁴ Raynolds et al argue that MNCs have been allowed to buy into Fair Trade without demonstrating a significant commitment and, in so doing, have undermined the 100% Fair Trade companies. ‘These large-scale corporate enterprises give Fair Trade entry into mass markets, but they are simultaneously profiting from a ‘social brand’ built up through long years of activity by a ‘core’ of Fair Trade supporters and consumers.’¹⁵

Stephanie Barrientos and Sally Smith have argued that one of the most significant impacts of supermarket involvement has been that they are ‘driving a shift from producer- to consumer-led Fair Trade.’¹⁶ On the surface this seems to be a justified assertion, but when considered more closely it is hard to find examples where Fair Trade has been genuinely producer-led.¹⁷ As has been illustrated in earlier chapters, the British movement has certainly been producer focused, but historically attempts to promote producer-led models (such as Bridge’s international co-operative model) have not been implemented. If anything, in recent years the British movement has seen increasing producer involvement with greater producer representation on the boards of the Fairtrade Foundation and FLO, as well as Divine Chocolate¹⁸.

Mike Goodman, in investigating the expansion of Fair Trade in the United States, has argued that, ‘Fair Trade is more of a consumer-dependent movement for change rather

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴ L. Raynold, D. Murray & J. Wilkinson (eds.) *Fair Trade: The challenges of transforming globalisation*, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 103.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹⁶ S. Barrientos & S. Smith, ‘Mainstreaming Fair Trade in Global Networks’, in L. Raynold, D. Murray & J. Wilkinson (eds.) *Fair Trade: The challenges of transforming globalisation*, (London: Routledge, 2007).

¹⁷ The Mexico Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de la Región del Istmo (UCIRI) in Oaxaca was the first group to sell Fair Trade coffee labelled by Max Havelaar. This could be argued to be a producer-led initiative since UCIRI was proactively involved in developing links European markets (but this is not a British example).

¹⁸ Divine was set up by and is part-owned by cocoa producers in Ghana.

than a consumer-*led* movement.¹⁹ Goodman's findings are based on his research into the direct action campaigns that targeted well-known brands such as Starbucks and attempted to shame them into converting to Fair Trade. The success of these campaigns has led Goodman to argue that, 'Activist groups are the fundamental vanguard fostering Fair Trade markets'.²⁰ The distinction between a consumer-*led* and a consumer-*dependent* movement is a valuable analytical tool in understanding the momentum behind Fair Trade. But Goodman's findings are based exclusively on his study of the US and reveal a number of limitations when applied to the contemporary Fair Trade movement in Britain.

Who would lead the ethical consumer ?

Drawing on Robert Millar's work on consumer behaviour in the 1960s, this section will explore the analogy of consumers as 'affluent sheep' in relation to ethical consumerism and Fair Trade. Millar had little faith in ability of majority of consumers to resist the seduction and manipulation of modern industry. He stated that, 'They are like sheep being joggled by sheepdogs. They run hither and thither, not knowing why and totally unaware of where they are going.'²¹ But he recognised that there were signs that, 'at least a small section of consumers have become frustrated by their lack of knowledge and are eager to see impartial, expert advice from whatever source it may come.' Millar asked, 'Who would be the shepherds?²²

It seemed to Millar in the 1960s, that the Consumers Association and the Consumer Advisory Council provided, 'the one gleam of hope in an otherwise dismal situation'.²³ I will argue that in the 1980s organisations such as New Consumer and Ethical Consumer Research Association (ECRA), building on the work of the Green consumer movement, were best placed to provide guidance to the ethical consumer. But the New Consumer and ECRA provided conflicting assessments of the role that ethical consumer could play, particularly in relation to engaging with mainstream businesses. Although both

¹⁹ M. K. Goodman, 'Reading Fair Trade: political ecological imaginary and the moral economy of Fair Trade foods', *Political Geography* 23 (2004) p. 901.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ R. Millar, *The Affluent Sheep* (London; Longmans, 1963). p. 7.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 192.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

organisations were invited to join, ultimately it was New Consumer that would represent the consumer on the Fairtrade Foundation

The following section will look to explore whether it is possible to identify the entrance of a genuine consumer consciousness behind Fair Trade. From the early 1980s, there was a groundswell of new consumer consciousness, firstly based around environmental issues and extended to wider socio-economic factors. But was Fair Trade part of this new consumer consciousness or was Fair Trade really about recruiting consumers as supporters for wider international development campaigns? The role of the new organised consumer movement is explored through a comparative case study of New Consumer and the Ethical Consumer Research Association (ECRA), in the context of the more established Consumers' Association and Green consumer movement. On the surface these organisations shared a common goal of representing consumers' interests beyond what was seen as the Consumers' Association's exclusive concern with the traditional virtues of competitive price, safety and reliability. In practice, New Consumer and ECRA articulated significantly different visions of ethical consumerism and the dialogue between them during the early 1990s reveals the tensions about how to develop Fair Trade into a mainstream concept.

Before examining role of the new consumer organisations that emerged during the 1980s this section will first consider the Consumers' Association approach to ethical consumerism. Fair Trade's ambitions to reassess the relationship between consumers in the North and producers in the South were seemingly entirely consistent with the internationalist standpoint endorsed by Michael Young, the first director of the Consumers' Association. Young believed there was the potential for consumerism to be more than individualistic, value-for-money choices. These views were most clearly expressed in Young's *Chipped White Cliffs of Dover*.²⁴ Commenting on the potential of a consumer party, Young argues that, '[it] could be internationalist, for it is not as producers that we feel sympathy for Indian or Chinese peasants — rather the reverse since other producers are possible competitors. It is as consumers that we feel for them: they too are people, whose families are dying because they do not get enough to eat'.²⁵

²⁴ M. Young, *The Chipped White Cups of Dover: A Discussion of the Possibility of a New Progressive Party* (London, 1960).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Young felt that alongside the rights consumers had won during the 1960s, they also had responsibilities, and these extended beyond national borders.

But despite Young's force of character and guiding presence within the organisation, this internationalist view was not incorporated into the strategy of the Consumers' Association. Instead, it adopted a relatively narrow focus on product testing, publicised via the publication, 'Which?'. Caspar Brook, Director of the Consumers' Association from 1958 until 1964, commented that 'it seems to me that the majority wants us to continue to do nothing more but test goods, investigate services and report the results more or less dead-pan'.²⁶ This outlook persisted through to the 1980s and Rachel Waterhouse, Chair of the Consumers' Association Council, maintained that, 'Our paramount mission is to give our members the help and information when they want it'.²⁷ It was felt that providing information about the company ownership or working conditions of employees was too political and was not required by their readership. But it was exactly this type of information that consumers would require if they were to make informed 'ethical' purchasing decisions.

By the late 1980s, the Consumers' Association resistance to 'political consumerism' seemed increasingly out of step with the direction of the international consumer movement whose centre of influence was gravitating towards the Global South. Anwar Fazal, President of the International Organization of Consumers Unions stated that, 'The act of buying is a vote for an economic and social system, for a particular way of producing goods. We are concerned with the quality of goods and the satisfaction we derive from them. But we cannot ignore the conditions under which products are made – the environmental impact and working conditions. We are linked to them and we have a responsibility for them'.²⁸

From the early 1970s, it was environmental issues that first came to characterise the concerns of ethical consumers, including pesticide use, acid rain and the use of CFC's. At times, the role of the consumer within the environmental movement seemed to conflict

²⁶ M. Hilton, 'The Fable of the Sheep, or, Private Virtues, Public Vices: The Consumer Revolution of the Twentieth Century', *Past and Present*, (2002), 176, p. 247.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

²⁸ P. Wells & M. Jetter, *The Global Consumer: Best Buys to Help the Third World*, (London: New Consumer, Victor Gollancz, 1991), p. 3.

with the overall ecological message: how could ethical consumerism be justified as a campaign tool for challenging government and business, when consumer society was contributing towards many of the most pressing ecological problems? The environmental movement did not always agree on this issue. In 1971, Friends of the Earth (FoE) published, *Consumers' Guide to the Protection of the Environment*.²⁹ FoE recognised that environmental problems could seem complex and overwhelming but they argued that this should not be taken as a reason to ignore the impact of consumer choices: 'Every consumer decision we make has an impact on the environment. This is an ecological fact.'³⁰ Friends of the Earth clearly identified the role of the consumer as political. They argued that, 'the challenge to the concerned consumer will be to use his buying power to vote against the behaviour that has brought us to the present situation. He must be acutely aware that each penny paid for the product that is harmful or unnecessary, the process pollutes, or the food that doesn't nourish, prolongs and expands the squandering of our resources and destroys the biological systems on which we ultimately depend'.³¹

The *Consumers' Guide* recognised that consumer influence depended on good information, rather than simply corporate communications (described by FoE as 'eco-pornography').³² But rather than provide a detailed study of products or company behaviour, the *Consumers' Guide* encouraged readers to consider more broadly the impacts of consumer choices in relation to a wide range of environmental issues including pollution, water usage, over consumption, excess packaging and intensive farming. Interestingly, one of the sources of information listed was the Consumers' Association, but this was followed by a disclaimer that, 'some of their recommendations in fact run counter to the best interests of the environment'.³³ In contrast to the Consumers' Association magazine, *Which?*, the *Consumers' Guide* stated that when considering a new purchase, 'the first question is always do you need it?'.³⁴ Although in itself this 'common sense' approach did not necessarily lead to a radical environmental philosophy, by drawing on Vance

²⁹ J. Holiman, *Consumers Guide to the Protection of the Environment*, (London: Friends of the Earth, Pan /Ballantine Books, 1971).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 206.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

Packard's, *The Wastemakers*, FoE were developing a sustained critique of mass consumer society.³⁵

It was not until the 1980s that green consumerism really started to make the headlines.³⁶ John Elkington was one of the leading spokespersons for this revival of green consumerism. He argued that, 'consumer power is one lever among many, but as yet an under-exploited one. We make consumer choices much more often than we vote or lobby or demonstrate, so the potential for increased pressure on industry and government could be considerable.'³⁷ Published in 1989, John Elkington's and Julia Hailes', *The Green Consumer's Supermarket Shopping Guide* soon became a handbook for the green consumer activist. In contrast to FoE's publications in the 1970s, *The Green Consumers' Supermarket Shopping Guide* set out to cover everything from 'shampoo to champagne'. Questions about over-consumption and its implied critique of luxury goods had been largely sidelined. Central to this new form of green consumerism was an approach that favoured 'positive engagement' with mainstream business and supermarkets in particular. Elkington and Hailes recognised that supermarkets had been responsible significant environmental destruction, but they argued that it was possible to change them from within. They stated that, 'The potential impact of the supermarkets in the greening of industry is increasingly clear. From the point of view of the Green consumer the supermarket is the place where we can exert our power most effectively.'³⁸

New Consumer

The Fair Trade Mark Steering group met for the first time in August 1989 and had soon defined the main objectives of the project: 'The Fair Trade Mark is an ambition to engage UK consumer power on a significant scale, to give a fairer deal to Third World

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁶ J. Elkington, 'Costing the earth - The urgent need to meet the challenge of securing a greener environment', *The Guardian* (November 27, 1987); H. Thomas, 'Growing demand from the new conscious consumers', *The Guardian* (January 6, 1988); B. Laurance, 'The greening of supermarkets as shoppers get the message' *The Guardian* (September 13, 1988); R. North, 'Consumed with various shades of green' *The Independent*, (September 23 1989); M. McCarthy, 'New force in the land: The Green Consumer', *The Times* (June 5 1989).

³⁷ H. Thomas, 'Growing demand from the new conscious consumers', *The Guardian* (January 6, 1988).

³⁸ J. Elkington & J. Hailes, *The Green Consumer's Supermarket Shopping Guide*, (London; Victor Gollancz, 1989).

producers of basic commodities.³⁹ Only one of organisations that became a founding member of the Fairtrade Foundation claimed to speak for the consumer. That organisation was New Consumer, a small consumer research organisation formed only months earlier. It is perhaps surprising that the consumer profile of the Fairtrade Foundation was largely driven by an organisation that has received such little academic attention.

New Consumer was a charitable, consumer research organisation established by Richard Adams in February 1989. New Consumer was inspired by the success of *The Green Consumer's Supermarket Shopping Guide*, which set out to 'put into everybody's hands direct information about the social and ethical policies of the companies who make and sell a large part of the products they buy regularly'.⁴⁰ New Consumer argued that Green consumerism heralded the way for a 'radical rethink about consumer power'.⁴¹ But they argued that the scope of consumerism needed to be broadened to include social and economic concerns. 'Our concern for the kind of world we want to leave to our children is not just a matter of ozone layers and clean seas; it's a matter of people too. . . We need to move on now, from an environmentally-conscious consumerism to a world-centred approach.'⁴²

New Consumer argued that consumer power had the potential, if directed towards social criteria, to act as a significant force for international development. In 1988, the British public gave about £1.5 billion to charity and in the same year spent £280 billion on consumer goods and services. This meant that for every six pence given to charity £10 was spent on consumer goods.⁴³ New Consumer believed that the 'everyday shopper needn't be a "problem" but can be part of the *solution*'. The next step is to join our individual actions to create a movement with national impact'.⁴⁴

But New Consumer did not expect to change consumer habits overnight and realised that most people would not accept any significant reduction in their living standards.

³⁹ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: B.Yates, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, (September 1990).

⁴⁰ Elkington and Hailes, *The Green Consumer's Supermarket Shopping Guide*.

⁴¹ R. Adams, 'Corporate Social Responsibility and the Progressive Market', (28 Nov 1989).

⁴² P. Wells & M. Jetter, *The Global Consumer: Best Buys to Help the Third World*, (London: New Consumer, Victor Gollancz, 1991), p. 2.

⁴³ Adams, 'Corporate Social Responsibility and the Progressive Market'.

Instead, it argued for ‘an alternative strategy to the hard-line approach of no growth and hair-shirt consumption’.⁴⁵ In terms of strategy, New Consumer’s pragmatic approach towards consumer activism drew heavily upon John Elkington’s experiences of promoting Green Consumerism. Elkington had set a precedent for positive engagement with supermarkets and Adams believed that supermarket take-up of ‘environmentally friendly’ products could be extended to ‘people-friendly’ products. Adams argued that, ‘When it comes to much of mainstream business I believe that we don’t need to start a fight with people who can be won over.’⁴⁶

Ethical Consumer Research Association

The Ethical Consumer Research Association (ECRA) was founded in June 1987 as a worker co-operative with the aim of providing consumers with information on ‘factors other than price and quality to help them make decisions’.⁴⁷ The ECRA publication, *Ethical Consumer*, described itself as ‘a magazine dedicated to the promotion of the ideals behind “ethical consumption”’.⁴⁸ The first issue pitched *Ethical Consumer* as ‘the alternative WHICH? guide’.⁴⁹ But by the second issue, following pressure from the Consumers’ Association, the direct reference to *Which?* had been dropped and in its place the new strap-line read ‘the alternative shoppers’ guide’.⁵⁰ Like New Consumer, the ECRA traced its intellectual roots to the environmental movements’ use of consumer action as a campaign tool.

While FoE had warned shoppers of being ‘brainwashed to consume what manufactures want us to, and not what we really need’,⁵¹ ECRA argued that MNCs helped to defend the ‘dominant economic theory that maintains that economics and ethics do not mix’.⁵² ECRA argued that many ethical initiatives launched by large companies were simply

⁴⁴ R. Adams, J. Carruther & C. Fisher, *Shopping for a Better World: A Quick and Easy Guide to Socially Responsible Shopping*, (London: Kogan Page, New Consumer, 1991).

⁴⁵ Adams, ‘Corporate Social Responsibility and the Progressive Market’.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ethical Consumer (EC)*, Issue 1 (March 1989).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *EC* Issue 2 (May/June 1989).

⁵¹ J. Holiman, *Consumers Guide to the Protection of the Environment*, (London: Friends of the Earth, Pan /Ballantine Books, 1971), p. 3.

⁵² *EC* Issue 17 (Dec 91/ Jan 1992), p. 2.

'tokenism' or 'niche-marketing' and did not represent genuine improvements throughout the operation.

In issue 17 of the *Ethical Consumer* (December 1991/ Jan 1992), the ECRA published highly critical reviews of two consumer guides produced by New Consumer: *The Global Consumer* and *Shopping for a Better World*. *Ethical Consumer* dedicated four pages of review articles and editorial to the subject of these publications by New Consumer in order to explain what they saw as a fundamentally different approach to ethical consumerism. One of the main criticisms raised by *Ethical Consumer* was that the advice given by New Consumer was 'product specific'. It was argued that this approach discouraged companies from introducing improvements throughout their supply chain. Instead, they could introduce ethical products to cater for a niche market. *Ethical Consumer* further argued that this approach, 'disempowers consumers because it perpetuates the idea that there is nothing to be gained from understanding the companies behind the brand names.'⁵³ The ECRA stance was that consumers could only be in a position to exert control, they would need to know about both products and the companies behind them.

The other major issue raised by the ECRA was that New Consumer did not appear to recognise the existence of 'oppressive regimes' and recommended buying from all third World countries including textiles from China. The *Ethical Consumer* argued that 'the governments of some of these countries have stepped so far outside the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, that a refusal to contemplate any trading links with them may be a more effective way to end grinding poverty, brutality and hardship.'⁵⁴ ECRA's critique extended beyond New Consumer and also questioned NGO support for Fairtrade Mark - 'the support of a number of the same UK Third World charities and development groups for "The Global Consumer", and a related "Fair Trade Mark" project, appears to be a very worrying shift on their part to the political right.'⁵⁵

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Supermarkets

Given the recent climate of one-upmanship that has characterised supermarkets contest over the Fair Trade consumer, it may be surprising to learn of their initial reluctance to even trial Fair Trade products. Richard Pugh, was the technical manager for Tesco at the time and had been responsible for the introduction of organic produce and free range eggs. But his response to Fair Trade was cautious, ‘Fair Trade sounds more like a question of moral judgement. I need the weight of scientific opinion to adopt a new idea with confidence.’⁵⁶

The Institute of Grocery Distribution responded to the challenge of ethical consumerism by setting up the Policy Issues Council in 1991. Chief executive Dr John Beaumont cautioned of ignoring the vocal consumer, he stated that, ‘The mass of consumers are becoming more aware, more confident, more assertive and ultimately reflect their opinions more forcefully through their purchasing patterns.’⁵⁷ Beaumont warned unprepared retailers, ‘It has happened with the “greening” of a range of alternatives. It will happen with the Third World.’⁵⁸ Some commentators were cynical of the retail response and saw ‘more than a little opportunism involved.’⁵⁹ They cited business advantage as the main motivation for any involvement rather than social concern.

Typhoo Tea, a potential commercial pioneer

For the Fairtrade Foundation the most likely root to supermarket listing was winning support of a major brand. In 1992 it looked as though Typhoo could be this brand. On the 26th June 1992, the Fairtrade Foundation’s Richard Adams met with Philip Mumby, Technical and Quality Director for Premier Teas. Adams’ notes indicate his positive reaction to this first meeting. ‘In some respects this is our dream ticket. A high profile, national brand which has been modified to meet FT criteria and also a range of own label products covering a large part of the main grocery market.’⁶⁰ As well as their main brand Typhoo, Premier Teas also supplied teas for a number of own labels including Tesco,

⁵⁶ A. Jack, ‘Fair Trade set to join free-range as a USP’, *Financial Times*, (11 October 1990).

⁵⁷ ‘Now the Supermarkets do what we tell them’, *The Independent*, (9 March 1991).

⁵⁸ ‘Trade facing shocks from ethical consumerism’, *The Grocer*, (22 September 1990).

⁵⁹ ‘Now the Supermarkets do what we tell them’, *The Independent*, (9 March 1991).

⁶⁰ FTF/Tea/Premier: Meeting with Philip Mumby (26 June 1992).

Iceland, Waitrose and M&S. Although the popularity of tea had been in decline since the late 1960s, the UK tea market in 1991 was still valued at £731m and Premier Teas accounted for 14 per cent of UK sales.⁶¹ Negotiations with Typhoo were a test case for the policy of positive engagement with MNCs promoted by New Consumer.

The generally positive opening to negotiations was slightly diminished by the realisation that within Premier Teas there was ‘a suspicion about any agency-led initiative or even the use of the term “Fair Trade”’.⁶² Adams was clear that this was the result of the fair tea campaigns of the 1970s. When Adams visited Premier Teas’ Kenyan tea estates in August 1992, he was again faced with the issue of mistrust of NGOs. Adams reported that there was a ‘need to build trust and to assure estate managers that the Fairtrade Foundation are not intent on gaining access to estates in order to expose poor conditions in campaigns. Without this trust, there is no question of gaining access to estates for spot checks, and the scheme would fail on rather poor grounds.’⁶³

It seemed that Premier teas had made significant progress in terms of developing supply chains, a buying criteria and pricing structure for Fair Trade tea. Previous initiatives by ATOS such as Oxfam Bridge, had only served to highlight the difficulties inherent in the tea trade. In 1989 Bridge decided to stop trading tea in because it found that it could not guarantee the source, since nearly all its tea came from auctions.⁶⁴ In contrast Premier Tea was able to establish close relationship with their suppliers in India, Kenya, Bangladesh and Indonesia, and only purchased a very small percentage (2-3%) at auction.⁶⁵ ‘Premier Teas is already doing expertly much of the work we see as necessary to set Fair Trade standards and check tea estates against them.’⁶⁶

In many ways Premier Teas were ahead of the Fairtrade Foundation in terms of drawing up criteria for Fair Trade on tea plantations. ‘The Fairtrade Foundation recognise that Premier have provided a clear path into a complex area and it is agreed that the company’s role in establishing a mechanism for assessment should be appropriately

⁶¹ FTF/Tea/CaseIntr: R. Adams, ‘Premier Teas – The Typhoo Quality Assurance Project’ (8 Jan 1991).

⁶² FTF/Tea/Premier: Meeting with Philip Mumby (26 June 1992).

⁶³ FTF/Tea/Kenya92: R. Adams, ‘Visit to Kenyan tea estates’, (August 1992).

⁶⁴ Oxfam: Bridge Information, ‘Withdrawal of Darjeeling, Nilgiri and Assam Teas from the OT range’, (1989).

⁶⁵ FTF/Tea/Premier: Meeting with Philip Mumby (26 June 1992).

⁶⁶ FTF/TEA/FTFZ: FTF Executive Group, ‘The Fairtrade Foundation and Premier Teas’ (23 July 1992).

acknowledged.⁶⁷ The Fairtrade Foundation acknowledged that working so closely with a household brand from the start would leave them open to allegations of being co-opted by big business. ‘There is, however, the risk that the public may perceive the Mark as belonging to Premier Teas and therefore not independent.’ Adams remained confident that Premier Teas would be a suitable company to launch the Fairtrade Mark. The single most important factor was that Adams was convinced of Philip Mumby’s commitment to reforming the tea business. Mumby was a former Traidcraft representative and a New Consumer subscriber.

In September 1992, Typhoo tea negotiations broke down following a controversial advert placed by Christian Aid. The banner line of the advert read, ‘You have stopped using eggs from battery hens, but what about tea from battery tea workers?’⁶⁸ The advert sparked an immediate reaction from other members of the Fairtrade Foundation. Richard Adams, Director of New Consumer and former head of Traidcraft, conscious of the likely impact of the advert described it as, ‘the torpedoing of the most promising initiative of the last twenty years.’⁶⁹ Paul Johns, Acting Chief Executive of the Fairtrade Foundation, also condemned the advert outright, ‘You have opened your campaign against unfair trade by dropping a bomb on your allies.’⁷⁰

The parallel with battery hens was seen as particularly damning since it was taken as a backhand reference to Premier, whose parent company, Hillsdown Holdings, were the largest supplier of eggs and breeding poultry in the UK.⁷¹ Richard Adams was quick to point out the inaccuracies of the Christian Aid campaign as they applied to Premier Teas. Focus on Sri Lanka was seen as not representative of the wider tea trade and the problems on Sri Lanka estates were seen as a result of ‘government mismanagement’ not the result of world tea prices. It was also stated that ‘Premier does not, in fact deal with Sri Lanka because it considers the estates have appallingly low standards.’⁷² The suggestion that high mark-ups were a sign of profiteering was also disputed and the point

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Christian Aid advert, ‘You have stopped using eggs from battery hens, but what about tea from battery tea workers’, *The Times* (16 September 1992).

⁶⁹ R. Adams letter to Nick Isles, Christian Aid (17 September 1992).

⁷⁰ P. Johns, letter to Jenny Borden, Christian Aid (17 September 1992).

⁷¹ FTF/Tea/Nick: R. Adams, ‘fax to Nick Isles, Christian Aid. (17 September 1992).

⁷² *Ibid.*

was made that ‘the highest mark-ups in the commodities trade are actually charged by the ATOS because of their low efficiency on small turnovers.’⁷³

The main criticism of Christian Aid’s advert was that it stood to undermine the Fairtrade Foundation’s strategy of ‘consultation, dialogue and a new, positive approach to campaigning’; it was censured as a throw back to, ‘1970s-style campaigning’.⁷⁴ But was this a valid criticism or an overreaction? The campaign was certainly hard hitting, but rather than calling for a boycott of tea, Christian Aid appealed to consumers to, ‘Ask your supermarket to buy goods from sources that provide Third World workers with a decent living.’⁷⁵ Although this campaign may have been stretching the limits of ‘positive engagement’, it was far from a direct attack of Typhoo. The Fairtrade Foundation were desperate not to lose Typhoo because it offered the opportunity of, ‘a Fair Trade advertising and point of sale campaign employing massive resources which would reach millions of people who are normally not touched by the agencies’.⁷⁶ But the prospect of launching the Fairtradee Mark with the backing of a major player in the mainstream market, caused some members of the Fairtrade Foundation to lose sight of the wider campaign.

Cafédirect – the product of ATOs

Cafédirect was the first ever attempt by leading British ATOs to create and market jointly a product. The Cafédirect launch was an example of a campaign that showed elements of being both consumer-led and consumer-dependent. Launched by Oxfam, Traidcraft, Equal Exchange and Twin Trading, Cafédirect was to be marketed as both a ‘people-friendly’ and an ‘environment-friendly’ product.⁷⁷ Cafédirect was a new concept for ‘alternative’ coffee. With the change of government in Nicaragua and an independent South Africa on the horizon, solidarity markets were no longer a consumer priority. The message behind Cafédirect was ‘towards people and away from “origin/cause” profile’.⁷⁸ This meant that ‘Fair Trade’ could effectively respond to the crisis caused by the collapse

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ R. Adams letter to Nick Isles, Christian Aid (17 September 1992).

⁷⁵ Christian Aid advert, ‘You have stopped using eggs from battery hens, but what about tea from battery tea workers’, *The Times* (16 September 1992).

⁷⁶ R. Adams letter to Nick Isles, Christian Aid (17 September 1992).

⁷⁷ OXFAM, OA, Cafédirect File (hereafter CD), R1244: Project Document, *Establishing a New Ethical Coffee Brand for the UK*, (1 November 1990), p. 1.

of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989 and also pursue a more generalised sustainable development agenda.

Cafédirect positioned itself as an ethical trader, not a marketing cooperative for producers. It was stated that the relation with producers ‘must be firmly market led.’⁷⁹ Traidcraft had suggested that the small Farmers Co-operative Society should have a director or be issued shares in the company. But Hugh Belshaw from Oxfam Trading, despite acknowledging producer membership as an attractive idea, argued that ‘Bridge has always found it difficult to turn this into a reality and would not expect Cafédirect to find this any easier.’⁸⁰ This was something a missed opportunity in terms of developing the potential of a producer-led model of Fairtrade. It was not until 2003 that Cafédirect started to encourage producer member representation on the board for the first time.

In November 1991, the Fairtrade Foundation opened discussions with Cafédirect about Fairtrade certification. The Fairtrade Foundation was seeking to secure an agreement in principle that Cafédirect would apply for the Fairtrade Mark once officially launched. But Cafédirect had serious reservations about potential loss of mainstream sales due to the higher retail price required to cover the Fairtrade minimum price for coffee beans, set at \$1.20 Ib. Cafédirect justified their decision due to supermarket buyers intention to retail Cafédirect at £1.39 not the £1.70 proposed by the consortium. It was concluded that ‘there was no evidence of acceptance that the Fair Trade concept commanded a price premium.’⁸¹ R. Adams argued that ‘the more closely the ATO movement seeks to be identified with the Max H. type of “Fair Trade” authorisation the more closely will its own mechanisms be examined. To my knowledge there is not a single ATO whose products could all meet the equivalent of the Max H. coffee criteria and license agreement.’⁸²

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

⁷⁹ OXFAM, OA, CD, R1244: FAX, M. Honeywell Director of OT to R. Evans Director of Traidcraft, (4 March 1992).

⁸⁰ OXFAM, OA, CD, R1244: MEMORANDUM, H. Belshaw Finance and Admin. Director of OT to M. Honeywell Director of OT, *Cafédirect*, (11 March 1992).

⁸¹ OXFAM, OA, CD, R1244: Minutes of Cafédirect Consortium Meeting at Twin Trading, (12 November 1991).

⁸² FTF/Europe/RichardM: R. Adams, ‘Memo concerning the development of an international Fair Trade co-ordinating body’ (17 March 1992).

The Fairtrade Mark criteria was more far reaching and guaranteed producers a better deal than under the trading terms previously operated by many ATOS. For the first three years of trading, Cafédirect set their own price for buying coffee. In 1992, it was \$0.92 per Ib, 53% above the market price of \$0.60 per Ib., but still well below the Fairtrade criteria.⁸³ The Fairtrade Foundation used the international example set by Max Havelaar to reinforce their tough stance on minimum pricing, 'At present they [Cafédirect] are paying about \$0.87 per Ib. On this basis they cannot qualify for the FTF seal. We would like to know why they cannot pay more when clearly roasters and retailers in Holland are able to make some sort of profit margin whilst paying \$1.26/Ib.'⁸⁴

As plans for the launch of the Fairtrade Mark progressed it became apparent that Cafédirect's reluctance could prove a stumbling block. By January 1994, there was increasing pressure on Oxfam Trading and Traidcraft to review their position in relation to Cafédirect. Mike Drury argued that if new products were launched by Cafédirect carrying the agencies' names as verification of Fair Trade, instead of carrying the Fairtrade Mark it would make it less likely that mainstream traders would license the Mark. Drury believed that NGO involvement with the Fairtrade Foundation and Cafédirect was, 'very confusing for the public and put the two organisations in commercial conflict with each other.'⁸⁵ Eventually Cafédirect were persuaded of the value of an independent certification label that would engage with consumers beyond the typical agency supporter. So in March 1994, Cafédierct revised its purchasing criteria and applied for the Fairtrade Mark.

Conclusions

This chapter has considered the alternative models available to the Fair Trade movement as it looked to engage with mainstream markets from the late 1980s. It has argued that it was not inevitable that a particular model of Fair Trade would come to dominate the movement. Mainstreaming of Fair Trade was a process of negotiation between Fair Trade movement, major brands, supermarkets, consumers and within the movement

⁸³ OXFAM, FTF, R0716: Action guide no. 4, *Why 'Shopping for a Fairer World?* (1992).

⁸⁴ FTF/Europe/Bert2: Richard Adams to Bert Beekman Stichting Max Havelaar (24 March 1992).

itself. In particular, this chapter has explored the role of New Consumer and assessed how it came to represent the consumer interests within the Fairtrade Foundation. New Consumer's ability to speak for the ethical consumer did not go unchallenged, the ECRA championed an approach that looked beyond the certification label in order to inform consumers about the ownership structure and values of a company.

During the 1970s the role of the consumer was relatively limited, a more accurate description would be to talk about agency supporters and church communities. But from the 1980s onwards there is the entrance of a new form of consumer movement which looked to increase involvement of the consumer. In recent years, particularly since 2005, there has been a noticeable shift towards the consumer, supermarkets have been arguing that Fairtrade growth and product selection is consumer driven. The movement is still guided by NGO members, but the increased role for consumer demand could potentially prove problematic if it leads to further dominance by the supermarkets. If supermarkets increase their market share it seems likely that they will increase pressure for more Fairtrade products to be sourced from plantations rather than from small co-operative farmers in order to satisfy consumer demand.

But there are signs that FLO is responding to these concerns. There is increasing producer representation on the FLO Board and within national labelling bodies, including the Fairtrade Foundation. This has resulted in an increase of the minimum price for coffee and a commitment that coffee, cocoa, cotton and honey will only be sourced from small producers. Producers are now representing themselves, although many NGOs have been very effective spokespersons, this is the real difference between Fairtrade and other social labels and this where genuine empowerment and development will be found. There are already a number of positive examples such as Divine, Cafédirect and Liberation Nuts, but they are still in the minority.

⁸⁵ Minutes of the Meetings of Directors of The Fairtrade Foundation: Special General Meeting (6 January 1994).

Conclusions

In this concluding chapter I intend to cover five themes that bring together the main findings of this thesis. Firstly, I approach the question of global citizenship and cover the complexities that are inherent in this concept. Secondly, I will suggest that Fair Trade is most clearly understood as a new social movement and show how this can be linked to the involvement of globally minded citizens. Thirdly, I investigate the factors involved in building the Fair Trade movement; here I explore both practical and philosophical drivers for change. Fourthly, I look to contextualise the British case within a global context; while recognising that the shortage of national case studies limits direct international comparisons, some promising directions for further research are identified. Finally, I consider the consumer/producer relations at the heart of the Fair Trade movement and look at whether there is an opportunity to reconsider how we conceptualise these distinctions and what that might mean for Fair Trade.

'Global Citizenship' or 'Globally Minded Citizens'?

One of the central objectives of this thesis has been to assess whether the emergence of the Fair Trade movement in late twentieth century Britain represented a new form of global citizenship. Over the last ten years questions over citizenship have been the subject of greater public debate, most notably in response to the Government's decision to include citizenship as part of the National Curriculum.¹ The Fairtrade School scheme has been funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) since 2006 and Fairtrade has become one of the clearest demonstrations of whole school commitment to education that engages with 'global citizenship'.² There are signs that Fair Trade is being positioned by the Government and some NGOs as a model for

¹ In 2002, following the publication of the report of an independent advisory committee chaired by Professor Bernard Crick, Citizenship became a Foundation Subject of the National Curriculum in secondary schools, giving Citizenship statutory status for the first time. In 2005, the teaching of citizenship was extended to include Global Citizenship defined as, 'gaining the knowledge, skills and understanding of concepts and institutions necessary to become informed, active, responsible citizens'. DFID, DfES et al., *Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum*, (March 2005).

² DFID has provided Fairtrade Schools (2006-09) £240,356 (70% of total budget). Cited in House of Commons International Development Committee, 'Fair Trade and Development', the stationary Office (14 June 2007), p. 99.

global citizenship both in education and in broader society, but to what extent is the Fair Trade movement able to deliver on these ambitions?

Oxfam provides the clearest statement of what it understands global citizenship to involve in its *Education for Global Citizenship*. A global citizen is defined as someone who is: ‘aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen; respects and values diversity; has an understanding of how the world works; is outraged by social injustice; participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global; is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place; takes responsibility for their actions’.³ While Oxfam recognises the potential for disagreement about what makes a ‘good’ or ‘responsible’ global citizen, they do not present any critique of the concept of global citizenship itself.⁴

Oxfam’s approach, while it is not necessarily invalid, is overly simplified. Any discussion of Fair Trade’s potential contribution towards developing a new form of global citizenship needs to be firmly grounded within the context of broader academic discussions about the viability and practical limitations of global citizenship. The concept has certainly caused controversy. David Miller for example has argued that those who aspire to create transnational or global forms of citizenship fail to take into account the necessary preconditions to enhance a genuine citizenship, ‘either [these] aims are simply utopian or else what they aspire to is not properly described as citizenship.’⁵

In an approach they have defined as ‘cosmopolitan democracy’, Daniele Archibugi and David Held have explored whether there is scope for individuals to have some voice in deciding on issues affecting the world as a whole.⁶ Despite their ambitious proposals for the reform of the UN Assembly, in practice there remains an absence of institutional

³ Oxfam, *Education for Global Citizenship: A Guide for Schools*, (Oxford: Oxfam Development Education Programme, 2006).

⁴ The concept of global citizenship has been the subject of extensive debate and has produced a wide ranging literature: T.H. Marshall’s book, *Citizenship* (1950); Commission on Citizenship, *Encouraging Citizenship*, (London: HMSO, 1990); I. Crewe, D. Searing and P. Conover, *Citizenship and Civic Education*, (London: Citizenship Foundation, 1997); R. Falk, ‘The Decline of Citizenship in an Era of Globalization’, *Citizenship Studies*, 4:1 (2000), pp. 5-17; N. Dower, *An Introduction to Global Citizenship* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003); L. Desforges, ‘The Formation of Global Citizenship: International Non-Governmental Organisation in Britain’, *Political Geography*, 23 (2004), pp. 549-569.

⁵ D. Miller, ‘Bounded Citizenship’ in K. Hutchings, R. Dannreuther (eds), *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 60.

⁶ D. Archibugi, and D. Held, (eds.), *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

channels to define and enforce the legal and political rights of global citizenship.⁷ These limitations have led April Carter to respond that, 'global citizenship expresses an aspiration, not a reality'.⁸ While highlighting tensions present in national politics Carter still contends, somewhat frustratingly that, 'in some circumstances it is nevertheless possible for an individual to identify as a member of a national community and to claim simultaneously to be a global citizen'. By not defining what these circumstances might be it seems that Carter deliberately sidesteps this crucial issue.

Peter Singer, in contrast, argues that individuals identify themselves as citizens of the world and therefore actively recognise cosmopolitan moral obligations to other individuals. Singer, writing in 1972, argued that, 'from the moral point of view, the development of the world into a "global village" has made an important, though still unrecognized, difference to our moral situation'.⁹ Writing in the context of the refugee crisis in East Bengal, Singer dismissed arguments about distance and lack of personal knowledge and made an uncompromising argument for individual responsibility for tackling famine and poverty in other parts of the world. He stated that, 'expert observers and supervisors, sent out by famine relief organizations or permanently stationed in famine-prone areas, can direct our aid to a refugee in Bengal almost as effectively as we could get it to someone in our own block. There would seem, therefore, to be no possible justification for discriminating on geographical grounds'.¹⁰

One of the clearest routes for identifying Fair Trade with citizenship (and potentially global citizenship) is seemingly in the concept of citizen consumer. Tim Lang and Yiannis Gabriel have argued that 'ethical consumerism maps one clear path for consumers, a route for translating consumerism into citizenship, consumer/ citizen being one conventional ideological contrast'.¹¹ But this optimistic sounding endorsement is followed by the caveat that, 'much as we would like consumers to take the 'high' road, evidence suggests that there are powerful forces pushing and pulling consumers in different and 'low' roads too'.¹²

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ A. Carter, 'Nationalism and global citizenship', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, (1997), 43(1), p. 72.

⁹ P. Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1972): p. 232.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ T. Lang and Y. Gabriel, 'A Brief History of Consumer Activism' in R. Harrison, T. Newhom and D. Shaw (eds.), *The Ethical Consumer*, (London: Sage, 2005), p. 53.

The clarity offered by the citizen consumer route may in fact be illusory. Corianne Gendron, argues that, ‘it is not the consumer who takes the place of the citizen, but rather the citizen who stands behind the consumer, with the limits and the potential that this status offers’.¹³ For Michele Micheletti and Andreas Follesdal there are obvious problems with, ‘the sole reliance on voluntary consumer choice and using personal money and private capital to solve human rights problems by shopping them away’.¹⁴ They contend that, ‘shopping is not and cannot be a sufficient agent of human rights’.¹⁵ This is a position that is echoed by many within the Fair Trade movement. Tomy Mathews, outspoken founder of Fair Trade Alliance of Kerala, has commented that, ‘the larger battle for trade justice cannot be won with shopping bag politics.’¹⁶

So where does this leave Fair Trade and notions of global citizenship? Brett Bowden, a political scientist based at the Australian National University, Canberra, has argued that, ‘the notion of a global citizen or citizen of the world is not a viable one.’¹⁷ But Bowden proposed that this need not be at odds with what he calls ‘globally minded citizens’.¹⁸ There are some clear parallels between the aims of the Fair Trade movement and Bowden’s concept of ‘globally minded citizens’. Bowden’s outline of what being a globally-minded citizen means includes, ‘being aware that actions taken in one part of the world can have an effect on people/ nations beyond one’s borders’.¹⁹ Specific activities that are singled out for attention include: ‘atmospheric polluting and other environmentally detrimental action’ and ‘unfair trade and/or unethical investment’.²⁰

If the global dimensions of citizenship are problematic, within a national context the existence of the Fair Trade movement is consistent with a particular sense of ‘British citizenship’ that is defined by membership of voluntary associations and community groups rather than political parties. Ivor Crewe and Donald Searing have argued that from a British perspective, ‘citizenship is involvement in social networks, in the groups,

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ C. Gendron, V. Bisaillon and A. Rance, *Institutionalization of Fair Trade: More than Just a Degraded Form of Social Action*, Journal of Business Ethics, (Spring 2008).

¹⁴ M. Micheletti and A. Follesdal, ‘Shopping for Human Rights. An Introduction to the Special Issue’, *Journal of Consumer Policy*, (2007) 30: pp. 167-175.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ ‘Is Fairtrade Still Fair?’, *Ecologist*, (1st February, 2009).

http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_round_up/270375/is_fairtrade_still_fair.html

¹⁷ B. Bowden, ‘The Perils of Global Citizenship’, *Citizenship Studies*, (2003) 7:3, p. 359.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

organisations and voluntary associations that connect citizens with the life of their communities.²¹ By amalgamating elements of these latter concepts we are left with a definition that can be aligned with the Fair Trade movement, at least within a British context. So rather than a new form of global citizenship, Fair Trade is perhaps more accurately defined as a social movement of globally minded citizens.

A Social Movement

From the early 1970s Fair Trade represented a new and distinctly modern approach to campaigning that resonated with individuals and organisations looking to influence debates about how Britain should conduct international trade and development.²² Although building on the politics of the past, the messages and organisational structure of Fair Trade identified it as more closely aligned with the ‘new social movements’ than traditional labour or consumer politics.

Donatella Della Porta, has identified three key elements of a social movement: they are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents; linked by dense informal networks and share a distinct collective identity.²³ Della Porta argues that the networks of organisations involved with Fair Trade are characteristic of social movement, ‘The spread of fair-trade practices is facilitated by the existence of extended networks of co-operatives and small retail operators in the West, who try to somehow to reach a balance between ethic-driven public action and market requirement.’²⁴

This thesis has looked to extend the assessment of Fair Trade as a social movement beyond an understanding of ‘co-operatives and small retailers’, to include consumers, religious groups, NGOs and trade unions.²⁵ By widening the field of investigation what becomes apparent is the sheer breadth of ideas that Fair Trade has encapsulated. For different groups, and at different times in its history, Fair Trade has been defined in

²¹ I. Crewe, D. Searing and P. Conover, *Citizenship and Civic Education*, (London: Citizenship Foundation, 1997).

²² This challenges Trentmann’s interpretation that draws direct parallels between the nineteenth and early twentieth century Free Trade campaigns and the late twentieth century Fair Trade campaigns. F. Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²³ D. Della Porta, *Social Movements An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, second edition 2006), p. 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

relation to: internationalism, charity, social justice, solidarity, social enterprise, consumer activism, moral duty. This thesis has explored how groups motivated by these differing and sometimes conflicting motivations were able to unite under the banner of Fair Trade. In the following sections the main driving forces behind the formation of these Fair Trade networks will be discussed in turn.

Building a Movement

In order to build a picture of how the Fair Trade social movement developed, it is important to understand what provided the main organising themes during different moments of the movement's history, and why different groups identified with Fair Trade. The factors that encouraged the formation of Fair Trade networks can be divided into two groups. The first I term 'practical drivers' and the second 'philosophical drivers'. The practical drivers will be covered first, and will consider two features: the role of charismatic leaders and the media. Secondly, the philosophical drivers will be explored, here the main factors consider are: 'Christian ethics and voluntarism', 'an alternative approach' and 'consumer activism'.

Practical Drivers: charismatic leaders

Fair Trade has been described as one of the fastest growing grassroots social movements across Europe and the significance of NGOs and campaign groups in shaping the growth Fair Trade has increasingly been recognised by academics.²⁶ Clarke, Barnett et al. have argued convincingly that, 'agency needs to be located not on the activities of consumers but in the articulation of intermediary organisations, social networks, and every day practices of social reproduction.'²⁷ But while recognising the contribution of activists and campaigners to the growth of Fair Trade, I argue that the history and governance of the movement cannot be fully understood without also referring to the leadership of a relatively small number of key individuals.

²⁵ In general terms, the trade unions have remained on the periphery of the Fair Trade movement, but this in itself is an important finding as discussed in chapter four.

²⁶ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/6305673.stm.

²⁷ C. Barnett, N. Clarke P. Cloke and A. Malpass (2007). 'The Political Rationalities of Fair-Trade Consumption in the United Kingdom,' *Politics and Society*, 35:4: p. 602.

In the formative years of the Fair Trade's development in Britain (1970s and 1980s) there were several prominent individuals that proved important in shaping the future direction of the movement in Britain. Amongst them were managers and directors from a range of established organisations and newly formed Fair Trade companies. They saw in Fair Trade a new way of driving forward the agenda on international trade and development. This group included: Roy Scott (Oxfam 'Bridge' and One Village); Richard Adams (Tear Craft, Traidcraft, New Consumer, Fairtrade Foundation and Out of This World); Michael Barratt Brown (TWIN Trading); Hedley Whitehead (the Co-operative).²⁸

Within the business management literature the role of charismatic leaders is well documented, particularly during times of structural change.²⁹ The concept of 'charismatic leadership' is defined by David Nadler and Michael Tusman as referring to a special quality that, 'enables the leader to mobilize and sustain activity within an organization through specific personal actions combined with perceived personal characteristics'.³⁰ The role of individual leaders has received less attention in the new social movement literature; here the focus tends to be on understanding the dynamics of grassroots activist networks.³¹ Michael Barratt Brown, speaking about the importance of social networks at the 1988 Conference on Development, Trade and Co-operation, stated that, 'they don't happen spontaneously. There have to be networkers'.³² It seems that this is an issue that is too often overlooked in studies of Fair Trade.

What is required is an academic approach that accurately reflects the specific nature of Fair Trade as it straddles both the business world and social activism. In the recent years there has been strong growth in the studies of social entrepreneurship on the level of

²⁸ This list is not exhaustive but aims to highlight some of the most prominent and frequently cited individuals that both acted as an inspiration for early Fair Trade campaigners and developed important networks between organisations that would underpin the growth of the Fair Trade social movement.

²⁹ J. Gabbaro, *The Dynamics of taking Charge*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1987); N.M. Tichy and M.A. Devanna, *The Transformational Leader*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1986); D. Hambrick, 'The top Management Team: Key to Strategic Success', *California Management Review*, 30(1) (Fall 1987), pp. 88-108; D. Nadler and M. Tushman, 'Beyond The Charismatic Leader: Leadership And Organizational Change', *California Management Review*; (Winter 1990), (32) 2. pp. 77- 97.

³⁰ D. Nadler and M. Tushman, 'Beyond The Charismatic Leader: Leadership And Organizational Change', *California Management Review*; (Winter 1990), (32) 2. p. 82.

³¹ M . Diani and D. McAdam (eds.), *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, (Oxford: OUP, 2003); G. Davis D. McAdam, W. Scott and M. Zayer (eds.), *Social Movements and Organization Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); D. Snow, S. Soule, H. Kriesi (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), K. McDonald, *Global Movements: Action and Culture*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

business administration and microeconomics. This has been especially the case since Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank and a renowned example of a social enterprise, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.³³ Although the term ‘social entrepreneur’ was not in common use during the 1970s, the concept can still be usefully applied to characterise the role of these Fair Trade leaders as they worked to establish a system that would produce wider social benefits from international trade.

While definitions of a social entrepreneur often vary from country to country and author to author; one of the most widely cited definitions in the academic literature is the one devised by Gregory Dees, Jed Emerson and Peter Economy. They define a social entrepreneur as a change agent who: ‘Adopts a mission to create and sustain social values; recognizes and relentlessly pursues new opportunities to serve that mission; engages in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; acts boldly without being limited by resources currently at hand; exhibits heightened accountability to the constituencies served and the outcomes created.’³⁴ The further significance of applying the definition of social entrepreneur to these Fair Trade pioneers is that it challenges the ‘lingering associations with hippy lifestyles’.³⁵

The gender imbalance, in the above list of leaders, is striking particularly since Fair Trade is often assumed to have been influenced to some degree by feminist political theory. It is not hard to find echoes of ‘the personal is political’ within the campaign literature of the Fair Trade movement.³⁶ Harriet Lamb, speaking on the tenth anniversary of the launch of the FAIRTRADE Mark declared that, ‘now with globalization has come a way to make political changes through your personal choices.’³⁷

³² Michael Barratt Brown, ‘Who Cares About Fair Trade?’, Report of Conference on Development, Trade and Cooperation, 4 September 1988, Conway Hall, London (Published by TWIN, December 1988), p. 3.

³³ G. Dees, J. Emerson, P. Economy, *Enterprising Nonprofits: A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs*, (New York, Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001); C. Leadbeater, *The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur*, (London: Demos, 1997); OECD, ‘Fostering Entrepreneurship’, *Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development*, (1998) 16, 1–277; J. Nagler, ‘The Importance of Social Entrepreneurship for Economic Development Policies’, (3 April 2007). <http://www.business4good.org/2007/04/importance-of-social-entrepreneurship.html>

³⁴ J. Dees, J. Emerson, P. Economy, *Enterprising Nonprofits: A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs*, (New York, Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001), pp. 4–5.

³⁵ G. Charles ‘Fairtrade becomes mainstream with Cadbury initiative’, *Marketing*, (10 March 2009). <http://www.marketingmagazine.co.uk/news/888519/Fairtrade-becomes-mainstream-Cadbury-initiative/>

³⁶ Carol Hanisch, ‘The Personal is Political’ in S. Firestone and Anne Koedt (eds.), *Notes from the Second Year: Women’s Liberation*, (1970).

³⁷ ‘What’s behind Fair Trade success?’, *Developments*, (DFID) Issue 25, 05 April 2004.

Recent reports on Fairtrade and initiatives such as the Triodos Women in Ethical Business Awards have highlighted the role of female social entrepreneurs such as: Safia Minney (People Tree), Sophi Tranchell (Divine Chocolate), Penny Newman (Cafédirect) and Harriet Lamb (Fairtrade Foundation). Commentators have asked: ‘Why are so many ethical businesses run by women?’³⁸ Predominantly the answer provided is that, ‘money is not enough to persuade women into business . . . women crave an extra factor to complete the picture’.³⁹ But are these simply the traits of an entrepreneur? This is an interesting field that would benefit from further research into the management practices of Fair Trade companies. Can female leadership be seen as part of Fair Trade’s social agenda or are these developments consistent with wider social trends in employment and business management over the last 20 years?

There is a growing literature on Fair Trade and issues of gender inequality but to date the focus has been on studying the relative impact on female producers in less developed countries.⁴⁰ There has yet to be a detailed study of the role gender played within the Fair Trade movement as it gained support in the Global North. The National Federation of Women’s Institutes (NFWI) would seem to offer a productive avenue for studying the specific contribution made by women in building the Fair Trade movement.⁴¹ Some commentators have identified the WI’s involvement with Fair Trade campaigns as further evidence of the ‘edgy new world of the Women’s Institute’.⁴²

It is perhaps surprising then that recent WI publications and reports offer few details about their involvement with Fair Trade beyond the stereotypical references to the ‘WI Fairtrade Chocolate Cake’.⁴³ A review of the WI’s recent campaigning activities also shows that there has been no resolution passed on Fair Trade by the WI AGM since

³⁸ A. Sheppard, ‘Business women making work a greener place’, *The Times*, (24 June 2009).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ B. Rosenbaum, ‘Of women, hope, and angels’, in K. Grimes B. Milgram (eds). *Artisans and Cooperatives: Developing Alternative Trade for the Global Economy*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000), pp. 85–106; A. Tallontire,C. Dolan, S. Smith, S. Barrientos, ‘Reaching the marginalized? Gender value chains and ethical trade in African horticulture’, *Development in Practice* (2005) 15(3/4): pp. 559–571; J. Steinkopf Rice, ‘Free trade, Fair Trade and Gender Inequality in Less Developed Countries’, *Sustainable Development*, Published Online: 30 Mar 2009, DOI, 10.1002/sd.407.

⁴¹ The NFWI were one of the early members of the Fairtrade Foundation, joining in 1993.

⁴² Ian Herbert, ‘Women’s Institute: It’s not all jam and Jerusalem’, *The Independent*, (Friday, 11 November 2005).

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/womens-institute-its-not-all-jam-and-jerusalem-514828.html>.

⁴³ <http://thewipa.blogspot.com/2009/03/fairtrade-fortnight-launch.html>.

2002.⁴⁴ There is still more work to be done to understand the role women have played in developing Fair Trade through their membership of community groups and voluntary organisations, as social entrepreneurs and as consumers. A study of this type has been beyond the scope of this thesis, but with Soroptimists of Great Britain and Ireland becoming the fifteenth member of the Fairtrade Foundation in 2007, there are further grounds for pursuing this research agenda.⁴⁵

Practical Drivers: the media

In recent years, academics have looked at the use of the media by NGOs in anti-poverty campaigns and specifically in the mainstreaming of Fair Trade.⁴⁶ These studies have mainly focused either on the marketing of Fairtrade products by companies such as Cafédirect or they have looked at high profile media campaigns such as Make Poverty History or Live 8. But as this thesis has shown, links with the media have been an important practical driver in building support for the Fair Trade Movement since the 1970s and the dynamics of this relationship merit further consideration. An historically informed debate may also provide context for some of the contemporary discussions about how Fair Trade positions its media profile.

Mike Goodman, drawing on the work of Arjun Appadurai questions, ‘Can the media ever be turned to the interests of the poor?’⁴⁷ Goodman explores the use of celebrities in Fair Trade and anti-poverty campaigns such as Make Trade Fair and Live 8. He argues that, ‘this growing *celebritisation* of environment and development has reached an almost fever pitch in the UK’s Fair Trade movement. Here, the newest Fair Trade campaigns are less about trouble-making than they are about *market-making* through the judicious use of celebrity and marketing wherewithal.’⁴⁸ Returning to his opening question,

⁴⁴ <http://www.thewi.org.uk/standard.aspx?id=10572>.

⁴⁵ Soroptimist International is a worldwide organisation for women in management and the professions, working through service projects to advance human rights and the status of women.

⁴⁶ A. Appadurai, ‘Grassroots globalization and the research imagination’. *Public Culture* (2000), 12 (1), pp. 1-19; M. Goodman, ‘The Mirror of Consumption: Celebrities, developmental consumption and the shifting cultural politics of Fair Trade’, Environment, Politics and Development Working Paper Series Department of Geography, King’s College London, (2009); D. Brockington, ‘Powerful Environmentalisms: Conservation, Celebrity and Capitalism’, *Media, Culture and Society*, (2008) 30:4, pp. 551-568; W. Low and E. Davenport ‘Has the Medium (Roast) become the Message?: The ethics of marketing Fair Trade in the mainstream’, *International Marketing Review*, (2004) 22: 5, pp. 494-511.

⁴⁷ M. Goodman, ‘The Mirror of Consumption: Celebrities, developmental consumption and the shifting cultural politics of Fair Trade’, Environment, Politics and Development Working Paper Series Department of Geography, King’s College London, (2009), p. 2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Goodman concludes that the media has been turned to the interests of the poor but in a particularly spectacular and potentially ambiguous way.

An area that has received less academic attention to date is the role played by investigative reporting in raising awareness of the general public about the links between everyday consumer choices and conditions for producers in developing countries. This represents the less spectacular side of Fair Trade's interactions with the media, but the impact that investigative journalism has had, both on television and in print, should not be overlooked.

One of the first Fair Trade campaigns to benefit from access to a mass television audience was the Campaign for Fair Tea Prices (1973-77).⁴⁹ As discussed in proceeding chapters, World in Action's 'Cost of a Cup of Tea', first broadcast in September 1973, played a vital role in raising consumer awareness of the conditions on tea plantations. These images sparked off debate and led to a Parliamentary Select Committee enquiry. Previously many British consumers had little idea of how these 'exotic' products were produced and held on to an idealised picture of plantation life that had changed little since the 1930s. Perhaps the infamous spaghetti tress of the late 1950s reveals a darker side about consumer ignorance of goods produced beyond British shores than has been fully recognised.⁵⁰

While it is sometimes assumed that television programmes popularised by NGO campaigns have in some way been commissioned by those NGOs; with 'Cost of a Cup of Tea' this was not the case. It was filmed and produced largely in secret (in order to avoid a backlash from the tea companies or Sri Lankan government) and without direct input of any NGO campaign groups.⁵¹ The motivation for filming came from colleagues working on *Disappearing World* (an anthropological series) who had been filming in Sri Lanka early in 1973. They told the World in Action team about what they had observed

⁴⁹In 1950, only 380,000 licenses were issued but by 1968 there was more than 15.5 million; more than 90 per cent of adults lived in homes that possessed a television set. Statistics cited in S. Glynn and A. Booth, *Modern Britain: An Economic and Social History*, (London: Routledge, 1995) p. 203.

⁵⁰ On April 1 1957, a Panorama programme, narrated by Richard Dimbleby, featured a family from Ticino in Switzerland carrying out their annual spaghetti harvest. At the time, spaghetti was not a widely-eaten food in the UK and was considered by many as an exotic delicacy. Hundreds of people called the corporation after the broadcast asking where they could get hold of a spaghetti bush so they could grow their own crop.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/1/newsid_2819000/2819261.stm.

⁵¹ Interview, April 2009, with David Hart, Producer on, *Cost of a Cup of Tea*.

on the tea estates. The World in Action team decided to go out to investigate. Their cover story was that they were making a film about tea for children. This meant that they could get general footage on the estates and auctions during daytime. With the support of the local tea workers union they then conducted an investigation with the help of a doctor at night.

What does this case study reveal about the interaction between the Fair Trade movement and the media and how this relationship has developed over time? Does it reinforce Goodman's contention that in recent years there has been a shift away from the 'once vaunted transparency of Fair Trade'?⁵² Certainly the Fair Trade movement, and the Fairtrade Foundation in particular, have become more media savvy and Goodman is probably right to question the *celebrityisation* of public communications. But I would argue that there is still room for thought-provoking and provocative investigative reporting that has the potential to challenge both consumers and the Fair Trade movement to look beyond the marketing hype.⁵³

Philosophical Drivers: Christian ethics and voluntarism

Churches have become an important site for Fair Trade interactions, with volunteers regularly running Traidcraft stalls. In recent years, many churches have joined local Fairtrade Towns' campaigns and 5,300 churches across the UK have achieved Fairtrade Church status.⁵⁴ Although it may be tempting to argue that churches were 'natural allies' of the Fair Trade movement, this would underestimate the amount of work involved in getting some churches to support Fair Trade.⁵⁵ As argued by Barnett, Clarke, Cloke and Malpass, 'it should not be assumed that fair-trade movement has a natural home in church-based networks'.⁵⁶ Rather than focusing on church institutions themselves as a

⁵² Goodman, 'The Mirror of Consumption', p. 3.

⁵³ 'Black Gold' directed by Mark and Nick Francis (2005). <http://www.blackgoldmovie.com/>; 'Just Coffee' produced by Consumers International (2006). <http://www.consumersinternational.org/Templates/News.asp?NodeID=94997>; 'The Bitter Aftertaste' directed by Philip Thompson (2006). <http://www.worldwrite.org/bitter/>; 'The Bitter Taste of Tea' directed by Tom Heinemann, (2009). <http://www.flipthecoin.org/the-films/the-bitter-taste-of-tea/>

⁵⁴ Fairtrade Foundation, *Fairtrade Churches Newsletter* (June 2009).

The three goals a church must fulfil are: use Fairtrade tea and coffee after services and in all meetings for which, they have responsibility; move forward on using other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit; promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight and during the year through events, worship and other activities whenever possible.

⁵⁵ C. Barnett, N. Clarke P. Cloke and A. Malpass (2007). 'The Political Rationalities of Fair-Trade Consumption in the United Kingdom,' *Politics and Society*, 35:4: p. 596.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

driver for change, Barnett et al. identify, ‘a shared discourse of faith’ as a strategic option open to Fair Trade campaigners.⁵⁷

It is this abstract concept of ‘a shared discourse of faith’, or what I have defined as ‘Christian ethics and voluntarism’, that played an important role in uniting the Fair Trade movement, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. As already noted in chapter three, identifying Christian ethics and voluntarism as important philosophical drivers for the growth of Fair Trade provides an interesting dimension, (and an additional complexity), to the secularisation debate, particularly in relation to Callum Brown’s assertion of the ‘Death of Christian Britain’.⁵⁸ Any suggestion that Fair Trade represented evidence of increased interest in Christian teachings and ethics, needs to be prefaced with a caveat that for much of this period international development was a relatively minor political issue, as reflected in the modest budgets allocated to of the Government department responsible.⁵⁹

That being said, international development, and Fair Trade in particular, represented an important opportunity for Christian groups (not necessarily the Church) to demonstrate the relevance of Christian teachings during a period when they had been seen to no longer provide ‘a compelling explanation for the ills of society’.⁶⁰ In contrast to many of the recent revisionist studies on religion in Britain, Fair Trade does not lend itself to local studies.⁶¹ Although Fair Trade campaigns may have been networked at a local level through discussion groups, Traidcraft stalls and Church meetings; the focus was on influencing the media, national supermarket chains and government policy makers. Fair Trade campaigns can therefore provide an interesting, and new approach to important questions such as: ‘Why the churches – as supposedly declining institutions – should

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ C. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 3.

⁵⁹ ‘The size of the aid programme is but one reflection of an enduring feature of central government in Britain: the department responsible for development co-operation is politically weak... In 1988 net public expenditure on overseas aid was a meagre 0.85 per cent of government expenditure’. A. Bose and P. Burnell, *Britain's Overseas Aid Since 1979: Between Idealism and Self-interest*, (Manchester: MUP, 1991), p. 15.

⁶⁰ F. Prochaska, *Christianity & Social Service in Modern Britain: The Disinherited Spirit*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 13.

⁶¹ S. J. D. Green, *Religion in the age of decline : organisation and experience in industrial Yorkshire, 1870–1920*, (Cambridge, 1996); S. C. Williams, *Religious belief and popular culture in Southwark, c. 1880–1939*, (Oxford, 1999); M. A. Smith, *Religion in industrial society : Oldham and Saddleworth, 1740–1865*, (Oxford, 1994); J. N. Morris, *Religion and urban change : Croydon, 1840–1914*, (Woodbridge, 1992).

have achieved in the 1980s and 1990s such a persistently high public profile . . . By what authority and in whose name have the churches intervened in public debate?⁶²

Grace Davie in her influential and challenging work identifies a mismatch between ‘Believing and Belonging’.⁶³ Davie argues that “the sacred does not disappear – indeed in many ways it is becoming more rather than less prevalent in contemporary society.”⁶⁴ But her assessment of the 1970s as a period of religious revival is based on the emergence of the ‘New Age’ phenomenon rather than Christianity. Fair Trade allowed the Christian Church, through the work of the main agencies, Christian Aid and Cafod, to demonstrate a united approach to international development.⁶⁵ This was in stark contrast to the denominational rifts that divided the Churches over matters of individual and spiritual morality. This no doubt positively impacted public perceptions of the Church’s contribution to role in ‘Third World’ development more generally.⁶⁶

The Fairtrade Foundation increasingly talks about, ‘a vibrant network of faith communities’ rather than singling out Christian support for Fairtrade.⁶⁷ Recent publications by Islamic Relief Worldwide have provided an Islamic perspective on Fair Trade. Ajaz Ahmed Khan and Laura Thaut have shown that there is, ‘a rich heritage in Islam of high moral standards, ethics, values and norms of behaviour, which govern personal, professional and business life.’⁶⁸ They conclude that, ‘indeed in many respects, Islamic thinking goes much further than contemporary Fair Trade advocacy efforts, as Islam forbids speculation and the hoarding of merchandise in order to increase prices, it prohibits interest as a mechanism of exploitation that reinforces poverty, and prohibits trade in goods that compromises the hearts and minds of consumers, such as alcohol and gambling.’⁶⁹ While recognising that there are some positive moves towards an inter-faith

⁶² G. Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 2.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁶⁵ The only exception is the tensions that led to the division within Tear Craft and the formation of Traidcraft. But there is no evidence that this received any negative media coverage that would have impacted on public perceptions of either of these Fair Trade companies.

⁶⁶ When asked, ‘Do you think it is proper for churches to speak out on Third World problems?’ Across Europe, 76 per cent of respondents answered yes. D. Barker, *The European Values Study 1981 – 1990*. (Gordon Cook Foundation, 1991). p.47.

⁶⁷ Fairtrade Foundation, Annual Review (2007/2008), p. 7.

⁶⁸ A. Ahmed Khan and L. Thaut, *An Islamic Perspective on Fair Trade*, (Birmingham: Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2009), p. 12.

http://www.islamic-relief.com/InDepth/downloads/Islam_and_Fairtrade.pdf

⁶⁹ A. Ahmed Khan and L. Thaut, *An Islamic Perspective on Fair Trade*, (Birmingham: Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2009), p. 12.

dialogue, it should be noted that the Fairtrade Foundation remains a predominantly Christian organisation with seven of its fifteen member organisations having Christian allegiances and no other faith groups are represented.⁷⁰

While Christian ethics have continued to motivate supporters they have not been integral to the modern identity of Fairtrade Foundation.⁷¹ There remains a perception that openly Christian language could alienate the general public.⁷² There is no evidence that the Christian members of the Fairtrade Foundation have been pushing for a stronger Christian message within the Foundation's brand identity. But Church leaders continue to be important spokespersons for Fair Trade and consistently receive mainstream media coverage when they speak on issues relating to international development and Fair Trade.⁷³

What lessons from this study of Christian agencies and Fair Trade companies can be applied to the wider secularization debate? Jeremy Morris, has argued that, 'for the time being it is a strange sort of death that leaves churches still amongst the largest voluntary organisations in the country, and Christianity still notionally the conviction of a majority of the population'.⁷⁴ To this I would add that, it is also a strange sort of death that leaves Christian volunteers as a significant constituent of one the fastest growing grassroots social movements, and church leaders as spokespersons for an internationally recognised Superbrand (the FAIRTRADE Mark).⁷⁵

http://www.islamic-relief.com/InDepth/downloads/Islam_and_Fairtrade.pdf.

⁷⁰ CAFOD*, Christian Aid*, Methodist Relief and Development Fund, SCIAF, Tearfund, Traidcraft Exchange*, United Reformed Church. *Founder Member. Fairtrade Foundation, Annual Review (2007/2008).

http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2008/a/annual_review.pdf

⁷¹ Initial studies of Fair trade Town's suggest that the proportion of Christian volunteers is substantial. There are a series of research projects currently underway looking at Fairtrade Town campaign groups and it is expected that these will be able to shed more light on the numbers of Christian supporters.

⁷² There are parallels here with Traidcraft's approach: 'I was very conscious of how "Christian language" might alienate people.' R. Adams, *Who Profits?* (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1989), p. 159.

⁷³ Recent examples include: In May 2004, Archbishop of Wales, Barry Morgan backed the Wales Fair Trade Forum's initiative to make Wales the first Fair Trade nation. ('Backing for Fair Trade country bid', *BBC online*, May 2004). In April 2005, speaking at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the 60th anniversary of the Christian Aid, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, challenged a 'naive faith in free trade' that was stripping some countries of their economic power and hampering efforts to overcome poverty. ('Williams attacks 'global scandal', *BBC online*, Tuesday, 26 April, 2005). In October 2007, The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, called for a boycott of all chocolate that is not certified as Fairtrade. ('If that chocolate is not Fairtrade, then don't buy it, says the Archbishop of York', *The Times*, October 31, 2007).

⁷⁴ J. Morris, 'The Strange Death of Christian Britain: another look at the secularization debate'. *The Historical Journal* (2003), 46(4) p. 976.

⁷⁵http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/press_releases_and_statements/archive_2005/sept_2005/fairtrade_mark_is_top_of_class_in_superbrands_awards.aspx

Philosophical Drivers: an alternative approach

Earlier chapters have explored how Fair Trade developed as an alternative approach in the 1970s that filled the vacuum left not only by government and business reluctance to engage consumers on issues of international trade and development; but also the reluctance of the traditional consumer movement, in the form of the Co-operative, and the labour movement, as seen with the TUC.

Up until the early 1990s the term *alternative trade* was preferred by the majority of campaigners and organisations involved. Carol Wills, former Executive Director of IFAT,⁷⁶ commented that, ‘alternative was rather a good word, because it was alternative in all kinds of ways; cutting out the middleman, trading directly; alternative distribution channels; alternative workforce, volunteers in many case’.⁷⁷ The concept of an alternative approach developed in parallel with Christian ethics and voluntarism as a defining theme of Fair Trade from the mid 1970s. In general, there was little real tension between these approaches, despite the idea of ‘an alternative’ opening up opportunities for more overtly political campaigns than may have been possible in debates framed by Christian ethics.⁷⁸

The politics of alternative trade were often expressed initially through solidarity campaigns with regimes such as Nicaragua and Tanzania that were seen to have politically progressive regimes. Ken Livingstone demonstrated these sentiments in a speech given at the Third World Trade and Technology Conference in 1985, ‘The people of London will not solve their problems at the expense of the people of the South. Our problems are the same. We both suffer from unaccountable activities of giant trans-national companies. We are both seeking to find an alternative framework for international economic links.’⁷⁹

⁷⁶ IFAT, originally stood for the International Federation for Alternative Trade (1989), it changed its name to the International Fair Trade Association and in 2009 became the World Fair Trade Organisation.

⁷⁷ Carol Wills cited in A. Nicholls and C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*. (London: Sage, 2004), p.12.

⁷⁸ Although as discussed in chapter three, liberation theology demonstrated the possibility of a social responsible, political, Christian ethic.

⁷⁹ Speech delivered by Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC, to the opening session of the Third World Trade and Technology Conference (18 February 1985).

For many supporters of Fair Trade in the 1970s and 1980s, one of the major motivations was the belief that they had to respond to the growth in multinational corporations (MNCs), because they were seen to be setting back any attempts to implement international development programmes.⁸⁰ An alternative approach meant finding new supply chains outside the control of big business. Roy Scott envisaged a marketing structure that, ‘avoids the conventional chain of profit-seeking employers, middlemen, agents, exporters, importers, wholesalers and through the economies of direct marketing is able to pay producers better’.⁸¹

An alternative approach also represented a move away from charity. Roy Scott stated that Bridge was, ‘nothing to do with charity or paternalism; it provides security and Fair Trade basis producers need for development; and it satisfies the need for products to be sold on their merit’.⁸² But most supporters of Fair Trade were sufficiently pragmatic to realise the benefits of registration with the Charity Commission and did not shun the various grants available nor the opportunity to receive tax relief. Central to the success of the Fair Trade movement has been its ability to balance the often conflicting, requirements of charity, campaigning and commercial enterprise. Despite the initial resistance of the Charity Commission and the ambivalence of some within the movement, in February 1995 the Fairtrade Foundation gained charitable status, after prolonged negotiations and a year after the launch of the FAIRTRADE Mark.⁸³

Although Fair Trade continued to be described as ‘an alternative approach’ in the movement’s agreed definition up until 2009, public messages had quickly moved away from this terminology by the early 1990s.⁸⁴ Carol Wills has acknowledged that alternative

⁸⁰ *Multi National Corporations, The Co-operative Alternative* (Warsaw, ICA Congress, 1972); Overseas Development Institute, *A Third force for the Third World: A Study of the channels for investment of Church Trust Funds in economic development.* (1972) CA2/D/14; Christian Aid, *The European Community and the Third World* letter to EC commissioners (25 April 1973) CA2/D/11; ICFTU, Working Party on Multinational Companies, (11-12 September 1975) MSS.292D/954.9/1:ICFTU/ITS.

⁸¹ OXFAM, BRIDGE HS/5: report by R. Scott, ‘What, Why, How: Bridge Summarized’ (1973).

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Fairtrade Foundation Minutes, Twentieth meeting (8 March 1995).

⁸⁴ In April 1999 the following statement was agreed: ‘Fair Trade is *an alternative approach* to conventional trade. It is a trading partnership which aims at sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers. It seeks to do this by providing better trading conditions, by awareness raising and by campaigning.’ Quoted in J. M. Krier, *Fair Trade in Europe 2001: Facts and figures on the Fair Trade sector in 18 European countries*, (Maastricht; EFTA, 2001). In 2009 this statement was revised, ‘Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks *greater equity in international trade*. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade Organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for

ideas quickly went out of fashion; it the public's mindset they were too closely associated with, 'brown rice, sandals and beards'.⁸⁵ The formation of the Fairtrade Foundation, in 1992, was a direct attempt to engage with mainstream markets and it was argued that the alternative label would have to be dropped. In its place was a stated ambition to 'engage UK consumer power on a significant scale'.⁸⁶

Philosophical Drivers: consumer activism

In much of the Fair Trade literature the role of consumer demand and consumer activism have gained prominence as the drivers for change.⁸⁷ On the surface this provides a logical explanation for the growth of Fair Trade in Britain; but in reality it offers only a limited insight into what is a complex and diverse social movement. The danger with this approach is that activist groups which could be argued are 'the fundamental vanguard fostering Fair Trade markets' are frequently overlooked.⁸⁸ While recognising a role for consumer politics within the Fair Trade movement, this thesis has argued throughout for a more nuanced approach that does not define Fair Trade as an 'entirely a consumer choice model'.⁸⁹

The politically neutral figure of the consumer proved a valuable tool in allowing NGOs to move beyond the social, cultural or religious affiliations of their core supporters and attempt to influence the general public in a way that few had succeeded in doing previously. This language of consumer activism has remained a prominent feature of many Fair Trade messages. But this campaign literature should not be accepted uncritically, rather it needs to be understood within a wider political context that also takes into account outside influences such as: the charity commission, government and mainstream business.

If we look beyond the campaign material and the marketing messages and assess the strategies adopted by the Fairtrade Foundation, the slogan of consumer choice seems to

changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.' EFTA and FLO, *A Charter of Fair Trade Principles* (January 2009).

⁸⁵ Carol Wills cited in A. Nicholls and C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*. (London: Sage, 2004), p. 12.

⁸⁶ OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: B.Yates, *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, (September 1990).

⁸⁷ A. Nicholls and C. Opal, *Fair Trade: Market-Driven Ethical Consumption*. (London: Sage, 2004).

⁸⁸ M. K. Goodman, 'Reading Fair Trade: political ecological imaginary and the moral economy of Fair Trade foods', *Political Geography* 23 (2004) p. 901.

ring hollow. The evidence suggests that the Fairtrade Foundation have in fact adopted a strategy of, to use Tim Lang's phrase, 'choice editing'.⁹⁰ Lang argues that consumers can't be relied on to do the right thing and calls for a move away from consumer power. Lang states that, 'individual action is not enough. It requires choice editing, not personal choice'.⁹¹ This means removing ethical hazards before a product reaches the consumer.

The 2006 Sustainable Consumption Roundtable report, 'Looking Forward Looking Back', endorses Lang's assessment, stating that, 'The evidence suggests that, historically, the green consumer has not been the tipping point in driving innovation. Instead, choice editing for quality and sustainability by Government and business has been the critical driver in the majority of cases.'⁹²

It is perhaps not surprising that the Fairtrade Foundation has shied away from a critique of individual action and consumer choice; it would probably not play well in the boardrooms' of Starbucks or Tesco. But 'choice editing' through public procurement has been an important focus for Fair Trade ever since the Greater London Council established TWIN Trading, in 1985 and has been revived with the Fairtrade Towns scheme. Oliver Le Brun, Director of TWIN Trading was clear about where attention should be focused, and it was not individual consumers: 'If we want to develop more direct and permanent trading links between the south and the north we have to open new opportunities for the distribution of Third World products. We have to explore the social market: the supply departments of local authorities, their purchasing associations and civic catering, universities, polytechnics, schools, social services, hospitals, trade unions, labour clubs etc.'⁹³

There also seems to be a reluctance to leave the fate of Fairtrade to the whims of consumer choice when it comes to dealings with big business. Harriet Lamb in a public statement recognising the commitment by Cadbury to achieve Fairtrade certification for Cadbury Dairy Milk, said that: 'The Fairtrade Foundation set out an ambitious

⁸⁹ Nicholls and Opal, *Fair Trade*, p. 31.

⁹⁰ T. Lang, 'A food crisis is heading our way' *The Guardian*, (16 October 2008).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² 'Looking Back, Looking Forward: lessons in choice editing for sustainability', (May 2006), research report by the Sustainable Consumption Roundtable – a joint initiative of the National Consumer Council and the Sustainable Development Commission.

⁹³ Oliver Le Brun, Director of TWIN and Twin Trading, Bridges Not Fences: Report of the Third World Trade and Technology Conference, (London Feb 1985), p. 7.

strategy last year to double its positive impact for producers by 2012...It is precisely this kind of big commitment by a major player such as Cadbury that could make it possible to achieve these goals.⁹⁴ So while the Fairtrade Foundation objectives have been, ‘to empower consumers to take responsibility for the role they play when they buy products from the third world.’⁹⁵ The Foundation has often not been adverse to *shepherding consumers* (through lobbying local councils and MNCs) in preference to empowering consumers, in order to achieve the objective of promoting responsible consumer choices.

The British Case in a Global Context

The Fairtrade retail market in Britain is the second largest in the world and arguably the most advanced, with the widest range of Fairtrade products available to mainstream consumers.⁹⁶ The British Fair Trade market is also seen as one of the most closely aligned to major MNCs and supermarkets and this has been reinforced with the recent announcement by Starbucks that it intends to serve only Fairtrade coffee in its UK stores by the end of 2009.⁹⁷ For this reason the British case study has received considerable international attention from academics, Fair Trade companies and campaigners. International interest into how Fairtrade has taken hold in Britain is often based on the assumption that the success achieved may be replicable in other national contexts.

Steve Ogden-Barnes, programme director at Monash University's Australian Centre for Retail Studies, commenting on Marks & Spencer's 'Look behind the Label' campaign, stated that it was significant because, 'generally once trends have taken hold in Europe and America, we see them arrive in Australia'.⁹⁸ Sarah Scarborough, from Scarborough Fair, one of the leading Australian Fairtrade brands, reinforced this position stating that, 'trends that start in Britain do generally follow in Australia and getting Fairtrade to the

⁹⁴ Harriet Lamb, Executive Director, Fairtrade Foundation (4 March 2009).

http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/press_releases_and_statements/march_2009/cadbury_dairy_milk_commits_to_going_fairtrade.aspx.

⁹⁵ Fairtrade Foundation, *Introducing the Fairtrade: A guide to the Fairtrade Mark and the Fairtrade Foundation*, (London: 2000).

⁹⁶ Fairtrade certification: net retail value, 2007, in 000 €: UK = 704,300, USA = 730,800. Cited in, J. Krier, *Fair Trade 2007: new facts and figures from an ongoing success story - A report on Fair Trade in 33 consumer countries*, (Dutch Association of Worldshops, Netherlands, August 2008), p. 18; DFID, *Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future*, (London: The Stationery Office, July 2009), p. 43.

⁹⁷ G. Charles, 'Starbucks' UK outlets to convert to Fairtrade coffee', *Marketing* (26 November 2008).

<http://www.marketingmagazine.co.uk/news/865224/Starbucks-UK-outlets-convert-Fairtrade-coffee/>

⁹⁸ 'Sip Coffee with a conscience', *The Age*, Melbourne, (27 May, 2006). www.theage.com.au.

mainstream makes it practical for the consumer. They no longer have to go to an Oxfam shop and pay \$10 for a bag of coffee, they can go to the supermarket aisle and switch their brand of coffee.⁹⁹

While on the surface the general trend, seen in Britain, of a move away from NGO backed charity shops towards a greater uptake by mainstream retailers seems to fit with the experiences of other national Fairtrade labels, it is not clear how far these similarities can be extended. For a start, it seems that the speed and extent of these developments has varied significantly and is not necessarily a linear process. In recent years this increased engagement with MNCs has led to further questioning about the direction of Fair Trade. The Fairtrade Foundation to date has generally been judged to have managed this development more successfully than some national labelling initiatives, notably TransFair USA.

In 2004, five small 100 percent Fair Trade coffee roasters, part of the Co-operative Coffees Network, withdrew from the TransFair USA certification. They claimed that the original vision of a better model was being watered down by corporate engagement.¹⁰⁰ The initial response by Paul Rice, President & CEO of TransFair USA, was somewhat dismissive of these moves: ‘If a corporate giant roasts a million pounds of fair-trade coffee in one year they are still doing far more than some smaller 100-percent roasters will in their entire history.’¹⁰¹ It wasn’t until 2006 that TransFair’s approach began to temper: ‘TransFair USA acknowledges and values the vital role of NGOs, advocacy groups and producers in growing the Fair Trade market and movement. . . At times, in our efforts to extend the benefits of Fair Trade to farmers and farm workers rapidly, we have failed to adequately engage the broader Fair trade community effectively.’¹⁰²

These controversies have led to a growing critique, both from academics and those within the movement, about the robustness of the governance frameworks of the various national labelling initiatives. Arguably, some of the misconceptions present within contemporary debates could be challenged if there was a greater understanding of the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ D. Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*, (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007), p. 207.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² L. Raynold., D. Murray and J. Wilkinson *Fair Trade: The challenges of transforming globalization*, (London: Routledge, 2007).

historical origins of the Fair Trade movement internationally. Although there are comprehensive statistical surveys of the European and international Fair Trade markets dating back to 1995, historical accounts remain largely anecdotal and written by those working for Fair Trade organisations.¹⁰³

Bob Thomson, Managing Director of TransFair Canada, has provided one of the most intriguing accounts of the development of the European Fair Trade movement, from what he describes as ‘an outsider’ perspective.¹⁰⁴ Thomson characterises the process as, ‘even more complex than just national politics. It involves personalities, national cultural traits, "ideologies" and turf battle for market share. If forced to put it very simply, I could say that it amounts to groups of people arguing about who has the most angels on the head of their pin. It can't be put simply however!’¹⁰⁵ Thomson describes how Max Havelaar Netherlands left a vacuum by initially not wanting to expand beyond coffee and not providing an alternative pan-European structure or forum to EFTA. According to Thomson, the result was that, ‘when TransFair Germany got started in 1992, there was already a history of personality clashes, resentments and probably some elements of turf battles for influence on new national label initiatives’.¹⁰⁶

While providing many interesting anecdotes Thomson’s account, in common with other histories of Fair Trade, mainly draws from personal experience rather than documented archive records and as such is difficult to verify. There is a call for academic research into both the European and international Fair Trade movements that draws on interviews with practitioners and is substantiated by archive research. Initial research has pointed to some potentially significant differences that may have impacted on the structure, governance and approach adopted by different national Fair Trade movements. Unfortunately there is not yet sufficient detail at a national level in order to undertake a

¹⁰³ EFTA, Fair Trade in Europe: Facts and Figures on the Fair Trade Sector in 14 European Countries, (May 1995). <http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-1995.pdf>; J. Krier, Fair Trade 2007: new facts and figures from an ongoing success story - A report on Fair Trade in 33 consumer countries, (Dutch Association of Worldshops, Netherlands, August 2008). <http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2007.pdf>; Marlize Kocken, Manager of EFTA, Sixty Years of Fair Trade: A brief history of the Fair Trade movement, (November 2006); Stefan Durwael, General Director of Fair Trade Organisatie, "The Development of Fair Trade in the Netherlands", (Fair Trade Organisatie, Culemborg, 1994); Bob Thomson, Managing Director TransFair Canada, "A Brief History of Fair Trade Labels", unpublished, (Ottawa, August 1995).

¹⁰⁴ Bob Thomson, Managing Director TransFair Canada, "A Brief History of Fair Trade Labels", unpublished, (Ottawa, August 1995).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

global comparative study, although this has the potential for an exciting future collaborative research project.¹⁰⁷

A New Direction for Consumer Politics?

This thesis has argued that consumer demand offers only a partial explanation for the growth of Fair Trade and that consumer choice was not the main driver of change within the Fair Trade movement. But this is not to suggest that Fair Trade campaigners should discard consumer activism; conversely there may be real value in widening definitions of consumer politics in order to address the question of living standards of Fair Trade producers in the global South from a new perspective. It is clear however, that this approach may run counter to the arguments of some global justice activists. Vandana Shiva speaking at the second World Social Forum in 2002 argued that, ‘the philosophical and ethical bankruptcy of globalization was based on reducing every aspect of our lives to commodities and reducing our identities to merely that of consumer on the global market place. Our capacities as producers, our identity as members of communities, our role as custodians of our natural and cultural heritage were all too disappear or be destroyed.’¹⁰⁸

Speeches such as this one have had a lasting impact on the direction of the global justice movement and have been one reason why Fair Trade has remained on the fringes of these gatherings; a consumerist approach being seen as too closely aligned with corporate interests. Fair Trade set out to ‘bridge’ the gap between consumer and producer, but as the movement developed there were few signs that this was happening, instead the distinctions seemed to sharpen. With the recent formation of Fairtrade consumer labels in the global South, (Mexico and South Africa), there is now an opportunity for the Fair

¹⁰⁷ I have undertaken some preliminary archive research into the history of Oxfam Australia and Trade Winds. Although there has only been a national Fairtrade labelling initiative in Australia since 2003 the history of the movement dates back to the 1970s (as it does in Europe). But this research indicates potentially significant differences within the Australian national context that require further consideration, such as tariff barriers implemented to protect Australian farmers that produce goods such as bananas and mangoes.

¹⁰⁸ V. Shiva, ‘The Living Democracy Movement: Alternatives to the Bankruptcy of Globalization’ in W. Fisher and T. Ponniah, (eds.) *Another World is Possible: Popular Alternatives to Globalization at the World Social Forum*, (London, Zed Books, 2003), p. 115.

Trade movement to rethink how it addresses the dynamics of consumer/producer relations.¹⁰⁹

Additionally, Consumers International (CI), the world federation of consumer groups, has recently shown a greater interest in Fair Trade. Its report on coffee posed several important questions, ‘When a consumer chooses to buy certified coffee what effects ripple along the commodity chain, from retailer to grower? What are the factors that prompt consumers to buy certified coffee – and equally, what are factors that keep them from such a purchase?’¹¹⁰ There is a potential to develop these links in a new direction, if the Fairtrade Foundation is willing engage with CI and explore how the dynamics of CI have changed to reflect the increased representation from consumer organisations based in the South. From being an organisation predominantly concerned with product testing in Europe and the United States, CI has evolved into an influential lobby for basic necessities in the global South.¹¹¹

Throughout Fair Trade’s history, how the movement has defined ‘a fair price’ has been the result of process of negotiation and compromise. For some academics this represents an ideological weakness at the core of the movement.¹¹² But contrary to this stance, I suggest that this ability to adapt and evolve has been one Fair Trade’s strengths and has contributed to its resilience. The recent development of consumer labels in the global South, has the potential to open up a new set of possibilities about how the Fair Trade movement frames debates over minimum price and decent wages. In responding to this challenge the Fairtrade Foundation should consider defining trading networks more holistically so that producers are recognised as also consumers and as citizens.

¹⁰⁹ Sybrandus Adema interview with Boudeijn Goossens, Executive Director of Fairtrade Label South Africa (FLSA), ‘Q&A: The South Can Also be Consumers of Fair Trade Products’, *Inter Press Service*, (21July 2009); D. Jaffee, *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*. (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007).

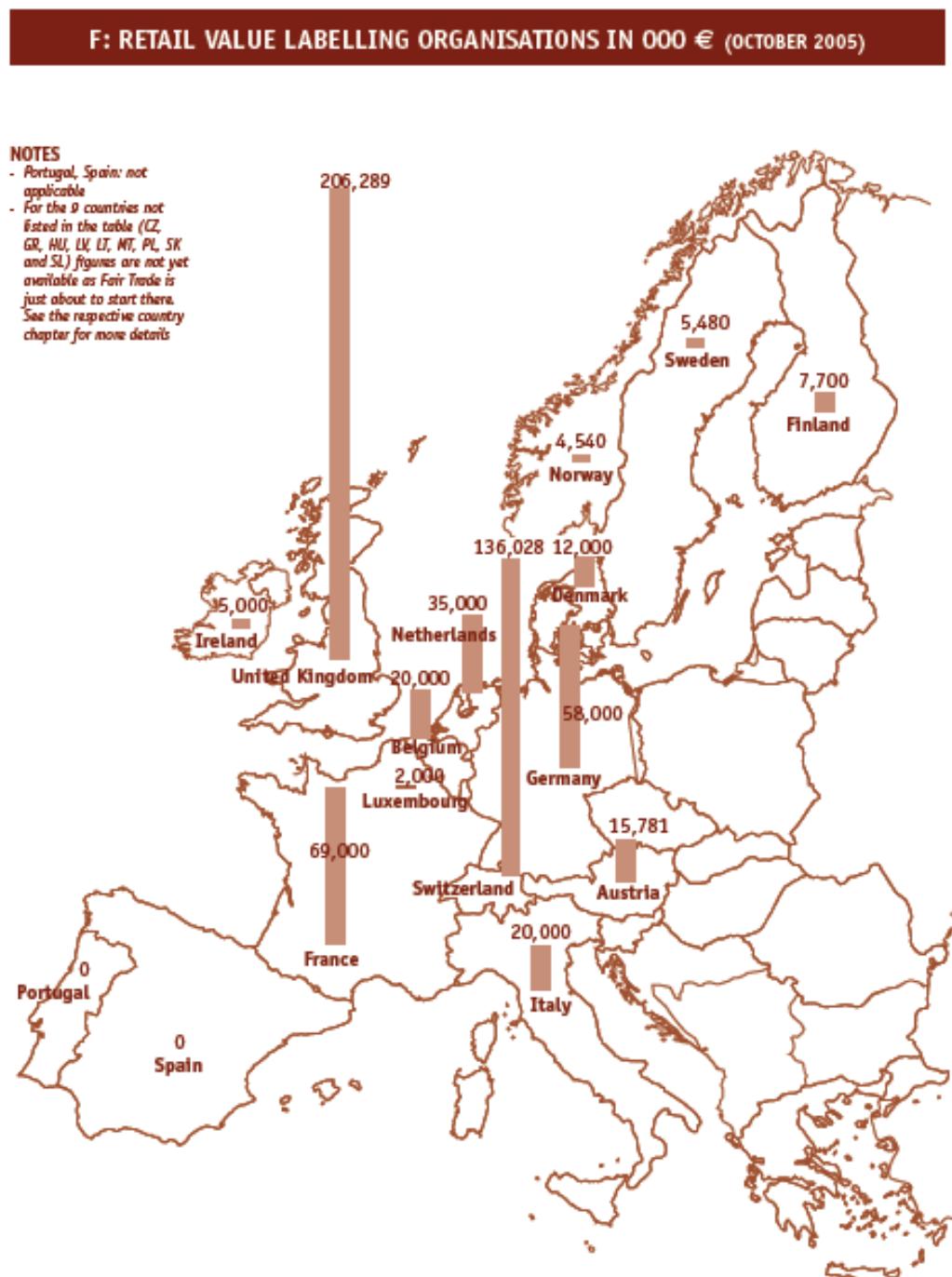
¹¹⁰ Consumers International, From Bean to Cup: how consumer choice impacts upon coffee producers and the environment, (December 2005).

¹¹¹ M. Hilton, *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization*, (Cornell University Press, 2009).

¹¹² G. Fridell, *Fair Trade Coffee: The Prospects and Pitfalls of Market-Driven Social Justice*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2007).

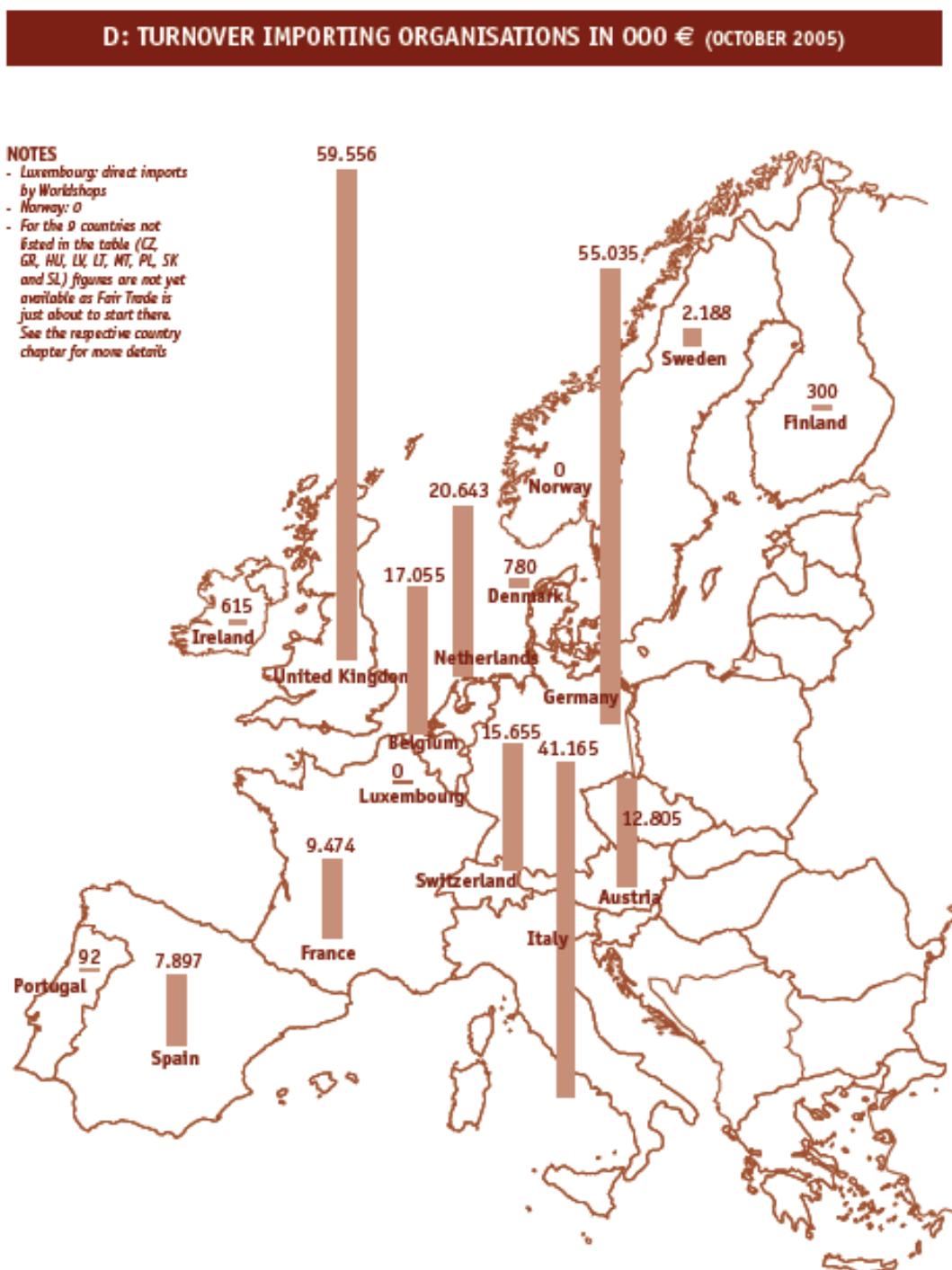
Appendix

Fig. 1 Retail value of European fair trade labelling organisations (2005)



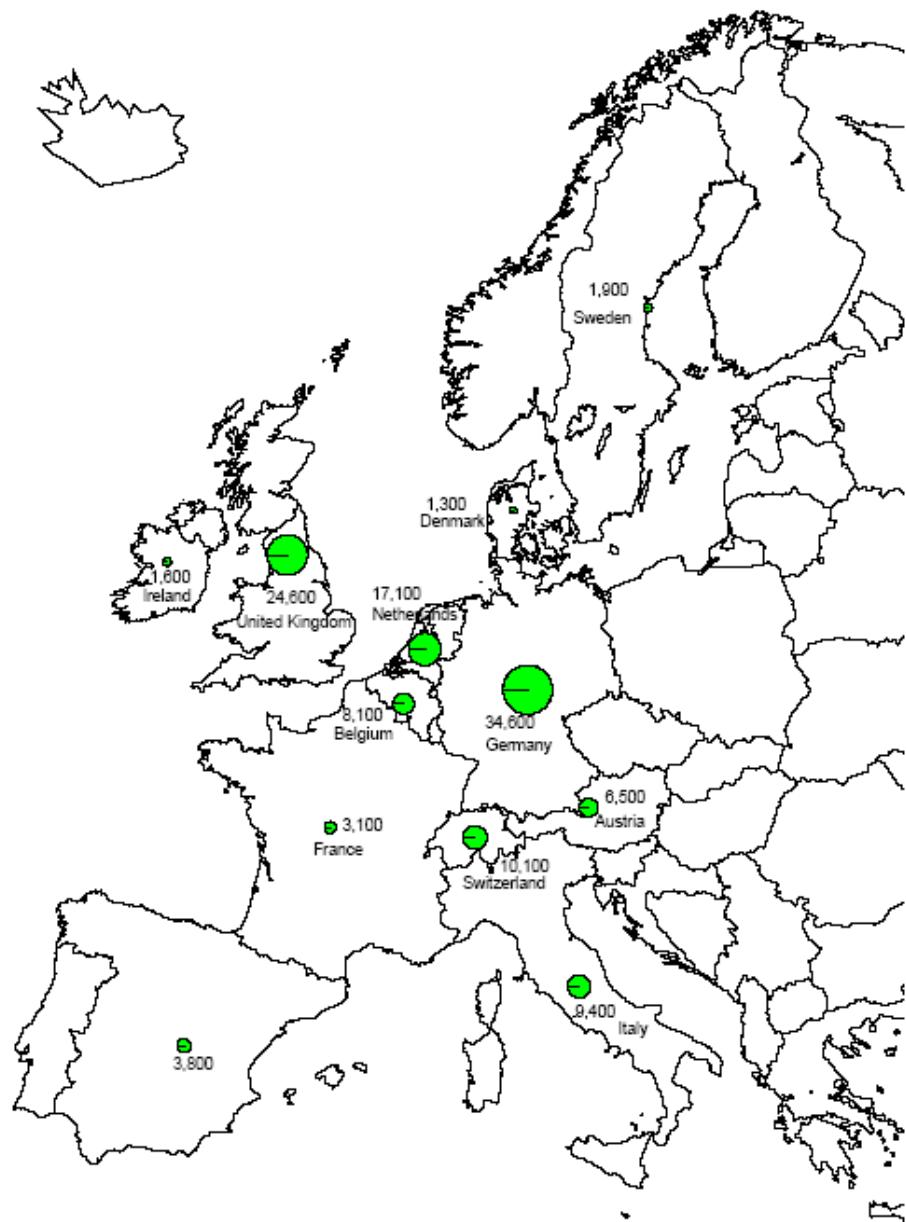
Source: EFTA – European Fair Trade Association - Fair Trade in Europe 2005
<http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2006.pdf>

Fig. 2 Turnover of fair trade importing organisations (2005)



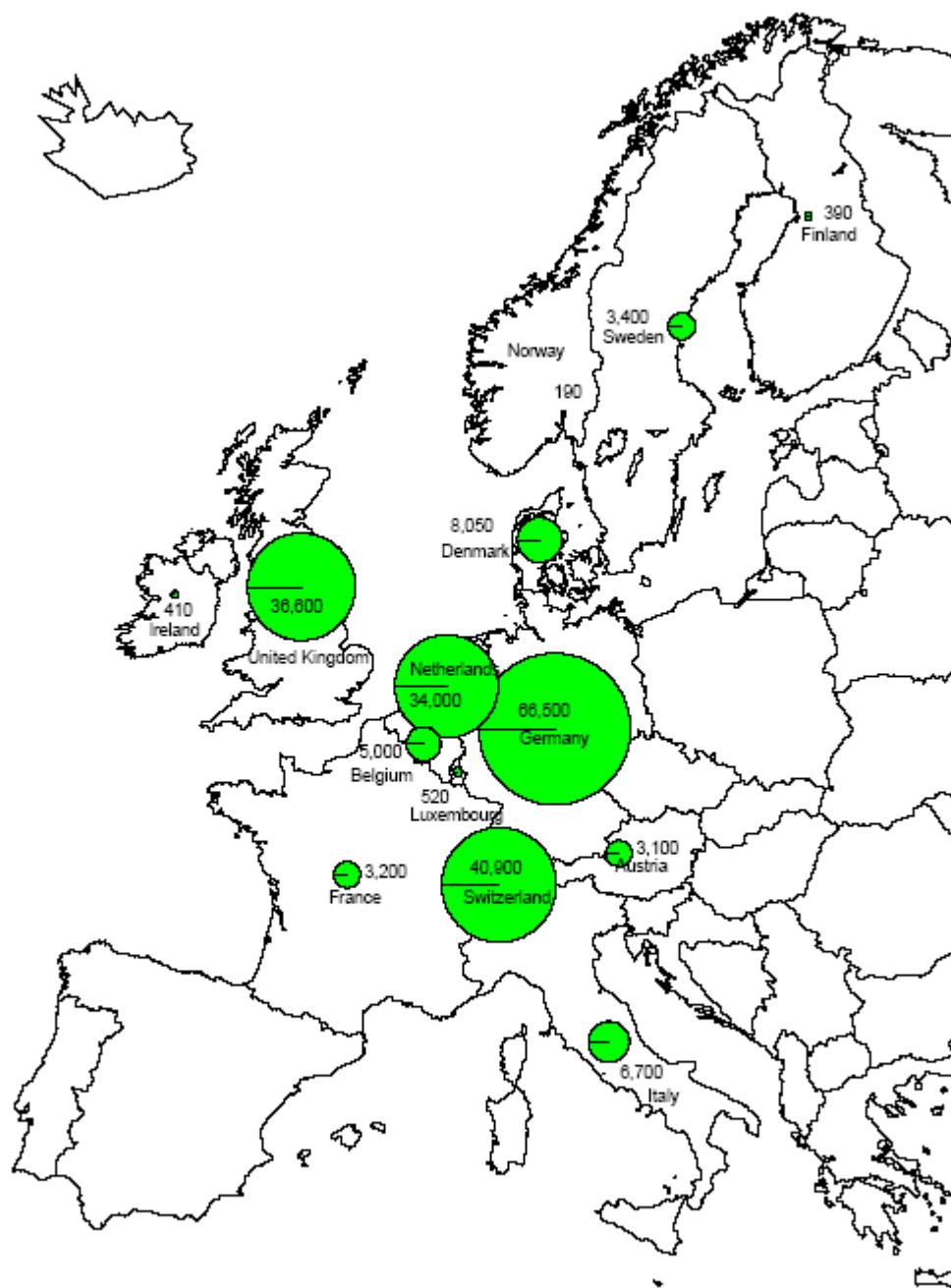
Source: EFTA – European Fair Trade Association - Fair Trade in Europe 2005
<http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2006.pdf>

Fig. 3 Turnover of European importing organisations in 000 € (July 2000)



Source: EFTA – European Fair Trade Association - Fair Trade in Europe 2001
<http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2001.pdf>

Fig. 4 Turnover of European label organisations in 000 € (July 2000)



Source: EFTA – European Fair Trade Association - Fair Trade in Europe 2001
<http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-2001.pdf>

Fig. 5 Total annual retail turnover 1996-1997, ATOs and labelling initiatives

EFTA Survey on Fair Trade in Europe

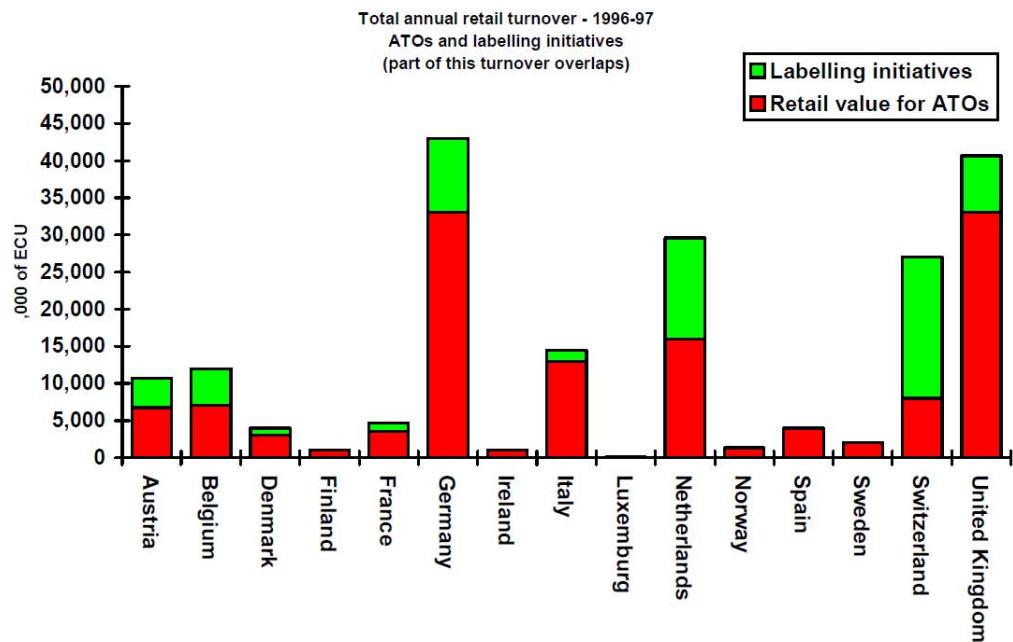
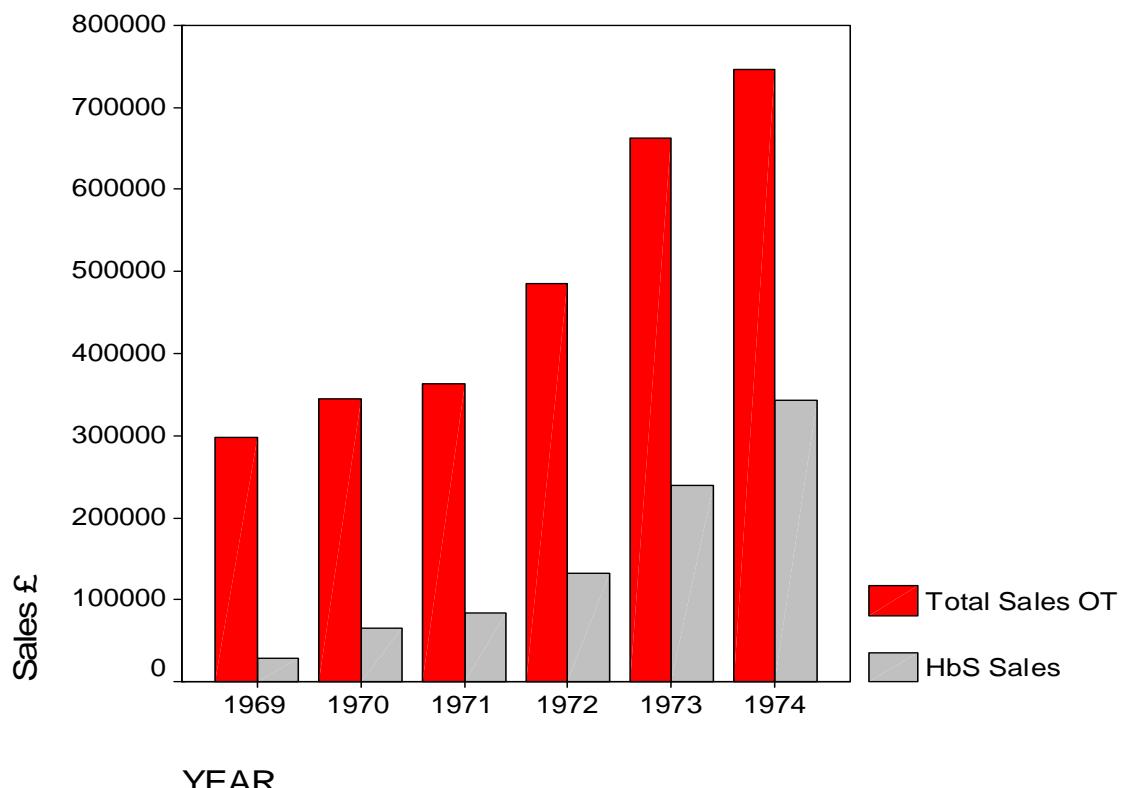


Table with summarised information of the 16 European countries in the study (numbers are rounded off):

Importing organisations:	70+
Selling points:	70,000
Including	
World Shops	3,000
Commercial shops (incl. supermarkets)	33,000
Chains of supermarkets:	50
Employees (equivalent full-time positions):	1,500
Volunteers:	100,000
Labelling initiatives:	Max Havelaar, TransFair, Fairtrade Mark
Budgets for education & public relations:	8 million ECU
Retail turnover:	200 million ECU
Market share of fair trade coffee:	1.7% (European average)

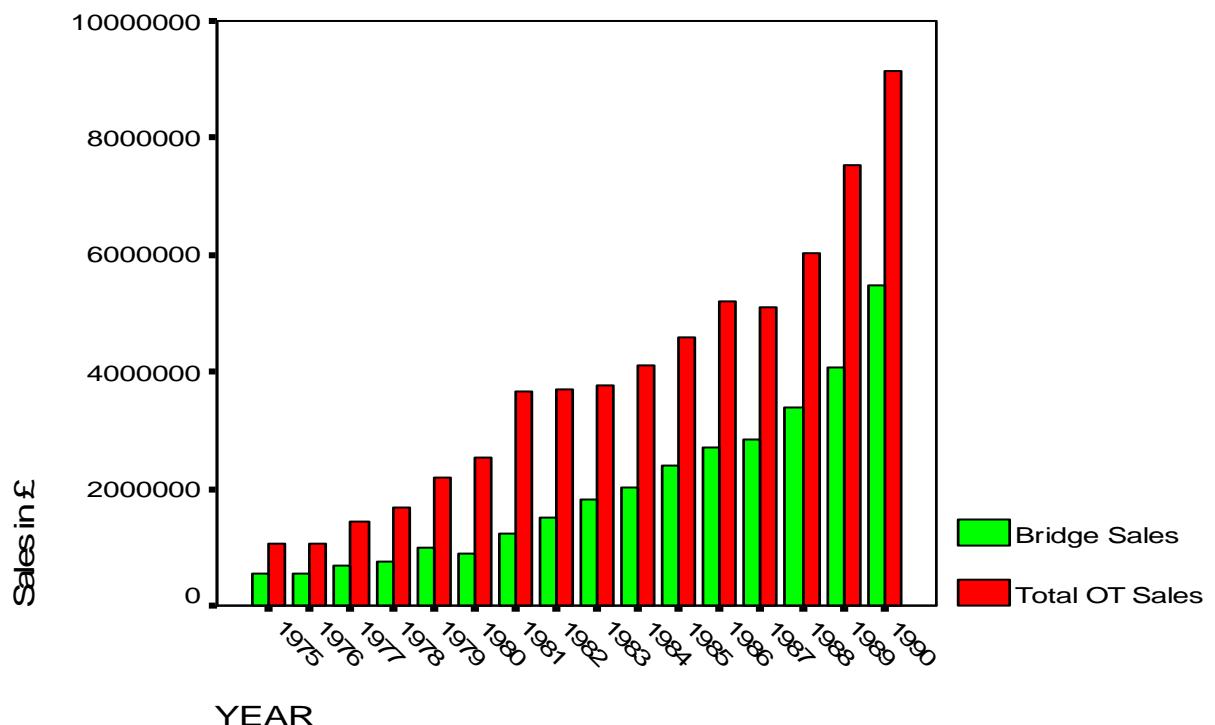
Source: EFTA – European Fair Trade Association - Fair Trade in Europe 1998
<http://www.european-fair-trade-association.org/efta/Doc/FT-E-1998.pdf>

Fig. 6 Helping by Selling sales in relation to total Oxfam Trading sales, 1969 – 1974



Source: OXFAM: Guy Stringer, Directors Report to the Executive Committee (February 1974).

Fig. 7

Bridge sales in relation to total Oxfam Trading sales 1975 - 1990

Source: OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Analysis of Bridge imports* (1990)

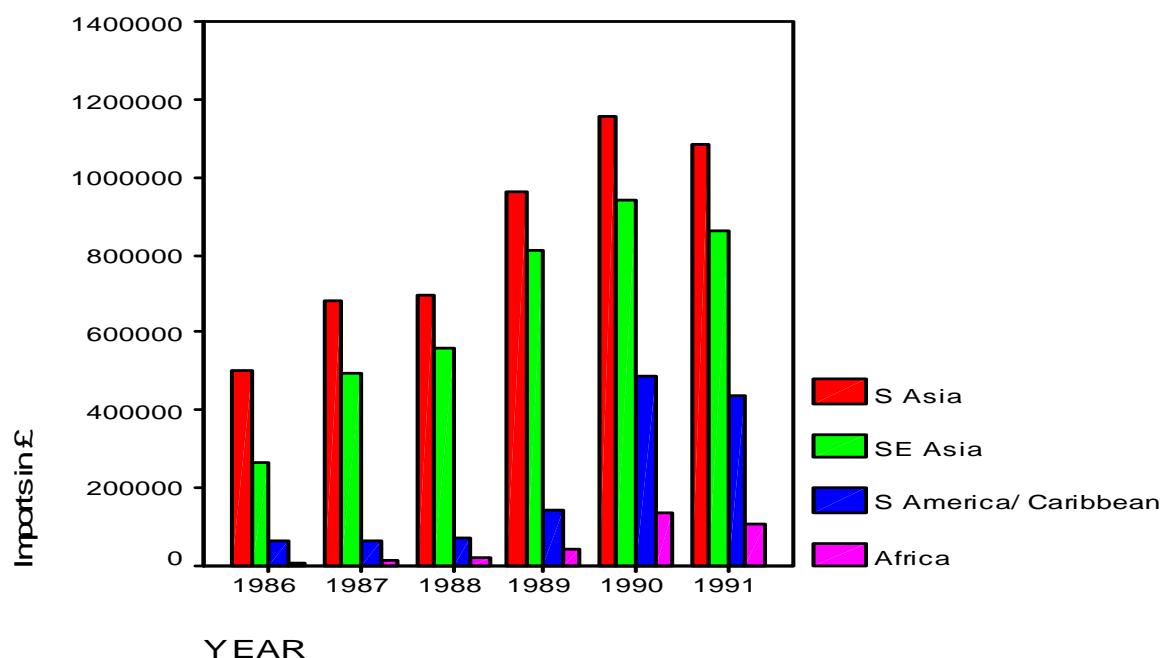
Fig. 8 **Bridge sales as percentage of overall Oxfam Trading sales 1975 - 1990**

Year	OT Sales (£)	Bridge Sales (£)	Bridge as % of OT	Bridge Net profit
1975	1 054 274	532 871	51.0 %	81 296
1976	1 050 199	540 474	51.0%	-
1977	1 439 077	687 814	47.8%	-
1978	1 664 930	757 055	45.5 %	-24 000
1979	2 183 707	989 581	45.3 %	30 611
1980	2 543 868	902 818	35.5 %	8 280
1981	3 564 191	1 224 368	34.4 %	65 367
1982	3 695 634	1 503 677	40.7 %	51 238
1983	3 776 229	1 812 399	48.0 %	73 206
1984	4 124 279	2 011 740	48.8 %	75 509
1985	4 584 856	2 384 126	52.0 %	102 863
1986	5 193 103	2 689 744	51.2%	119 386
1987	5 109 245	2 825 519	55.3%	197 000
1988	6 026 043	3 378 620	56.1%	197 000
1989	7 530 845	4 073 670	54.1%	66 000
1990	9 133 866	5 494 105	60.2%	188 000

Source: OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Analysis of Bridge imports* (1990)

Fig. 9

Analysis of Bridge imports by region 1986 - 1991



Source: OXFAM, BRIDGE COM: *Analysis of Bridge imports (FOB value) by country* (1990)

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CA2/A/3/9: Botswana15: Social Action Programme, 1971

CA2/D/1/1: Charity Commissioners, 1962-64

CA2/D/1/2: Charity Commissioners, 1965-66

CA2/D/1/3: Christian Aid Constitution, 1964-67

CA2/D/3/5: Christian Aid Board trading Company, 1970

CA2/D//3/8: Director – Correspondence with staff, 1969-70

CA2/D/9/1: Director's reports, 1972

CA2/D/9/13: New Internationalist, 1972

CA2/D/11/3: Director's visit to South Africa

CA2/D/14/11: Investment Matters – A Third Force for the Third World, 1974

CA2/D/14/12: Meeting on Church investments, May 2 1974

CA2/D/15/14: South Africa, 1974

CA2/D/22/3: Oxfam, 1975

CA2/D/24/4: South Africa, 1975

CA2/E/11/8: UK 181: Third World Road Show, 1974

CA2/I/8/1: WCC/ICA Self Help Projects, 1963-1966

CA2/I/47/6: Overseas Development Institute, 1966-69

Christian Aid Series III deposited at SOAS 1995

Asia/Pacific:

CA/3/45: Philippines – Skillshop – Iloilo city, 1978-83

CA/3/46: Artisans Training Project, Pakistan, 1977-80

CA/3/59: Appropriate technology Development Unit, 1974-79

CA/3/78: Consumers Association of Penang – Correspondence and reports, 1978 - 81

Latin America/Caribbean:

CA/3/15: Handicrafts and Semi-industrial workshop, Chile, 1974

CA/3/40: FASE – Brazil (mainly Portuguese), 1976-77

CA/3/41: FASE – Brazil, 1981-83

CA/3/101: Development Projects and Relief, 1973-74

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CA5/G/147: Latin America and Caribbean: Brazil and FASE, 1985-88

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CA5/C/283B: Asia: Sri Lanka, Plantation People's Welfare Trust, 1978-86

CA5/C/247: Asia: Philippines, 1982-88

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MSS. 292D/900-993 International, Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia 1970-1990

MSS.292D/901/1-39 **International Committee** 1970 Oct - 1990 Jul

MSS.292D/901/1 **International Committee: Minutes** 1970 Oct - 1971 Aug

MSS.292D/901/2 **International Committee: Minutes** 1971 Oct - 1972 Feb

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- MSS.292D/901/5 **International Committee: Minutes** 1973 Apr - Aug
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- MSS.292D/901/7 **International Committee: Minutes** 1974 Oct - 1975 Feb
- MSS.292D/901/8 **International Committee: Minutes** 1975 Mar - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/9 **International Committee: Minutes** 1975 Oct - 1976 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/10 **International Committee: Minutes** 1976 Apr - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/11 **International Committee: Minutes** 1976 Oct - 1977 Aug
- MSS.292D/901/12 **International Committee: Minutes** 1977 Oct - 1978 Jan
- MSS.292D/901/13 **International Committee: Minutes** 1978 Feb - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/14 **International Committee: Minutes** 1978 Oct - 1979 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/15 **International Committee: Minutes** 1979 Apr - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/16 **International Committee: Minutes** 1979 Oct - 1980 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/17 **International Committee: Minutes** 1980
- MSS.292D/901/18 **International Committee: Minutes** 1980 Oct - 1981 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/19 **International Committee: Minutes** 1981 Apr - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/20 **International Committee: Minutes** 1981 Oct - 1982 Jan
- MSS.292D/901/21 **International Committee: Minutes** 1982 Feb - May
- MSS.292D/901/22 **International Committee: Minutes** 1982 Jun - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/23 **International Committee: Minutes** 1982 Sep - 1983 Feb
- MSS.292D/901/24 **International Committee: Minutes** 1983 Mar - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/25 **International Committee: Minutes** 1983 Oct - 1984 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/26 **International Committee: Minutes** 1984 Apr - Jul
- MSS.292D/901/27 **International Committee: Minutes** 1984 Oct - 1985 Feb
- MSS.292D/901/28 **International Committee: Minutes** 1985 Mar - Apr
- MSS.292D/901/29 **International Committee: Minutes** 1985 Jun - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/30 **International Committee: Minutes** 1985 Oct - 1986 Mar
- MSS.292D/901/31 **International Committee: Minutes** 1986 Apr - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/32 **International Committee: Minutes** 1986 Oct - 1987 Jan
- MSS.292D/901/33 **International Committee: Minutes** 1987 Feb - Aug
- MSS.292D/901/34 **International Committee: Minutes** 1987 Oct - 1988 Feb

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MSS.292D/905.234/1-3 **War: Famine Relief (Oxfam)** 1970-1990

MSS.292D/905.234/1 **War: Famine Relief (Oxfam)** 1970-1981

MSS.292D/905.234/2 **War: Famine Relief (Oxfam)** 1981-1985

Correspondence & reports, including fundraising for the African drought and Ethiopian famine of 1984-5.

MSS.292D/905.234/3 **War: Famine Relief (Oxfam)** 1985-1990

MSS.292D/912-919 International Trades Union Organisations 1961-1990

MSS.292D/918/1-4 **International Trade Unions: World Federation of Trade Unions** 1961-1990

MSS.292D/918/1 **International Trade Unions: World Federation of Trade Unions** 1961-1978

MSS.292D/918/2 **International Trade Unions: World Federation of Trade Unions** 1979-1980

MSS.292D/918/3 **International Trade Unions: World Federation of Trade Unions** 1980-1985

MSS.292D/918/4 **International Trade Unions: World Federation of Trade Unions** 1986-1990

MSS.292D/919/1-3 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: General** 1970-1990

MSS.292D/919/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: General** 1970-1979

MSS.292D/919/2 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: General** 1980 Jan-1985 Jul

MSS.292D/919/3 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: General** 1985 Sep-1990 Jul
Includes material on subject of violations of Trade Union rights.

MSS.292D/919.12/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: minutes and papers of the ICFTU Executive Board** 1971-1972

Relating to amendments to the ICFTU's constitution.

MSS.292D/919.2/1-8 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1970-1990

MSS.292D/919.2/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1970-1977

MSS.292D/919.2/2 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1978-1982

MSS.292D/919.2/3 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1982-1985

MSS.292D/919.2/4i-ii **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1988 Dec

Agenda items and supporting papers.

MSS.292D/919.2/5 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1989 May

Agenda items and supporting papers.

MSS.292D/919.2/6 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1985-1986

MSS.292D/919.2/7 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1986-1988

MSS.292D/919.2/8 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Minutes and Reports (Executive Board etc)** 1988-1990

MSS.292D/919.21/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Committee correspondence** 1970 Sep-1972 Aug

Correspondence, notices and papers relating mainly to the ICFTU Executive Board, but also other ICFTU committees.

MSS.292D/919.21/2 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Committee correspondence** 1972 Sep-1978 Dec

Correspondence, notices and papers relating mainly to the ICFTU Executive Board, but also other ICFTU committees.

MSS.292D/919.26/1-7 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Congress** 1970-1989

MSS.292D/919.26/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1972 Congress** 1970-1973

Correspondence and papers relating to the ICFTU's Tenth World Congress (London, July 1972).

MSS.292D/919.26/2 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1975 Congress** 1974-1977

Correspondence and papers relating to the ICFTU's Eleventh World Congress (Mexico City, October 1975).

MSS.292D/919.26/3 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1979 Congress** 1978-1982

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to the ICFTU's Twelfth World Congress (Madrid, November 1979).

MSS.292D/919.26/4 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1983 Congress** 1982-1984

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to the ICFTU's Thirteenth World Congress (Oslo, June 1983).

MSS.292D/919.26/5 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1983 Congress** 1983

Reports circulated for the ICFTU's Thirteenth World Congress (Oslo, June 1983).

MSS.292D/919.26/6 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1988 Congress** 1986-1988

Correspondence and papers relating to the ICFTU's Fourteenth World Congress (Melbourne, March 1988).

MSS.292D/919.26/7 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: 1988 Congress** 1988-1989

Correspondence and papers relating to the ICFTU's Fourteenth World Congress (Melbourne, March 1988). Includes report on and decisions of Congress.

MSS.292D/919.7/1-4 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Publicity and Propaganda** 1973-1990

MSS.292D/919.7/1 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Publicity and Propaganda** 1973 Feb-Jun

Includes copy of an article on 'Discrimination against women' for Free Labour World.

MSS.292D/919.7/2 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Publicity and Propaganda** 1976 Sep-1978 Oct

Includes issue 19 of International Trade Union News (October 1978).

MSS.292D/919.7/3 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Publicity and Propaganda** 1981 Apr-1985 Jul

Includes issues of International Trade Union News.

MSS.292D/919.7/4 **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Publicity and Propaganda** 1986 Jul-1990 Aug

MSS.292D/931 Overseas Development 1970-1990

MSS.292D/931/1-13 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1970-1990

MSS.292D/931/1 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1970-1971

Correspondence and papers relating to developing countries

MSS.292D/931/2 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1971-1974

Correspondence and papers relating to developing countries, development aid and the Second Development Decade.

MSS.292D/931/3 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1975-1977

Correspondence and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931/4 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1977-1978

Correspondence, publications and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931/5 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1978

Correspondence, publications and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

Includes World Development Charter 1978 and ICFTU Development Charter.

MSS.292D/931/6 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1978-1979

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931/7 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1980

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

Subjects include the Brandt Report and north-south co-operation and international trade.

MSS.292D/931/8 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1980-1982

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

Subjects include the Brandt Commission and its second report, north-south issues and development education.

MSS.292D/931/9 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1983-1985

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

Subjects include the Brandt Commission and Reports.

MSS.292D/931/10 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1985-1986

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

Subjects include north-south co-operation and international trade.

MSS.292D/931/11 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1986-1987

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931/12 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1987-1989

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931/13 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries** 1989-1990

Correspondence, reports and papers relating to developing countries and development issues.

MSS.292D/931.03/1 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Aid Select Committee 1970** 1973-1974

Correspondence and papers (including a pattern of inquiry and draft submission) relating to a House of Commons Select Committee on Overseas Development, to which the TUC General Council had been invited to submit evidence.

MSS.292D/931.04/1 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Tariff Preferences** 1970-1972

Correspondence and papers relating to tariff preferences for developing countries, with special reference to the textiles and the clothing industry.

MSS.292D/931.06/1-5 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1970-1990

MSS.292D/931.06/1 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1970-1974

Correspondence, memoranda and publications relating to the ODI (including annual reports and accounts).

MSS.292D/931.06/2 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1973-1977

Correspondence, memoranda and publications relating to the ODI.

MSS.292D/931.06/3 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1978-1987

Correspondence and publications relating to the ODI. Correspondence mainly concerns discussion meetings.

MSS.292D/931.06/4 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1987-1989

MSS.292D/931.06/5 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Overseas Development Institute** 1989-1990

MSS.292D/931.07/1 **Social and economic conditions of under-developed countries: Labour Party Overseas Development Study Group** 1971-1980

Correspondence and papers relating to the formation and work of the Study Group.

The study group on overseas development was established by the Labour Party's National Executive Committee to explore aspects of development assistance.

MSS.292D/931.3/1-5 **Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration (ODA - ODM) Grant to TUC** 1975-1990

MSS.292D/931.3/1 Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration (ODA - ODM) Grant to TUC 1975-1979

Correspondence and papers relating to the establishment and administration of a substantial grant from the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM) to the TUC and a proposed 'Trade Union Foundation'.

The three-year grant from the Ministry of Overseas Development (to begin 1977-8) was to be used to promote the training and education of trade unionists from developing countries and to increase contacts between them and British trade unionists.

MSS.292D/931.3/2 Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration (ODA - ODM) Grant to TUC 1979-1981

Correspondence and papers relating to the administration and future of the ODM/ODA (Overseas Development Administration) grant.

MSS.292D/931.3/3 Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration Grant to TUC 1981-1983

Correspondence and papers relating to the administration of the ODA (Overseas Development Administration) grant.

MSS.292D/931.3/4 Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration Grant to TUC 1983-1987

Correspondence and papers relating to the administration of the ODA (Overseas Development Administration) grant.

MSS.292D/931.3/5 Minimum Standards of Social Policy Overseas Development Administration Grant to TUC 1988-1990

Correspondence and papers relating to the administration of the ODA (Overseas Development Administration) grant.

Michael Ward Collection: London Metropolitan Archives

LMA/4282/01/005 - GLC and Twin Trading

LMA/4282/03/002 - Thatcher and abolition of GLC

LMA/4282/02/004 - The future of the GLEB

Archive of the Anti Apartheid Movement, 1956-98: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford

A Boycott Movement papers, 1959-61

Shelfmarks: MSS AAM 1-12

Committee of African Organisations' papers concerning establishment of Boycott Movement, 1959-60
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 1

Boycott Movement minutes, 1959-60

Shelfmark: MSS AAM 2

Boycott Movement press releases, 1959-60

Shelfmark: MSS AAM 3

C.3.3 Papers of multi-faith conferences, 1984-8 Shelfmarks: MSS AAM 146-8

Inter-Faith Colloquium on Apartheid convened by Archbishop Trevor Huddleston in co-operation with the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, Mar 1984
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 146

Multi-Faith conference planning meeting, Sept 1985
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 147

The Religious Struggle Against Apartheid. A consultation for people of all Faiths, Sept 1988
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 148

O.5 Consumer Boycott, 1960-94

O.5.1 Correspondence and committee papers, 1960-93 Shelfmarks: MSS AAM 1556-8

General correspondence, 1960-92
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 1556

London Boycott Working Group minutes and papers, 1986-9
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 1557

Consumer Boycott Unit minutes and papers, 1988-93
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 1558

C.3 Multi-Faith Committee, 1967-94

C.3.2 General correspondence, 1974-94

Shelfmarks: MSS AAM 145

General correspondence on religious matters, 1974-94
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 145

C.3.4 Files on multi-faith issues, 1967-94

Shelfmarks: MSS AAM 149-60

British Council of Churches/Council of Churches of Britain and Ireland, 1967-92
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 149

Includes conference 'Britain and Southern Africa: the Way Forward', Feb 1989.

World Council of Churches, 1970-92
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 150

Quakers, 1975-92
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 151

Southern African News & Views, September 1985, Black Boycott Shuts Up Shops

Methodists, 1976-81
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 152

Includes Methodist Task Force for Co-operative Action on Southern Africa, 1976-9

Churches - general, 1980s
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 153

Multi-faith leaflets, 1980s
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 158

Background papers from various sources concerning South Africa and religion, 1970s-90s
Shelfmark: MSS AAM 159-60

Community Aid Abroad (Oxfam Australia) Archive: Melbourne University

81/122 CAA (Box 15) Index No. 84 Trade Action PTY LTD

1. Minutes of Directors' Meetings 5/11/1975 – 8/2/1979
2. Board Meeting Papers
- 2/1 1969-1970
- 2/2 Oct 1975 – Dec 1976
- 2/3 1977
- 2/4 1978/79

81/122 CAA (Box 16) State Correspondence

81/122 CAA (Box 17) Trade Action PTY LTD Correspondence

CAA 81/122 Box 18

3. Correspondence
- 3/6 Sale of Trade Action 1979
4. Balance Sheets & Financial Statements
- 4/1 Financial Statements 1966-76
- 4/2 Reports 1975 - 78

CAA 81/122 Box 20 Trade Action Pty Ltd Tanzania Project

CAA 81/122 Box 24 Press Cutting Books

3. Trade and Relating Matters

CAA 81/122 Box 62 Publications Misc. 1960s – 1970s

CAA 81/122 Box 63 Publications Misc. 1960s – 1970s

82/50 Newspaper Cuttings 1960s and 1970s Volume 1

82/50 Newspaper Cuttings 1960s and 1970s Volume 2

2nd Accession (1986) CAA 86/152

Box 5: 5 A – Trade Action 1972-82

- 1) Finance - Trade Action profits 1969-74
- 2) Correspondence
- 3) Tanzania Project - Report Tanzania Commodity Venture, 1
- 4) Reports

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Adbusters	Shopper's Guide
Ethical Consumer	Social Audit
Green @ Work Magazine	The Telegraph
Guardian	The Times
Independent	Which?

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Newholm, T. (2000). 'Understanding the ethical consumer: employing a frame of bounded rationality.' Ph.D thesis, Open University.

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NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY SOURCES

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Ruskin, J. (1864). *Sesame and Lilies*. London.

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Dumping Without Borders: How US agricultural policies are destroying the livelihoods of Mexican corn farmers - August 2003

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Europe and the Coffee Crisis: A Plan for Action - February 2003

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